

**TECHNICAL COLLEGE OF THE LOWCOUNTRY AREA COMMISSION**

**January 16, 2024**

**The Angus Cotton Academic Center**

**New River Campus**

**[Public Comment: areacommission@tcl.edu](mailto:areacommission@tcl.edu)**

**Minutes**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

**Randy Dolyniuk, Chairman**

**James Boozer, Secretary**

**David Smalls**

**Heath Duncan**

**Marjorie Thomas**

**STAFF PRESENT**

**Richard Gough, President**

**Laura Dukes, VP Academic Affairs**

**Nancy Weber, VP Administrative Services**

**Allison Canning, VP Student Affairs**

**Mary Lee Carns, VP Institutional Advancement**

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT EXCUSED**

**Sheree Darien, Vice Chair**

**Richard Toomey: Proxy to Chairman**

**GUEST**

**Alice Howard, Beaufort County Council Liaison**

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The January meeting of the Area Commission for the Technical College of the Lowcountry was held on Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 9:00 AM at the Angus Cotton Academic Center on the New River campus of the Technical College of the Lowcountry. Prior to the meeting media were notified and provided with the agenda. An email address for public comment is published on the agenda.

**CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairman Dolyniuk called the meeting to order at 9:05 and noted that a quorum was present. Mrs. Darien was absent, excused and Dr. Toomey was absent but had given his proxy to the Chairman.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The Consent Agenda consisted of the minutes of the November meeting only. Chairman Dolyniuk declined to approve the minutes and asked that they be resubmitted with typographical errors corrected.

**SCATCC**

Chairman Dolyniuk asked that Mr. Smalls' Commissioners Association report be moved up in the agenda as Mr. Smalls had another obligation to attend to. Commissioner Smalls reminded the group of the Commissioners Day of Learning which will be held on Wednesday, January 31 at the Palmetto Club in Columbia. The day begins at 9:00. The morning session will be the 'Trustee Academy' which is geared to Commissioners who have been appointed in the last five years. He noted that he and Ms. Darien will each be

recognized for 15 years of service to TCL. The Day of Learning will continue after lunch with Governor McMaster expected to appear in the early afternoon. The day will conclude at 4:00. The suggestion was made that perhaps next year the Commission could rent a small bus or organize a car pool for all to ride up to Columbia.

### ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Vice President Weber summarized the capital projects currently in progress on the Beaufort Mather campus:

- Building 8, Moor Hall – The Hub is complete and Student Services staff is moved in. Some punch list items to address.
- Buildings 2 and 6 – Coleman Hall (2) and Building 6 are currently in progress with a target completion date of May.
- Coleman Hall is also having roof repairs done which is a cost share with SCETV.

Upcoming projects include:

- Exterior renovations to buildings 2 and 6
- Roof work on buildings 10 and 15
- Renovations to MacLean Hall ( building 12) including ADA access, sound, lighting and seats in the auditorium, reconfiguring the LRC, renovating and opening up the 'carpeted' area of the first floor including patio access

She noted that Director for Facilities, Larry Beckler, has retired. Larry's background enabled him to serve as Project Manager on the large construction jobs (culinary, Moor Hall), but VP Weber said consideration is being given to outsourcing this position as it is not a full time need at this time.

Mrs. Thomas asked where the money for capital projects comes from and how is it determined which project to fund. Dr. Gough replied that renovation and maintenance funds are included in the annual budget from the state. VP Weber said she will distribute account information to the Commission at the next meeting to help clarify the funds and the sources. Dr. Gough reminded the Commission that the College holds 140 days in operational reserve.

### STUDENT AFFAIRS

Vice President Canning noted that enrollment has dipped and is currently down .37% in FTE and 18% HC. There are 'minimesters' coming up which should raise those figures. In answer to questions about why the dip is occurring, she noted that the Department of Education has been revising the FASFA (Free Application Federal Student Aid) form for 2024-2025 which has delayed the release which, in turn, delayed student

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Applications across the country. Several of the area high schools are holding "FASFA Day" and the College Financial Aid staff will be on site to assist with the changes to the application form and answer questions.

Title II Grant: VP Canning reported that the external evaluators for the Guided Pathways grant applauded the College for its outstanding execution of the Grant and for the commitment to merge the Grant funded operations into the regular budgeted College operations. The College was further applauded for the outstanding renovation of Moor Hall into The Hub for Student Services from application to graduation.

VP Canning had mentioned that all students on tuition payment plans are required to take a class in Financial Literacy. Chairman Dolyniuk asked her to expand on that and what the threshold is for dropping students due to nonpayment. Ms. Canning said that an \$800 unpaid balance is the threshold to be dropped for non payment. The College works very hard through targeted messages to students with outstanding balances to avoid them being dropped. Last semester ~90 students were dropped for nonpayment. She said that most nonpayment students are on SAP ( Satisfactory Academic Progress) suspension. Students on payment plans are required to take Financial Literacy classes which include a section on loans; understanding the responsibility of making regular payments and consequences of nonpayment. Also budgeting; how to plan for expenses and savings and how to apply for Financial Aid. Students dropped for nonpayment do have a process for appealing the decision.

A public comment was received at [areacommission@tcl.edu](mailto:areacommission@tcl.edu). The email was read and discussed during the meeting and is reprinted below followed by VP Canning's response.

*From: Chloe-Ann Bell <[Chloe-Ann.Bell@tcl.edu](mailto:Chloe-Ann.Bell@tcl.edu)>  
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 6:08 PM  
To: Ann Cullen <[acullen@tcl.edu](mailto:acullen@tcl.edu)>  
Subject: public comment*

*For the section when it comes to student affairs, I would like to point out the lack of community and campus life. I've been a student at TCL since 2020 and since I've been to all 3 campuses nothing has changed. The only club funded by the school is making people feel left out, uncomfortable, and criticized. The student life coordinator we had did not make enough effort to keep students engaged. The fact the position has been empty since September of 2023 goes to show that TCL doesn't make its students a priority. The same goes for offering more hybrid/online classes. Last semester and this semester only 3 people showed up to in-person classes. So much money is spent on facilities that end up being vacant and lifeless. What is the college doing to remedy this issue?*

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*From: Allison Canning <[acanning@tcl.edu](mailto:acanning@tcl.edu)>  
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 9:43:56 AM  
To: Chloe-Ann Bell <[Chloe-Ann.Bell@tcl.edu](mailto:Chloe-Ann.Bell@tcl.edu)>  
Cc: Ann Cullen <[acullen@tcl.edu](mailto:acullen@tcl.edu)>  
Subject: RE: public comment*

*Good Morning, Ms. Bell,*

*Thank you for sharing your comments regarding your experience with student life at the Technical College of the Lowcountry. Your comments were shared with the Commission at yesterday's meeting. The Commission has asked me to reach out to you and to schedule a meeting to discuss your experience as well as to seek your suggestions for improvement. We do care very much about our students and their ability to participate in student life and experience a sense of community on campus. I will report back to the Commission at their next meeting in March.*

*Please send me some days and times that will be best for you to meet with me. I look forward to meeting you and talking with you.*

*Sincerely,*

Allison Canning  
Vice President, Student Services  
Technical College of the Lowcountry  
Office: 921 Ribaut Rd. Beaufort, SC 29901-1288

## **ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

**Vice President Dukes updated the Commission on activities in Academic Affairs:**

- **The Commission recently approved the Fire Science Certificate program to be reinstated. Ms. Dukes noted that it has now been submitted to SACSCOC for their approval.**
- **She is in meetings with the Beaufort County School District to create an Early College High School opportunity in the Angus Cotton Academic Building at New River. The school district wishes to engage 9th grade students. The students will be screened for their suitability to be successful in the programs. The focus will be on General Education studies in preparation for an AA degree in Allied Health or to prepare the student to transfer to a four year institution. The students will be in designated dual enrollment classes only. Currently, the College has 730 dual enrollment students which is a record high and makes up about 30% of total enrollment.**
- **In Hampton, we are building relationships as the school district settles in after the consolidation of two districts. She noted that the ground breaking for the new high school complex will be held on January 18 at 1:00 PM.**

## HUMAN RESOURCES

Ms. Lahnen, Executive Director for Human Resources noted HR activities to increase employee retention and moral.

- Many processes have been automated for increased efficiency.
- Increased mandatory training.
- Recognition programs and Wellness programs are in place to celebrate success and recognize outstanding contributions from faculty and staff on a regular basis. She has implemented Wellness Wednesday and Thoughtful Thursday and these touches have received positive feedback.
- Temporary salary adjustments have been made in an effort to retain nursing instructors.
- She briefly reviewed the status of open positions.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

Vice President Carns informed the Commission of actions within the School of Continuing Education.

- Staff is working with the Beaufort County School District to develop CNA classes in high school that will create a pathway to a health sciences degreed career.
- TCL has established a base in the Adult Education building in Walterboro (Colleton County) and has engaged Philip Taylor to coordinate programs. At this time, limited CE classes are offered but the opportunity exists to increase the programs and move into credit programs.
- She noted that Hampton County high school is currently using equipment and space at the TCL campus in Varnville for their welding classes.

Upcoming events include:

- an AI Summit at the Culinary Institute in conjunction with the Hilton Head Island -Bluffton Chamber of Commerce in February; details as they develop.
- Ground breaking event for the Workforce Training Center is tentatively planned for April. She is currently working with Representative Bill Herbkersman's office and the office of Senator Tom Davis for a date on their calendars.
- VP Dukes added the South Coast Cyber Summit will be held in Beaufort in March and will feature TCL's SOC (Security Operation Center). More information as it becomes available.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Gough updated the Commission on the following topics:

- The College has received the real property donation of the acreage next to College-owned property on the island. The donor had one condition; that the donation be recognized by a plaque on the property. There is currently no signage to indicate that TCL owns the property, which is bordered on one side by the Spanish Moss Trail.
- The State Board for Technical Education has taken action to change the formula for distributing state funds to the 16 Colleges. In the 2025-2026 budget cycle, 10% of the state budget will go to performance funding. Dr. Gough will discuss specific targets as that information becomes available.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman Dolyniuk spoke of Representative Herbkersman and Senator Davis's Resolution regarding the naming of the workforce training center for General Brown and the valuable support the College has from the Delegation. Ms. Carns is to be commended for maintaining those important connections. He also noted that the groundbreaking will be held in April and will replace the State of the College event.

Chairman Dolyniuk asked the Commissioners to send him topics for the upcoming March Retreat.

Chairman Dolyniuk would like to recognize Ms. Darien's 15 years of service to the College and asked for a motion to discuss the form that recognition might take. Mrs. Thomas made the motion and Mr. Boozer seconded the motion. Commission vote was unanimous in favor and thus so ordered by Mr. Dolyniuk.

Mr. Duncan asked about the status of the bond repayment to Beaufort County. Dr. Gough said they are working with County Council on the best way to do that and he will let the Commission know how it is resolved.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

Having no further business, Mr. Dolyniuk adjourned the January meeting of the Technical College of the Lowcountry Area Commission at 11:35.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann Cullen

APPROVED:



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Randy K. Dolyniuk  
Chairman



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James Boozer  
Secretary