

EAST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Official Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting—May 18, 2023

EACC Allied Health Building 6:00PM

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 6:00PM by Mr. Brent Howton, Chairman. Mr. Howton opened the meeting in prayer.

II. ROLL CALL:

The following board members were in attendance: Mr. Alan Curtis, Mrs. Jan Haven, Mr. Rausch Hodges, Mr. Brent Howton, Judge Ann Hudson, Mr. Kevin Lewey, and Dr. Florine Milligan. Mrs. Beverly Devazier and Mr. Al Miller were unable to attend.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dr. Cathie Cline, Mr. Jack Hill, Mr. Jim Huff, Mr. Adam O’Neal, Mrs. Lindsay Midkiff, Mr. Mark Wilson, Dr. Laura Riddle, Mrs. Lindsi Huffaker, Mr. Dennis Colvin, Mr. Thomas Hare, Mr. Corey Deere, and Mr. Omar Busby. Minutes were recorded and transcribed by Anne Kelso.

MEDIA PRESENT:

Media representation included Mr. Brodie Johnson representing the *Forrest City Times-Herald* newspaper, and Mr. Rick Holt with KXJK Radio.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

Mr. Howton asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the previous meeting held February 9, 2023. Mr. Curtis moved to approve the minutes as presented. Dr. Milligan seconded the motion. Motion carried with no opposition.

IV. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Status of Current Projects

Dr. Cline reported that the Welcome Center project has a revised estimated completion date of July 16, following delays due to structural and utility issues that had to be addressed. Pictures of construction progress were shown on screen. A progress report by the architect was outlined in Dr. Cline’s memo. The final cost of the project is estimated to be around \$4.6-\$4.7 million once all issues have been addressed. Dr. Cline noted the food service provider, Great Western Service has been chosen following an RFP. Sample menus were distributed for review.

Regarding the connectivity trail, we have reached the 90% approval phase for the construction documents. The next step is to receive comments from ARDOT, who should then release us to 100% approval and bidding.

As the Board will recall, we received grant funds to work on the plumbing and mold issues at the property at 1326 E. Broadway. Abatement, HVAC, venting, and demolition has been completed, and the contractor has begun work on the plumbing and bathroom improvements. The contractor has given us a revised completion date of June 15. The building continues to be vacated as the work progresses. Ultimately, we believe the College will meet its goal of making the beautiful historic property safer and healthier, and ensure its preservation for the future.

We received initial quotes for a comprehensive signage plan that we think will make the campus more welcoming and easier to navigate. We are now working through the quoting and bidding process, as required by state law and College policy, with the goal of getting the best quality at the best price. Plans call for labeling each entrance, adding better signage to buildings in a consistent style, and adding 11 wayfinding signs throughout campus.

In February, the Board approved for us to work on designs for a campus mascot, which we hoped to present at this meeting. After extensively involving the community, the campus, and having many meetings with students, we have found that there was great enthusiasm for adopting a mascot. However, there was not a strong consensus for any one of the three designs the committee originally proposed. We have learned much about what appeals to people during this process, and will report back to the Board in August on additional ideas and information we gather over the summer. At that time, we will ask the Board how it wishes to proceed.

B. Campus Highlights

Lindsay Midkiff presented a PowerPoint presentation of the projects and activities that have taken place on our campus, including our record-breaking Fine Arts Center season, the concurrent credit convocation, awards day ceremony, commencement, and the Wynne tornado relief efforts. Members of our maintenance staff, Mr. Dennis Colvin, Mr. Omar Busby, Mr. Thomas Hare, and Mr. Corey Deere, were recognized for their work to prepare the EACC Wynne Center classrooms so that Wynne High School could continue classes following the complete loss of their high school building. Our IT went above and beyond as well to set up a computer lab, even adding the Wynne Yellow Jacket to the screen to welcome students. EACC also received and distributed donations from ASU-Mid-South and UA Hope-Texarkana for our faculty, staff and students, affected by the March 31 tornado.

V. Financial Reports & Budget Adjustments:

Financial reports for periods ending February 28, 2023, March 31, 2023 and April 30, 2023 were presented to the Board by Dr. Cline, as well as the “Days of Cash on Hand” report. Dr. Cline further reported that no reportable budget adjustments have been made since the last meeting. Per policy, only adjustments made outside the original department in which they were

budgeted are reported. Mr. Lewey moved to accept the financial reports, and Mr. Curtis seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

VI. New Business

A. Provisional Positions

Dr. Cline reported that the Board is required to approve, each year, the provisional positions that are normally associated with grants awarded to the college. These positions were outlined in a memorandum from Mrs. Lindsi Huffaker. Dr. Cline recommended the Board take action to approve the positions for the 2023-24 fiscal year and to give the administration blanket approval for additional provisional positions that may occur during the year. Mr. Curtis moved to approve this recommendation. Judge Hudson seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

B. Promotional Items

Dr. Cline reported that state law requires the governing board of an institution to approve funds expended for promotional items. Dr. Cline recommended the approval of up to the state authorized amount of \$50,000 for promotional items during the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Judge Hudson made a motion to approve funds for promotional item expenditures. Dr. Milligan seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

C. Resignations/Terminations/Retirement

Dr. Cline reported the following individuals who are no longer employed at EACC: Dr. Yolanda Cox, Vice President for Academic Affairs; Ron White, Business & Industry Instructor; Roni Horton, Executive Director of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Recruitment; Jenna Hayes, Registrar; Christy White, History Instructor; Boone Brown, HPR Instructor; Clara Harland, Bookstore Manager; Angela Tarrants, Payroll Administrator; and O'Hara Davis, CDL Instructor. We wish them well in their future endeavors. This report is informational and requires no official action by the Board.

D. New Hires/Changes in Duties

Dr. Cline reported that the following employees have been hired or have had a change in duties at the College since the last board meeting: Jim Huff, Vice President for Finance/CFO; Jack Hill, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs; Lisa Siler, Payroll Administrator/HR Assistant; Destinee Brock, Purchasing Specialist; Travis Moore, CDL (Restricted) Instructor; Bernice Bland, Institutional Services Assistant; Clarence McNeary, Maintenance Assistant; and Steve Nesbitt, Maintenance Assistant. This report is informational only and requires no official action by the Board.

E. Receipt/Acceptance of Arkansas Division of Workforce Services Grants

Information was included on the following grants awarded by the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Adult Education Section for the 2023-24 program year:

Adult Basic Education (ABE)	\$189,126.27
General Adult Education (GAE)	\$ 93,215.57
Adult Education Direct & Equitable (D&E)	\$ 69,533.48
Adult Education Special Projects Grant (SNAP)	\$ 23,500.00
Adult Education Special Projects (TANF)	\$ 75,000.00
<u>Adult Education Literacy (D&E)</u>	<u>\$ 20,311.45</u>
	\$470,686.77

Additionally, we have been notified that we will receive the Dollar General Literacy Foundation's Adult Literacy Grant in the amount of \$8,000. This grant supports the Literacy Council of St. Francis County.

Dr. Cline recommended that the Board approve these award notifications in the total amount of \$478,686.77 and to authorize the administration to make appropriate expenditures as outlined in the budget. Judge Hudson moved to approve, and Mr. Hodges seconded. The motion carried with no opposition.

F. Receipt/Acceptance of Arkansas Career Coach Grant AY24

Dr. Cline reported that EACC received notification from the Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Career and Technical Education (ADE-DCTE) for funding in the amount of \$171,471 for the 2023-2024 academic year to support the Career Coach Program. Dr. Cline asked the board to approve these funds and to authorize the administration to make appropriate expenditures associated with this program. Mr. Curtis moved to approve, and Judge Hudson seconded. The motion carried with no opposition.

G. Academic Programs

Dr. Cline reported on the updated program inventory of degrees and certificates approved for EACC by the Arkansas Division of Higher Education. This includes revisions made this year as well as other changes that may have been missed in the table that is included as part of Board Policy 4-16. Judge Hudson moved to approve the program inventory list, and Mr. Hodges seconded. The motion carried with no opposition.

H. Academic Calendar

Revisions were made to the 2023-2024 College calendar to include modifications made to the PN program schedule, the addition of mid-term grades, and changes in financial aid deadlines. Dr. Milligan made the motion to approve the academic calendar, and Judge Hudson seconded. There was no opposition.

I. Approval of 2023-2024 Budget and Salary Schedule

A copy of the proposed East Arkansas Community College budget for fiscal year 2023-2024 (FY 24) was included in the packet for review. Dr. Cline reported that unrestricted

income is budgeted at \$14,449,947, an increase over last year's unrestricted income of \$13,913,308. This increase is due to the College's performance in its productivity index, which determines how state revenues are distributed in to higher education, and to additional revenue generated from tuition and fees.

Restricted grants, contracts, and gifts total \$3,944,715, and auxiliary enterprises are projected to generate \$1,206,452, resulting in total expected revenues of \$19,601,114. This year's revenues do not include any HERRF or ARPA funds.

For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the proposed budget includes an \$8 per-credit-hour increase in tuition, which has not increased in 3 years. It also includes a technology fee increase of \$2 per credit hour (from \$9 to \$11). Fee increases for allied health and commercial driver training are included in the proposed budget to help offset the rising cost of these programs.

Some additions to the budget include an increase in the Allied Health budget to provide for a new simulation coordinator. The cost of this position will be offset by a small fee for the programs that will use the Sims training. It also includes \$150,000 for a mobile unit to allow us to provide short-term allied health programs such as CNA and EMT Basic at multiple off-site locations. The addition of food service is included in the budget, which we are projecting to expend \$250,000. We have also added an economic developer position, the salary for which will be reimbursed by the FCIDC.

The faculty salary schedule included in your packet includes increases that are proposed in order to achieve two primary goals: increasing instructor salaries to remain competitive with public schools following the LEARNS act and to give more weight to the skills and certifications held by vocational and technical faculty. The included faculty salary schedule shows a differential of one degree level for allied health, as has been done in the past, and beginning this year, a similar differential for vocational/technical faculty. It also includes the addition of a 12-month salary scale. Previously those salaries had been set without a clear, equitable method. The proposed budget includes five new faculty positions, three of which are grant or contract funded, rather than institutionally funded. In addition, we are proposing to increase adjunct faculty per-credit-hour compensation from \$550 to \$575.

The total faculty salary investment included in this budget reflects an increase from \$2.12 million spent in FY 23 to \$2.42 million budgeted for FY 24, an increase of 14.7%. It should be noted that the total budgeted faculty salary expenditure in FY 23 was -5.73% less than in FY 22. The result of the proposed increase in faculty salaries is that the average for all faculty (9-, 10-, and 12-months) would increase from \$49,164 to \$52,426, an increase of 6.63%.

For comparison purposes, the LEARNS act sets a minimum salary for 9-month public school teachers at \$50,000, who work 190 days in the school year, an average per-day cost of \$263.16. In contrast, EACC's 9-month faculty work 180 days, which equates to \$285.50 per day based on the average 9-month salary of \$51,389, or 8.5% higher than the per-day cost for public school teachers earning the \$50,000 minimum. Faculty employed in FY 23, under this proposed budget, overall would receive an average raise of 6.63%, including three faculty members whose salaries are frozen because they exceed the salary schedule. Excluding those three faculty members, the average salary increase for faculty is 7.33%.

Another goal of this year's budget is to set the lowest wage on campus at \$13.00 per hour. As a result of higher education being removed from the state's classification and compensation system, we were able to create our own staff placement scale, which is included in your packet. This will provide a more logical and equitable way to set staff position entry salaries.

The proposed budget would increase the lowest-wage positions to the new minimum on the included placement scale. For those positions whose salary increase is not based on the new scale, or due to a change in position or a market increase, we recommend a COLA (cost-of-living-adjustment) increase of 2% for those earning less than \$50,000 and 1% for those earning more than \$50,000. Similarly, this budget proposes a merit increase of 2% for those making less than \$50,000 and 1% for those earning more than \$50,000. By policy, merit increases may only be given to those employed by October 1 who have a satisfactory or better rating on their annual performance evaluation. The result is that staff earning less than \$50,000 who meet the policy guidelines may earn up to a total 4% salary increase for FY24; staff earning more than \$50,000 may earn up to a 2% salary increase.

The total proposed budgeted investment of institutional funds in staff salaries is \$3.34 million, compared to \$3.44 million budgeted last year, a decrease of -2.95%. This overall budgeted decrease is due to a reduction in the number of staff positions and controlling for salary increases to the highest-compensated employees.

Overall, the total proposed institutional investment budgeted for faculty and staff salaries is \$5.77 million, an increase of \$284,689, or 5.2%, over the total budgeted in FY 23 of \$5.48 million. We believe this increase will be more than set off by additional revenues.

I recommend the Board approve the 2023-24 budget and salary schedules as presented. Dr. Milligan moved to approve, and Mr. Curtis seconded. The motion carried with no opposition.

J. Summer Schedule

Dr. Cline reported that the majority of employees were in favor of continuing the 4-day workweek schedule that we piloted last summer. If approved by the Board, the summer schedule will begin Monday, May 22 and end Friday, August 11. The official College hours of operation will be 7:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Thursday, with offices closed on Fridays. Employees will have a half-hour lunch period. Classes or events scheduled for Fridays, in the evening, or on the weekend will continue. Departments with special needs will continue to work as best suits those special job responsibilities. Dr. Milligan moved to approve the summer schedule and Mr. Lewey seconded. The motion carried with no opposition.

K. Board Policy Review Committee Recommendations

The Board Policy Review Committee (Brent Howton, Ann Hudson, and Florine Milligan) met at 5:30 pm to review and discuss propose changes to the board policy in order to make a recommendation to the full Board. Dr. Cline reported that during the 2023 legislative session, all state higher education institution positions were removed from the “classified” system and this will require several policy changes. A summary of the requested policy changes was included in the board packet for review. Judge Hudson recommended that the full-Board approve the recommendations, and Dr. Milligan seconded. The motion was approved unanimously by the full Board.

L. Discuss/Approve Slate of Foundation Board of Directors

Mr. Howton reported that the nominating committee recommends the following slate of directors for the EACC Foundation Board for 2023-2024:

Ann Hudson	Larry Freeman
Margie Cannon	Megan O’Neal
Leroy Dangeau	Steve Hollowell
Anna Howton	Dale Morris
Susan DeRossitt	Joe Perry
Pierre Evans	Chris Morledge
Jan Haven	Claudette Walker
Beverly Devazier	

Ex-Officio Members:

Brent Howton, Chairman-Board of Trustees
Cathie Cline, President
Niki Jones, Director of Development

Dr. Cline noted, upon approval, these directors will serve a one-year term beginning July 1, 2023 and will hold their first meeting in July to elect officers. Mr. Hodges made a motion to approve this slate of officers, and Mr. Curtis seconded the motion. The motion carried with no opposition.

VI. President's Report

Jack Hill, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs, demonstrated the new online software program called Simple Syllabus, which is located on the EACC website. All syllabus will be approved by deans/directors and will have a uniform look across classes. Students are now able to review our syllabus online and know what is expected before signing up for classes.

Dr. Cline noted that we support our students in every way possible as our cosmetology students are now doing live work. Of note, Mr. Adam O'Neal and Mr. Jack Hill have recently had their hair cut by our students for \$5.

Dr. Cline further noted a small example of how students' lives are changed through our programs. A recent graduate of our Diesel Technology program was offered a job in Little Rock making \$14 per hour; however, when he presented his certification through our program, they raised their initial offer to \$20 per hour. He was excited to share this with his instructor.

The CDL classes in Truman are going well and we will be offering children's gymnastics this summer. We are also talking with them about offering CNA and EMT-Basic as well.

Our Adult Ed program is one of the most respected in the state, and because of the LEARNS Act, they plan to begin working with parents to help improve their reading and math skills so that they are better equipped to help their children with homework. We have partnered with the Palestine-Wheatley School District to implement this idea.

We are still accepting sponsorships and teams for our upcoming Golf Tournament. If you know of anyone we need to touch base with, please let us know.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Mr. Howton called for Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter at 6:55PM. The board meeting reconvened at 7:20PM. Mr. Lewey moved to extend Dr. Cline's contract for an additional year on the existing term. Mr. Curtis seconded the motion, and the motion passed with no opposition.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Lewey moved to adjourn. Judge Hudson seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 7:21PM. Mr. Howton encouraged everyone to stay and observe a simulation prepared by members of our nursing staff.

Approved:

Alan Curtis, Vice Chair
EACC Board of Trustees

Date

Board of Trustees Meeting
May 18, 2023