

**HERKIMER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Regular Meeting – January 27, 2025

Chairman Stalteri called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. in RMCC 282/283.

**Trustees Attending:** Dr. Ainsworth (virtual); Mrs. Crandall (virtual); Mr. Drumm; Mr. Gregory; Ms. Prymas; Mr. Reardon; Mr. Stalteri; Mr. Testa; Mr. Madrid

**Trustees Absent:** Mr. Russell

**In Attendance:** Mr. Laino; Mr. Dutcher; Mr. Oriolo; Ms. Ruffing; Ms. Woudenberg

**Also Present:** Ms. Karen Ayouch, Dean of Academic Affairs - Assessment, Institutional Effectiveness and Research; Jeffrey Steele

Chairman Stalteri called on Mr. Madrid to lead the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Stalteri presented the following consent agenda items for Board approval:

- a. Minutes – November 25, 2024 Regular Meeting
- b. Minutes – December 30, 2024 Special Meeting

Ms. Prymas moved that the consent agenda items for the January 27, 2025 regular meeting be approved.

Mr. Drumm seconded the motion.

Vote-Unanimous. Motion adopted.

Ms. Testa moved that the Financial Statements as of December 31, 2024 be approved.

Mr. Madrid seconded the motion.

Vote-Unanimous. Motion adopted.

**PRESENTATIONS**

Karen Ayouch, Dean of Academic Affairs - Assessment, Institutional Effectiveness and Research, gave an informative presentation on the Economic Value of Herkimer County Community College. Mr. Laino remarked that all 30 community colleges in New York State had this study done, which will help with advocacy. The information will be posted on the college website and will also be shared with the County and NYCCAP.

**OFFICER-IN-CHARGE'S REPORT**

Mr. Laino reported that the spring semester is off to a good start. New furniture, which was purchased through a grant, is in place throughout the campus buildings. Capital projects are moving forward, with much outside construction being done from late spring through December. This will cause disruption and may result in employees working remotely for a period of time. Mr. Laino will hold a public forum to inform the community about what will be taking place and

the anticipated increase in the volume of traffic.

Mr. Laino thanked Ms. Ruffing for the news release regarding the Governor's support for SUNY ASAP|ACE programs, which will empower students with financial, academic and other support to boost graduation rates and close opportunity gaps.

Mr. Laino also spoke about Governor Hochul's proposal to provide a free community college education to adults ages 25-55. Under the Governor's plan, the state will cover tuition, fees, books, and supplies for adults ages 25-55 who pursue an associate degree in high-demand fields like health care, advanced manufacturing, IT and cybersecurity, and sustainability. Adults without a college degree will be able to attend full- or part-time under the Governor's proposal. Further information will be available once the Governor releases more details in her 2025-26 Executive Budget.

A public broadcasting service in Old Forge recently interviewed Mr. Laino about Herkimer College. Mr. Laino also participated in a symposium at SUNY Poly by serving on a panel discussion with other college presidents. Plans are under way to commemorate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Mr. Laino and Jeff Steele, who is a member of the Herkimer County Historical Society, will be on the Herkimer County 250<sup>th</sup> Commission representing the College.

A department heads workshop was recently conducted. Many topics were discussed, including human resources, information technology, purchasing, and communication.

New room signage, which is ADA compliant, now appears throughout the campus. Ms. Becky Ruffing, Ms. Colleen Bentley-Cicccone and Mr. Ed Lynch were recognized for their efforts in this undertaking.

The proposal for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) has been submitted. The work force development position is being reevaluated.

There was great feedback from Dr. Daggett's presentation on Artificial Intelligence. Mr. Laino and Provost Oriolo are working on connecting with a very knowledgeable person on this subject, as this is a topic that needs to be embraced and adjusted to.

#### **Administration and Finance:**

The audit is in process. Ms. Woudenberg distributed and reviewed with the Board a preliminary year end revenue/expense summary as of August 31, 2024, as well as an unaudited statement of changes to unrestricted fund balance for the fiscal year ended August 31, 2024.

#### **Chief Academic Officer Update:**

Provost Oriolo reported on the Medical Coding certificate, which was revised, in consortium with seven other community colleges, through a grant by the Department of Labor.

A full-time faculty member and an adjunct are working on a certificate and associate degree in Artificial Intelligence. The initial work has been completed and is now going through the process. If approved, Herkimer College will be one of the first community colleges to have a

certificate degree in AI.

### **ENROLLMENT REPORT**

Students can still be accepted until January 28<sup>th</sup>. Compared to last year at this same time, the College is on the upward trend. Mr. Dutcher will report concrete numbers at the next board meeting. Housing was budgeted at 260 students and is currently 310.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chairman Stalteri summarized the status of the resolution passed by the Board and other colleges throughout the state to authorize the appointment of, and Execution of Retainer Agreement with, Ingerman Smith, LLP, in regard to the Chancellor's and SUNY's overreach of powers in presidential searches. The Chancellor received a letter from Mr. Stalteri regarding a request for a declaratory ruling.

### **FOUNDATION & AUXILIARY**

**College Foundation:** Mr. Laino has an upcoming meeting with the president of the Foundation Board.

**Housing:** There are two big capital projects that Mr. Laino would like to address in the next two years: 1) new roofs for Reservoir Run (year 1); and 2) take down College Hill Building #3 (year 2).

**NYCCT:** Mr. Gregory updated the board on upcoming NYCCT events.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Gregory moved, at 7:22 p.m., that the board adjourn to Executive Session to discuss, under provisions of Section 105f of Article 7 of the Public Officers Law the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation.

Mr. Drumm seconded the motion.

Vote-Unanimous. Motion adopted.

Mr. Gregory moved, at 8:28 p.m., that the board reconvene.

Mr. Testa seconded the motion.

Vote-Unanimous. Motion adopted.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Drumm moved to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Madrid seconded the motion.

Vote-Unanimous. Motion adopted.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

slh