



## The Spartanburg County Commission for Technical and Community Education Minutes

**Date:** Monday, January 12, 2026, 4:30 pm

**Location:** Dr. Benjamin Snoddy Boardroom

### ***Attendees:***

Chairman Keller, Vice Chairman Bell, Commissioner K. Fowler, Commissioner Smith, Commissioner Sarratt, Commissioner Kennedy, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Hill, Commissioner Hamrick, Commissioner J. Fowler, Commissioner O'Neill, Commissioner Powell-Baker, Dr. Mikota, Mr. Burroughs, Mrs. Walker, Mr. Aughinbaugh, Dr. Williams, Mrs. Harris, Dr. Obi, Mrs. Painter, Ms. Schultz, Ms. Hughes, Dr. Brothers

### ***Absent:***

Commissioner King

### **Call to Order**

Chairman Keller called the meeting to order at 4:38 pm.

### **Approval of Previous Minutes**

Chairman Keller presented the minutes from the December 11, 2025, meeting, which had been previously shared with the Members. Hearing no amendments or objections, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes as written.

Motion: Commissioner Anderson

Second: Commissioner Bell

Vote: All in favor

### **Consent Agenda Items**

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.

Motion: Commissioner K. Fowler

Second: Commissioner Anderson

Vote: All in favor

## Academic Update

### Presented by Dr. William Brothers

Dr. Brothers introduced a discussion on the proposed Criminal Justice Associate of Applied Science degree, expressing strong enthusiasm for the program. The overview of the program will highlight strong leadership and the program's potential.

The current option for students is a General Technology degree with a Criminal Justice emphasis, consisting of 24 credit hours of criminal justice courses, 25 hours of general education, and 13 hours of general credits. While beneficial, the program is limited in the number of criminal justice courses offered. The proposed Criminal Justice Associate of Applied Science degree would increase criminal justice coursework to 42 credit hours within a 67-credit-hour program overall. This expanded emphasis would provide students with a broader range of criminal justice topics and enhanced learning opportunities, generating strong enthusiasm for the new program.

Leadership for the proposed program is a key strength. Melissa Morton, Department Chair, Social Sciences Division, and Eddie McCall, Program Director, Criminal Justice, have prior experience establishing and leading criminal justice programs at other institutions and are providing direction. An advisory committee has been assembled with a broad range of professional backgrounds, including practitioners, school resource officers, and individuals with sheriff's office experience. This diverse representation is expected to support program development and instructional relevance.

There is strong growth potential based on prior experience overseeing successful criminal justice programs, including one at Greenville Technical College where enrollment regularly exceeded 200 students and generated significant annual revenue. Criminal justice programs are described as high-demand, flexible, and relatively low-cost.

Conservative enrollment projections estimate 90 students in the first year with approximately 33% growth by year three. The program will utilize a mix of delivery methods, with a significant portion of courses offered online and with some required face-to-face instruction. This will allow for future expansion across multiple campuses.

The anticipated growth in protective services, as well as projected industry growth is approximately 4% over the next five years which is consistent with state and national averages. Criminal justice is a broad field offering diverse career pathways beyond patrol, including corrections and state agency roles. Graduates are expected to have access to jobs that provide a living wage, with median income levels comparable to other local career fields.

While the proposed Associate of Applied Science degree is not primarily designed for transfer, there is potential for future 2+2 articulation agreements. The primary objective of the program is workforce preparation and employment upon graduation.

Based on prior experience, Dr. Brothers expressed strong confidence in the program's success, citing solid leadership, demonstrated demand, and existing institutional capacity. The committee's progress has accelerated the proposed launch timeline, with the program now targeted to begin in Fall 2026 instead of Fall 2027.

At this time the floor was opened for questions, none were put forth.

Chairman Keller asked for a motion to approve the proposed Criminal Justice Associate of Applied Science degree.

Motion: Commissioner Hamrick

Second: Commissioner O'Neill

Vote: All in favor

## **Financial Report**

**Presented by Ms. Melissa Hughes, Director, Finance**

Revenues:

As of the end of December, the College has received approximately 71% of total projected annual revenues, reflecting strong progress midway through the fiscal year.

### **Curriculum Revenue**

Curriculum remains the primary driver of institutional revenue. As of December 31, approximately 80% of anticipated curriculum revenue has been received. This total includes all fall semester revenue and a substantial portion of spring semester revenue. While registration continued into January, the December figures already reflect the majority of spring enrollment.

### **Continuing Education and Workforce Development**

Continuing Education and Workforce Development has received approximately 75% of its projected annual revenue, indicating a strong start and positive enrollment trends.

### **Auxiliary Enterprises**

Auxiliary revenues, which include bookstore sales and vending, have exceeded budget projections. This fiscal year represents the first full year of fully outsourced textbook sales, and revenues have surpassed the auxiliary budget established for the year.

### **System Office Allocation**

The College has received 100% of its System Office allocation, slightly exceeding initial

projections. Additionally, the System Office provided its required contribution toward the state-mandated employee bonus.

### **State and County Allocations**

- The State Cherokee allocation has been received in full.
- Union County has provided approximately \$122,000 to date.
- Cherokee County has provided approximately \$130,000 to date.
- The College is preparing to submit its first funding request to Spartanburg County.

### **Other Revenues**

Other revenues are primarily driven by interest earnings from the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP). Through December, interest income totaled approximately \$919,000, significantly contributing to overall revenue performance.

### **Expenses**

Personnel costs continue to be the primary driver of expenditures.

### **Full-Time Salaries**

Full-time salaries total approximately \$13.4 million, with 46% spent through the end of December. This category includes the state-mandated employee bonus that was provided to all eligible full-time employees in November, which had been discussed in prior meetings.

### **Full-Time Fringe Benefits**

Full-time fringe benefits are approximately \$6.5 million, with 48% expended year-to-date.

### **Part-Time Salaries and Fringe Benefits**

- Part-time salaries are approximately 35% spent.
- Part-time fringe benefits are closely aligned at approximately 34% spent.

### **Operating Expenses and Encumbrances**

Operating expenses are approximately 41% expended through December. Encumbrances have decreased by approximately \$230,000, reflecting effective budget management and completed obligations.

### **Total Expenses**

Total expenditures through December are approximately \$35.8 million, representing about 49% of the annual budget.

## **Overall Financial Position**

As of December 31, the College has received approximately 71% of its budgeted revenues, representing a \$3.8 million increase compared to the same period in the previous fiscal year. No major financial issues have been identified, and expenditures are tracking appropriately relative to revenues.

Based on the review of revenues and expenses, administration is recommending acceptance of the financial report as information.

The floor was opened for questions. Commissioner O'Neill inquired if there are areas that are significantly different from this time last year. Ms. Hughes pointed out that curriculum revenue is trending as expected but auxiliary is more than what had been budgeted. More interest from the local government investment pool has been collected.

The floor was opened for additional questions, none were put forth.

Chairman Keller asked for a Motion to approve the financials.

Motion: Commissioner Sarratt

Second: Commissioner Kennedy

Vote: All in favor

## **President's Report**

### **Presented by Dr. Mikota**

Dr. Mikota opened by noting that the College's financial position is stronger than initially anticipated and expressed appreciation for beginning the year on a positive note. He stated that fiscal year 2026 presents significant opportunities for continued growth and advancement. Institutional growth requires both strategic visibility and thoughtful positioning to ensure long-term impact.

Dr. Mikota expressed the importance of advocacy and relationship-building at the local and state levels, it is essential to securing the resources necessary to advance institutional priorities.

The Governor's proposed budget was reviewed, noting that while it has not yet been considered by the House or Senate, several elements could impact the College. Recent increases in state funding were the result of recurring funds received last year and proportional growth within the State Technical College System funding formula. However, the Governor's proposed budget does not include a recurring base funding increase for the State Technical College System. The System Office is requesting a \$38.1 million increase in recurring funds, which would equate to approximately \$2.5 million for the College if approved, based on current enrollment. A final determination would likely not be known until later in the legislative session.

Also noted was that the proposed budget includes \$20 million in non-recurring funding for high-demand job skills training equipment. The System originally requested \$75 million, which would have resulted in approximately \$5 million for the College, and emphasized the significance of one-time equipment funding for instructional programs.

The House Ways and Means Committee will begin budget hearings the following week, with Senate consideration expected in February. Updates will be provided to the Commission as the process progresses.

The College's Legislative Priorities Executive Summary was presented and the Commission members were encouraged to review and utilize the document in support of advocacy efforts. Operational funding is received through the State Technical College System, while capital funding for facilities is pursued directly by the College.

Dr. Mikota highlighted the Ledbetter Building replacement project, noting that Phase I approval has been received. The existing building has exceeded its useful life, and plans are underway for a replacement facility on the adjacent site. Maintenance, Repair, and Replacement (MRR) funds have been redirected to support Phase I but will not fully fund the project. The College is requesting \$10 million in state capital funding for the Ledbetter replacement, noting that the request has been submitted in prior years but has not yet received a line item. Dr. Mikota identified members of the House Ways and Means Committee who may be instrumental in advancing the request and encouraged Commission members to provide support where appropriate. Also discussed was the need to restore MRR funding used to support the Ledbetter project, emphasizing the importance of these funds for ongoing infrastructure, deferred maintenance, and facility upkeep. Maintenance needs exist across campus, including newer facilities, and that some MRR funding is included in the Governor's proposed budget. The College is also requesting state support for the Cherokee County campus expansion, emphasizing the importance of advancing from Phase I to Phase II to allow broader use of Maintenance, Repair, and Replacement (MRR) funds across all campuses.

Dr. Mikota spoke about the continued expansion in Union County, including plans for transition of the Union campus to the College, pending legal review. Upon completion, the College anticipates implementing approximately \$4.8 million as part of a \$5 million investment plan, with additional expansion requested due to increased workforce demand in energy and transportation-related training.

There was emphasis put on the importance of legislative advocacy on both the House and Senate sides, identifying key committee members and encouraging Commission support for College priorities.

For the upcoming fiscal year budget, the College will be using a zero-based budgeting approach to align resources with the new strategic plan. The College has reduced core expenses per FTE student despite enrollment growth, reflecting improved operational efficiency.

Development, reporting acquisition of approximately 20 acres of property, planned demolition of an existing structure, and advancement into Phase II planning Cherokee County campus update was presented. Plans for a future SPARK Center and a new academic and administrative building to support workforce training, student services, and community partnerships were also discussed. Dr. Mikota was pleased to announce the

receipt of a \$200,000 contribution from AT&T in support of the Cherokee SPARK Center initiative.

At this time the floor was opened for questions; none were put forth.

Chairman Keller asked for a Motion to approve the President's Report.

Motion: Commissioner K. Fowler

Second: Commissioner Bell

Vote: All in favor

## Resolutions

### Presented by Dr. Mikota

Two resolutions were presented to the Commission requesting authorization to proceed to Phase II for planned facilities at the Cherokee County campus. The resolutions align with information previously presented to the Commission.

The first resolution authorized Phase II for a 55,000 square foot Academic Building, with an estimated total project cost of \$37 million. Of this amount, \$30 million is expected to be funded through state proviso funds, with the remaining balance to be funded through future state appropriations and/or other available resources.

The second resolution authorized Phase II for a 70,000 square foot Spark Center, with an estimated project cost of \$21 million dollars. Funding sources include \$13 million from state proviso funds, \$5 million from Cherokee County, \$600,000 provided from grants, and \$2.7 million with funding through future state appropriations and/or other available resources.

Dr. Mikota requested Commission approval to move both projects forward to Phase II.

At this time the floor was opened for questions; none were put forth.

Chairman Keller asked for a Motion to approve the Resolutions to move both projects forward to Phase II.

Motion: Commissioner Hamrick

Second: Commissioner Sarratt

Vote: All in favor

## **Announcements**

**Presented by Chairman Keller**

2030 Strategic Plan Launch, Tracy J. Gaines Auditorium, Friday, January 16th, 2026  
Two Sessions - 9:00-10:30am: Faculty and Academic Employees or 1:30am-1:00pm:  
Non-Academic Employees

## **Adjourn**

Chairman Keller asked for a motion to Adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Commissioner K. Fowler

Second: Commissioner Anderson

Vote: All in favor

Meeting adjourned at 5:36 pm.

**Respectfully submitted by:**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tracey Hill".

Mrs. Tracey Hill, Secretary