

EAST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING–August 15, 2024

Allied Health Building

6:00PM

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 6:02PM by Mr. Brent Howton, Chair. Mrs. Jan Haven opened the meeting with prayer.

II. ROLL CALL:

The following board members were in attendance: Mr. Alan Curtis, Mrs. Jan Haven. Mr. Brent Howton, Judge Ann Hudson, and Mr. Al Miller. Per BP 1-10, a quorum was established. Mrs. Beverly Devazier, Mr. Rausch Hodges, Mr. Kevin Lewey, and Dr. Florine Milligan were unable to attend.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dr. Cathie Cline, Mrs. Lindsay Midkiff, Mr. Jack Hill, Mr. Jim Huff, Mr. Adam O’Neal, Mrs. Niki Jones, and Mr. Sam Harris attended. Minutes were recorded and transcribed by Anne Kelso.

MEDIA PRESENT:

Media included Mr. Brody Johnson, representing the Forrest City Times Herald Newspaper.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Mr. Howton asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the previous meeting held on May 16, 2024. Mr. Miller made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Curtis seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

IV. OLD BUSINESS:

There were no old business action items.

V. SPECIAL REPORTS

A. Annual Foundation Report–Niki Jones

Niki Jones gave the annual Foundation report for 2023-24. Information was distributed in a handout for review. Board officers included Megan O’Neal, Chair; Joe Perry, Vice-Chair; Chris Morledge, Treasurer; and Anna Howton, Secretary. Board members included LeRoy Dangeau, Susan DeRossitt, Beverly Devazier, Pierre Evans, Larry Freeman, Jan Haven, Steve Hollowell, Ann Hudson, Claudette Walker, Dr. Cathie Cline, EACC President, Brent Howton, EACC BOT Chair, and Niki Jones, Director of Development. Ms. Jones noted that as of July 2024 we have two new members, Brice Fletcher and Michelle Wilson. She stated that we recently lost long-time Foundation member Mrs. Claudette Walker who passed away in June. Ms. Walker played a huge role in our Foundation over the years, and she will be greatly missed.

Scholarship recipients for 2023-24 included:

1. George and Alice Walker–Danyel Vinson
2. Amanda Fogg–Shakyla Brown
3. Community Leader–Kerrigan Smith
4. Non-Traditional–Kylee Elliott
5. Technical Education–Raven Jones
6. General Education–Margaret Ishmon
7. Giny Blankenship–Alexandria Davis
8. Jesse E. Smith Swindle–Samantha Reed
9. Burt-Davis–Teana Snider
10. Coy Grace–Kierra Fraction
11. Willie Smith–Dana Densmore
12. Eleanor and Harry Beasley–Gabrielle Ransom
13. John Alderson Business Scholarship–Annisha Franks
14. Steward–Michael Williams
15. Dr. Don Lewis Award–Arica Pankey

This is the first year for the Dr. Don Lewis Award. This is automatically awarded to the student with the sixth highest GPA in Registered Nursing.

The Nimocks Family Concurrent Enrollment Grant was received again this year in the amount of \$10,000. These funds are used to assist with the cost of tuition, fees, and books.

The Sponsor a Child (SAC) scholarship awarded four scholarships for the Kids on Campus Summer Enrichment Camp in July for a total of \$360.00.

The 2024 Distinguished Faculty Award was presented to Bill Mathes, Diesel Technology Instructor, and the 2024 Outstanding Staff Award was presented to Mark Wilson, Director of Campus Safety and Operations.

The annual Golf Tournament, held on June 10th, raised a total of \$33,763.92 for the Foundation. We had three sponsorships at the \$5,000 level, Arkansas Concrete, Boar's Head, and Forrest City Medical Center.

The Capital Campaign to benefit the new Welcome Center has received over \$106,000 in pledged or donated funds. Several areas have been selected by donors for naming opportunities: Business and Industry Training Room–St. Francis County Farm Bureau; Café–First National Bank of Eastern Arkansas; Bookstore–Dr. Jim and Mrs. Susan DeRossitt; and Student Areas–The Morledge Family.

The EACC Food Pantry received the following grants: St. Francis County Community Foundation Giving Tree Grant in the amount of \$1,000, and the Engage Arkansas for MLK Day of Service Grant for \$3,000. The Grab and Go Bags program has distributed 8,211 bags to students since it began in the fall of 2020.

The 2023-24 Pillars of the Arts raised \$14,550.00 for the Foundation. Donations for the 2024-25 performance season began this month.

Lindsay Midkiff presented the 2024-2025 Fine Arts Center Season announcement video. She noted that since the recent season announcement, the response has been overwhelming. We are currently renewing packages and will open packages to the general public on Monday, August 26th. In addition, we have had a school reach out to reserve 650 seats to the school series show *Moon Mouse*. Also, we continue to accept Pillar donations which include perks such as VIP parking passes.

B. Status of Campus Projects–Dr. Cline

Dr. Cline reported on the Welcome Center. We continue to work on signage for donors and we have begun adding technology to the Farm Bureau Business and Industry Training room. We added a roof coating over the library portion of the building, as well as to the Workforce building.

Other campus improvements include the addition of a simulation lab for nursing and EMS students that replicates the residence of a fictional patient, “Ms. Linda.” This required some minor improvements to the Allied Health classroom building, but will greatly enhance the simulation experience by providing students a realistic experience in a patient’s home, and how to deal with issues in a caring, professional manner.

We have had a pre-construction meeting regarding the connectivity trail, which is now crescent shaped rather than oval to stay within budget. The project will also include work to a small drive for college vehicles only and some landscape work. The project was re-priced by Olympus and is now bid at \$223,101 versus \$284,800 in the original bid. This change is due to material adjustments in the project. With the max federal contribution of \$163,000, EACC will now pay \$60,101. A copy of the revised bid letter was included in the packet.

Dr. Cline noted that a group meeting was held to discuss capital improvements for the coming year. An initial working list was included in the packet with suggested earmarks for the maximum that we think is reasonable to expend. This is a preliminary first draft to assist the College in prioritizing improvement goals. We will wait until the final year-end close-out of the books to determine how much is prudent to expend from the College’s plant fund in a manner that does not negatively impact our overall net position. We are also gathering additional input before finalizing our priorities for campus improvements. This report is informational only and requires no action by the Board.

C. UA System Update

Dr. Cline reported that progress on our affiliation agreement to join the University of Arkansas System continues at a good pace. The 751-page application for substantive changes was submitted and accepted by the Higher Learning Commission. The first 24 pages of the application, which is the substantive part, was included for review. HLC has elected to follow up with a site review by peer reviewers on August 19 and 20. A schedule for the visit is included and the HLC team would like to have lunch with any board members who can participate on Monday, August 19.

We are already seeing benefits as a result of this proposed affiliation. The UA System is leading a statewide workforce initiative that we are now included in that will ultimately be adopted across the state. It is also leading in work to standardize course numbering. In addition, I have set up meetings with UA System University chancellors to engage in discussions about providing bachelor's degrees on campus and adding more 2+2 agreements.

If the review team gives a positive report following their visit, and if they are able to do so in time for the full HLC board meeting on October 31/November 1, it is *possible* that we might make it to the agenda and could close the transaction before the new year. If that occurs, it would be a good way to incorporate a celebration of this new forward-thinking affiliation into a 50-year celebration of EACC. It would also be beneficial to begin the 2025 legislative session as part of the System. However, if we do not make it to the fall agenda, the board does not meet again until March.

D. HLC Update

Dr. Cline noted that she is very pleased to report that we received the highest in all categories of our Year 4 Assurance Argument. She noted that she is proud of the team that worked on this huge project, which required many weekend writing sessions.

The Year 4 Assurance Argument is a desk review that does not require a visit. Its purpose is to keep institutions mindful of accreditation criteria and the importance of documenting those in the interim between one 10-year visit and the next. Our next visit is scheduled for 2029-2030.

The document itself is uploaded in a portal through the HLC website. It included 34,870 words and approximately 700 pieces of evidence.

Under the leadership of Vice President Jack Hill, the team included Mallory Adams, Lindsay Huffaker, Errin James, Lindsay Midkiff, Jim Huff, Daniel Grantham, Adam O'Neal, Christine Williams, and Michelle Wilson, with additional assistance provided by Matt Suda, Beth Thompson, Jerry Stegall, Sam Harris, and Anne Kelso.

The score sheet and highlights from the document were included in the packet for review. Within the report, HLC summarized our history with them, and this is one of the cleanest reports that we have ever received. This report is informational and requires no action by the Board.

VI. FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Dr. Cline discussed financial reports for the periods ending May 31, 2024, June 30, 2024 and July 31, 2024. The *Days of Cash on Hand* report, and budget adjustments. She noted that the memorandum from Mr. Jim Huff indicates that no reportable budget adjustments have been made. Only adjustments made outside the original department in which they were budgeted are reported according to policy.

She further noted the preliminary End-of-Year Financial Report is not available at this time, however, the final report will be presented at the November meeting. Following

this report, Mr. Curtis moved to accept the financial reports presented, and Mr. Miller seconded the motion. The motion carried with no opposition.

VII. New Business

A. Resignations/Terminations/Retirement

Dr. Cline reported that the following individuals are no longer employed with EACC: Debbie Feagin, Director of Adult Basic Education/Literacy/SNAP; David Baldwin, Fiscal Support Supervisor; Dace Lee, Adult Education Paraprofessional/Marketing/Recruitment Coordinator; Cager Chapman, CDL Instructor; and Armoni Johnson, College Success Coach and JAG Specialist. This information requires no action by the Board.

B. Report on New Hires/Change in Duties

Dr. Cline reported that the following employees have been employed or have had a change in duties since our last board meeting: Adam O'Neal, Vice President for Student Services/CSAO; Ed Adams, Associate Vice President of Computer Services/CIO; Mark Wilson, Executive Director of Campus Safety and Facilities; Mitch Huffaker, Director of Physical Plant; Jodie Cantrell, SSS Career Transfer and Advising Specialist; Yanna Brown, Administrative Specialist II/Allied Health; Frank Jolls, Maintenance Assistant; Katie Minor, Welding Instructor/CTE; Erika Threat, Administrative Specialist for Student Services; Erika Threat, Financial Aid Specialist; Dabney Allen, CDL Instructor; and Michael Armstrong, Security Officer. This is informational only and requires no action by the Board.

C. Summer I and II Payroll Report

Dr. Cline presented the Summer I and Summer II payroll for faculty prepared by Vice President for Academic Affairs, Jack Hill. This item is informational and requires no action by the Board.

D. Summer I and Summer II Enrollment Data

Dr. Cline reported that Summer I enrollment increased by 2.59% this year, with an unduplicated headcount of 357 compared to 348 in 2023. Summer II enrollment increased by 8.33% over last year, from an unduplicated headcount of 276 in 2023 to 299 in 2024. Headcount for both summer terms has continued to increase post-Covid.

We are additionally encouraged by the fact that student semester credit hours (SSCH), or the number of credit hours in which students were registered, also increased. Summer I SSCH increased 4.3% from 1,489 in 2023 to 1,553 this year; summer II SSCH increased by 7.03% from 1,366 to 1,462. Again, this continues a post-Covid growth trend. This report is informational and requires no action by the Board.

E. Academic Calendar Updates

Updates to the academic calendar for 2024-25 were included in the packet for review. Dr. Cline noted the addition of short-term Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses and Fall 2024 Special Term dates that have been added to the end

of the calendar. Since the Board approved the previous calendars, we are requesting your approval to make these modifications. Ms. Hudson moved to adopt the modifications to the academic calendar as presented, and Mrs. Haven seconded. The motion carried with no opposition.

F. Approval of College Catalog 2024-2025

A copy of the 2024-25 catalog was distributed for review. Ms. Hudson moved to approve the college catalog, and Mrs. Haven seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

G. Receipt/Acceptance of Student Support Services Grant

Dr. Cline reported that EACC has received an award notification for our Student Support Services TRIO project in the amount of \$375,776 for the 2024-2025 budget period. Mr. Curtis moved to accept this award, and Ms. Hudson seconded. The motion carried with no opposition.

H. Receipt/Acceptance of Career Pathways Initiative Grant

Dr. Cline reported that EACC has received an award notification for the continuation of the Career Pathways Initiative Grant. The award amount for the FY25 period is \$317,805. Mrs. Haven moved to accept this award and to authorize the administration to expend the funds in the approved manner. Mr. Curtis seconded, and the motion passed with no opposition.

I. Receipt/Acceptance of the Arkansas Motor Vehicle Commission's Education and Training Grant

Dr. Cline reported that the College has been awarded funds by the Arkansas Motor Vehicle Commission in the amount of \$17,852 for the Education and Training Grant Program. Mr. Hill explained that the program will purchase equipment for hybrid electric vehicle maintenance and technology. We will be purchasing OSHA compliant equipment for training including EV/hybrid master tool kits that are non-conductive, an insulated rescue hook, static dissipative floor mats, an electric vehicle charging station tester, and an EV repair safety cabinet package. He noted that EACC is the only one in the state currently offering this training.

Dr. Cline recommended that the Board of Trustees take action to accept these funds and to authorize the administration to make the appropriate expenditures. Mr. Miller moved to approve, and Ms. Hudson seconded. The motion passed with no opposition.

J. Receipt/Acceptance of the Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Grant

Dr. Cline reported that the College has received an award notification for the Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Grant through the U.S. Department of Education. The total allocation of Perkins funds received is \$59,532 for FY25. This award will be used to purchase equipment for Nursing and Allied Health programs. Ms. Hudson moved to accept this award notification, and Mrs. Haven seconded. The motion passed with no opposition.

K. Receipt/Acceptance of Eastern Arkansas Literacy Grants

Dr. Cline noted that the College has received official notification that the Eastern Arkansas Literacy Project has been awarded GAC funds in the amount of \$15,103 for FY25. This grant will provide resources needed to continue the Adult Literacy program at EACC.

Also, for FY25, we received the Dollar General Foundation Adult Literacy Grant in the amount of \$8,700. This is an increase of \$700 over last year. This grant supports the Literacy Council of St. Francis County and will provide supplies and stipends for our AmeriCorps tutors. Ms. Hudson moved to accept these funds, and Mrs. Haven seconded. The motion passed with no opposition.

L. Receipt/Acceptance of the ALIGN Program Grant

Dr. Cline reported that EACC has received notification from the Office of Skills Development that our high school LPN program has been awarded grant funding up to \$54,327.43 out of a requested \$59,614 in proposed expenses to support this program. In the email notifying the College of this award, the program manager stated, "Due to budget constraints, we were unable to fully fund all requests. None of your requested expenditures were disallowed. After disallowed expenditures, all requests were reduced by *[sic]* 91.132% to meet the \$4.6 million dollar budget."

EACC continues to be one of only two 2-year colleges in Arkansas to participate in the high school LPN project. The funding came from monies the state received from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 for the Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) Program. A list of projected expenditures is included with this memorandum.

I wish to praise Mrs. Mallory Adams, her staff, and Mrs. Christine Williams, and her staff, for their work on this program, which is a joint effort of the Secondary Career Center and Allied Health.

Dr. Cline recommended that the Board accept the grant funds and authorize the administration to expend the funds in the manner allowed. Ms. Hudson moved, and Mr. Curtis seconded. The motion carried with no opposition.

VIII. President's Report

The UA System Office of General Counsel: Structure handout was distributed. Dr. Cline noted that she has been invited to attend the UA System board retreat and this was a couple of interesting pieces of information to share with you. To further illustrate the advantages of joining the system, the first page shows the many legal issues higher education faces, and the amount of legal advice that we will have available to us is invaluable. The next page shows the US Department of Education regulations, that giant list, are all major changes proposed, or in the works, or under lawsuits, and are all major shifts in which I will be happy to have additional guidance. There is also a brief but comprehensive list that includes assets to leverage that are unique to the System that will be a benefit as well.

The *Apple Vision Pro (Augmented Reality)* handout was discussed. Dr. Cline has been invited to come to Apple Park in Cupertino, California, August 27-28. The Vision Pro is currently being used in many medical applications. The handout expands on how this technology is being used to perform surgeries. Twenty 2-year college presidents have been invited to tour the Apple campus and experience the Apple Vision Pro to explore ways this augmented reality can be used in technical instruction.

The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Leadership Congress is coming up October 23-26. Please let us know if you are interested in attending.

Board of Trustees were invited to view the newly added simulation labs located throughout the Allied Health Building.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION -None

X. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Mrs. Haven made the motion to adjourn, and Mr. Miller seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:48PM.

Approved:

Brent Howton, Chair
EACC Board of Trustees

Date