



**Date:** Monday, February 17, 2025, 4:45 pm  
Spartanburg Community College, Dr. Benjamin Snoddy Boardroom

**Subject:** Minutes from The Spartanburg County Commission for Technical and Community Education Meeting

**Attendees:** Chairman Keller, Secretary Hill, Commissioner Fowler, Commissioner Kennedy, Commissioner O’Neill, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Smith, Commissioner Hamrick, Dr. Mikota, Mr. Burroughs, Dr. Obi, Mrs. Walker, Mr. Aughinbaugh, Mrs. Harris, Ms. James, Ms. Williams

**Absent:** Commissioner Bell, Commissioner King, Commissioner Sarratt, Commissioner Radford, Ms. Hughes, Dr. Satterfield, Mrs. Painter

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Keller called the meeting to order at 4:41 pm.

II. COMMISSION MINUTES

Chairman Keller presented the January 27, 2025, meeting minutes, which previously had been shared with the Members and asked if any Member had edits or questions. Hearing no amendments or objections, Chairman Keller asked for a motion to approve the minutes as written. Commissioner Anderson motioned to approve January 27, 2025, meeting minutes, Commissioner Smith seconded the motion, and all voted aye.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Keller presented the Consent Agenda Items, which previously had been shared with the Members and asked if any Member had edits or questions. Hearing no amendments or objections, Chairman Keller asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items as presented. Commissioner Fowler motioned to approve the Consent Agenda Items, Commissioner Hill seconded the motion, and all voted aye.

IV. PRESIDENT’S REPORT presented by Dr. Michael Mikota, President

Dr. Mikota’s topics of discussion were:

SASCOC 10-year Compliance Report

- Must be submitted by March 1, 2025, then:
  - The off-site reaffirmation committee will meet virtually in April 2025 to review the Compliance Certification
  - SCC will nominate 2 individuals for QEP Lead Evaluator to lead the review of the Quality Enhancement Plan and submit to SASCOC

- In July SASCOC will be sending a vice-president representative to SCC for a preview visit
- On-Site Visit will take place in October
- Some Commissioners will be asked to be included in the October meetings on campus
- Dr. Mikota emphasized that the College is implementing a new system to establish an annual process showing continual assessments and processes
- With the implementation of this process Dr. Mikota wants to see an alignment of the institutional effectiveness with the strategic plan (including the strategic enrollment plan, academic plan, and facilities master plan).

#### Strategic Plan

- Ramping up for a new Strategic Plan
- The previous Strategic Plan was designed to prepare SCC to “Chase”
- Through this new Strategic Plan process, move the College to that next level
- The focus of the plan will be on enhancing the capacity for our institution to advance the highest level of workforce capacity and individual prosperity in this region and beyond

#### Facility Master Plan

- Typically, there should be an Academic Plan and a Strategic Enrollment plan prior to a Facility Master Plan, these plans are in the development stages
- The Academic Plan and a Strategic Enrollment plan will eventually roll into forming future Facility Master Plans
- As the Facility Master Plan comes to life there will be updates to the Commission to allow input/feedback from the Commissioners
- The kickoff for the new plan will be in March 2025

#### *“Watch for these 5 high-impact trends shaping higher education business in 2025”*

- Dr. Mikota spoke to this article from the publication *University of Business* dated January 28, 2025
- Per the author, Nancy Varghese, these are emerging focus areas for higher education as a whole
- Dr. Mikota feels that the College is doing a good job at looking at the vision and setting that vision trajectory but there is a need to focus on execution
- Topic of discussion from the article were:
  - “Institutions get serious about developing nontraditional revenue sources”
  - Moving aggressively to develop micro-credentialing programs – not just traditional academic programs
    - SCC will be launching Data Analytics in the next few months
    - Pilot cohort to begin with future scaling opportunities
    - 2023 report from Captterra found that 41% of U.S. organizations have dropped degree requirements for some jobs and 48% believe alternative credentials can be a worthy substitute for a college degree for some jobs

- This proves the future will be focused more on skills, training and the outcomes
- Spartanburg Community College is currently under construction for this future
- Monetizing assets through innovation hubs
  - The Spark Center is a great example of this
  - Dr. Mikota would like to see the investments in the Spark Centers turn them into innovation hubs to align more with the College mission, objectives and training
  - This is where there needs to be thought into revenue sources
  - The budget was increased from state allocations based on a rolling three-year average by outpacing fellow institutions in the Technical College System
  - The new CHE report shows over that period of time, Spartanburg Community College was up and all other institutions over a 10-year period were down
  - The College needs to be thinking about how to continually adapt in the face of ongoing change
  - In the future there may be a proposal put forth with regards to differential tuition to help offset the College's cost to ensure growth and investment in our faculty, staff and facilities
- Mergers and acquisitions accelerate, making restructuring a major issue
  - Non-traditional revenue sources as well as mergers, acquisitions, and restructuring also need to be a focus
  - Spartanburg Community College has been restructured in the past 4½ years and will continue to be restructured as needed
  - Demographics can kill a college when the cost outweighs the demand which is happening rapidly in the Northeast, and to a lesser extent in the Southeast
  - The demographics in this area, there will be more students graduating high school in the next 5-10 years
  - SCC needs to be aware of this trend so that if there is a time when SCC needs to merge or acquire, SCC will be in a strong position
  - Streamlining operations and reducing costs; return on investments
  - Shared values and corresponding missions
- Continued rise in unionization
  - This should not be an issue in South Carolina
- Politics of Higher Education
  - Legislative changes and opportunities to advance SCC
  - State and Federal policies are reshaping higher education
- Evolving Public Trust
  - SCC currently is affordable and accessible, so this item is something SCC doesn't necessarily have to deal with at the moment
  - The value of higher education remains under scrutiny, with growing calls for greater affordability and transparency

- AI
  - There is the ethical piece of managing AI; Institutions must address ethical concerns
  - There's a lot of investment that can take place in efficiency, effectiveness and outcomes in some of the AI
  - Dr. Mikota is proud that Spartanburg Community College recently launched a partnership with AI body that will bring this company to Spartanburg from London
  - The major impact area that Dr. Mikota feels there must be a focus on at the College is the importance of data, workforce development and then revenue sources
  - AI is not good if there is not a good database; the College must continually focus on databases
- Workforce
  - Workforce development is training individuals to go out into the workplace with the skills to get the jobs
  - The advancements SCC is going to make in the next couple of years will ensure that the College is a power player in all areas of workforce development
  - New technology is going to be a key area for SCC to continue to advance

#### Budget

- Budget season is kicking off
- 20% of SCC's operating budget comes from the State Legislature, and in many years, there are potential delays with regards to the adoption of the budget
- There needs to be a focus on investments over a multi-year period so arrangements for those impactful investments can be made
- This will take a bit of change in how budgets are projected
- When looking at the significant investments that the College needs to make, it is better to see this over a rolling period of time vs. doing one-off's
- The Commission will be presented with the budget in June for approval

#### Investment

- Utilization of some of the College's capital resources over the years on the facilities have been beneficial
- Investment in the infrastructure on the Giles campus is going to have to take place as this is the biggest hub for students
- As there is expansion in programs and the utilization of space at Tyger River, Cherokee, and Downtown, investment will also be needed at these campuses

#### Economic Development

- Dr. Mikota was proud to partner with Mrs. Andrena Powell-Baker, Union Commissioner, to be in Union for the announcement from Eaton
- \$340 million investment which will create 700 new jobs.

- Dr. Mikota had discussions with Eaton prior to the announcement and it was exciting to hear from Eaton that they want this location to be a model for their entire company
- Eaton plans to work strongly with SCC from a training and operation standpoint.
- There is also a new company that will be landing at the Spark Center
- Pharmaceuticals and nutraceuticals
- This company is very innovative, and will be linked to the College by not only launching from the Spark Centers, but to help grow capacity in both new fields of study and economic development
- A partner to create biotech programs
- Utilize the new cleanroom at the Spark Center.
- Commissioner O'Neill and Commissioner Smith have been involved initially in this process
- Another potential company in the microelectronics and semiconductors space is in coordination with the College
- This company will also help the College advance in the engineering field while also attracting other companies in this industry to this area

#### BEA Update

- Met last week and announced the February estimate
- This comes before the Ways and Means first round budget report
- Reported:
  - Revenue growth for the year is 11.1%
  - Higher than expected, expected to be about 5.9%
  - Resulted in collections of \$396,000,000 above expectations
- The House Ways and Means will have a budget as of tomorrow
- A budget with \$666 million in new recurring funds and \$1.25 billion in non-recurring available allocation
- The focus of this year's legislative ask is once again on the new academic administration operations building
- This will start a domino effect with regards to the other buildings on this campus
- And then focus can move on to rounding out the Cherokee County needs

#### Facilities Master Plan

- The College has a strong facilities master plan
- Very important that the facilities master plan aligns with the academic master plan, the strategic enrollment plan and then tie all that into a strategic plan to invest in these operations in the next couple of years

#### President Meetings

- Dr. Mikota has been spending time on all five campuses making himself available to faculty and staff for open conversations
- These meetings have been very positive with good feedback

#### President's List

- Dr. Mikota was proud to announce the creation of the President's List

- 287 students are on the President's List
- A recognition ceremony for those students will be held March 4, 2025
- Criteria - enrolled in 12 semester credit hours, 4.0 GPA during that semester, and no incompletes during that semester

This concluded Dr. Mikota's report. The floor was open for questions, none were put forth.

Chairman Keller asked for a motion to approve the President's Report. Commissioner Fowler motioned to approve the President's Report, Commissioner Anderson seconded the motion, and all voted aye.

V. FINANCIAL REPORT presented by Ms. Melissa Hughes, Director, Finance

Revenues:

Curriculum = \$28,378,571 which reflects 84% of the budgeted amount  
 Continuing Education = \$1,025,323 which reflects 57% of the budgeted amount  
 Auxiliary = \$1,514,097 which reflects 106% of the budgeted amount  
 State = \$15,894,213 which reflects 115% of the budgeted amount  
 State = Cherokee Allocation = \$1,307,816 which reflects 100% of the budgeted amount  
 County = \$6,699,095 which reflects 49% of the budgeted amount  
 Other = \$1,035,486 which reflects 80% of the budgeted amount  
 Total Revenue = \$55,854,600 which reflects 83% of the budgeted amount

Expenses:

Full-time Salaries = \$14,334,866, which reflects 54% spent of the budgeted amount  
 Full-time Fringe = \$6,768,421 which reflects 56% spent of the budgeted amount  
 Part-time Salaries = \$2,845,724 which reflects 41% spent of the budgeted amount  
 Part-time Fringe = \$711,431 which reflects 41% spent of the budgeted amount  
 O&M Expenses = \$10,188,239 which reflects 52% spent of the budgeted amount  
 Encumbrances = \$2,974,285 which reflects 0% spent of the budgeted amount  
 Total Expenses = \$37,822,966 which reflects 56% spent of the budgeted amount

As of January 31, 2025, SCC received 83% of the budgeted revenues, which is a revenue increase of \$5,222,185 in comparison to January 31, 2024. There are no major issues regarding the budget. Expenditure as a percentage of the budget was 56%, which is 4% less than the previous year.

Recommendation: The Commission accepts this as information.

At this time the floor was opened for questions, none were put forth. Chairman Keller asked for a motion to approve the Financial Report. Commissioner O'Neill motioned to approve the Financial Report, Commissioner Kennedy seconded the motion, and all voted aye.

## VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❖ April 1, 2025 – Deadline to order regalia for graduation. Contact Donna if you need new regalia.
- ❖ Golf Tournament, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Carolina Country Club
- ❖ SCC = i2 Spring Fling, April 26, 2025, Cherokee County Campus
- ❖ The Crit, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Downtown Spartanburg
- ❖ An additional handout for the Spartanburgers April games was also distributed to the Commissioners

At this time Commissioner O’Neill asked for the floor before the adjournment. Commissioner O’Neill stated, “I was still processing the President's Report, and this may be a bit out of order, but I just want to thank you, Dr. Mikota, for the way that you have dug in with life sciences and technology with economic development efforts. You know, Commissioner Smith and I have talked often about how we have to grow as a community with diversifying the workforce here, and I've never met anyone that has committed at the level that you have to talking about nutraceuticals and semiconductor manufacturing and things that are way beyond what other communities are even attempting to try to do, let alone succeeding. I know that you've put a lot of personal time and effort into economic development, especially the nutraceutical company. We traveled to Tennessee to meet with the company. Commissioner Smith and I really appreciated the opportunity to learn more about semiconductor cooling. I mean, you hear about it on the news and in other circles, but to be with someone who truly understands the physics of it made me really wish I'd paid attention in science class in high school. I suppose it all comes around between chemistry and physics. I'm learning now how all these things fit together and really appreciate the commitment that you've made, you and your team. This is unexpected at the Community College level. I'm here on the Commission, so I advocate for the Community College, and I speak highly of it, but it's so unexpected to have a president like you who doubles down in this space and just very grateful for the time and effort that you've personally put into all of it. We couldn't have these wins without you.”

Dr. Mikota thanked Commissioner O’Neill for her comments. Dr. Mikota stated that as a native of this area he works extremely hard every day so that Spartanburg Community College will be the best, and so while Dr. Mikota is at this college, SCC will strive to be the best no matter who the College has to stand up against. In the ever-changing world of higher education, Dr. Mikota is ready to set an example for the other institutions as to how to handle the challenges. Challenges can only be resolved by tackling those issues and making it happen. Dr. Mikota stated that he received a lot of questions about why a Community College would even think about offering certain courses/programs? Dr. Mikota feels that this is the future of higher education. Dr. Mikota appreciated and thanked Commissioner O’Neill for her comments.

Chairman Keller thanked Commissioner O’Neill for her comments. At this time the floor was again opened for questions. None were put forth.

## VII. ADJOURN

Chairman Keller asked for a motion to Adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Hamrick motioned to Adjourn. Commissioner Fowler seconded the motion. All voted aye, and the meeting Adjourned at 5:02 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tracey Hill". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Respectfully Submitted by:".

Mrs. Tracey Hill, Secretary