SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
ALUMNI ROOM, BROOKHAVEN GYMNASIUM
AMMERMAN CAMPUS, SELDEN, NY
AUGUST 13, 2026

The meeting was held on Thursday, August 13, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. in the Alumni room of the Brookhaven Gymnasium, in Selden, NY.

PRESENT:

Shirley Coverdale	Chair
Jerome Bost	Trustee
Michael Arens	Trustee
John Dolan	Trustee
Wayne Horsley	Trustee
Belinda Pagdanganan	Trustee
Kevin Peterman	Trustee
Nova Ventura-Rios	Student Trustee
Dr. Edward Bonahue	President
Ashley Pope	General Counsel
Mary Lou Araneo	V.P. for Institutional Advancement
Shady Azzam-Gomez	V.P. for Information Technology Services
Dr. Patty Munsch	V.P. for Student Affairs
Angelica Rivera	V.P. for Human Resources
Kaliah Greene	V.P. for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Dr. Lauren Tacke-Cushing	V.P for Academic Affairs
Christina Vargas	A.V.P. for Opportunity & Belonging
Dr. Donna Ciampa	Interim Executive Dean, Michael J. Grant Campus
Dr. Mary Reese	Interim Executive Dean, Eastern Campus
Sean Tvelia	Executive Dean, Ammerman Campus
Holmer Avellan	Controller, Business and Financial Affairs

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The meeting of the Board of Trustees was convened at 4:00 p.m., with a quorum of eight Trustees physically present. Chair Coverdale noted Trustee Gordon's absence was excused in accordance with the Board's Bylaws.

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President Bonahue and the Board formally recognized outgoing Trustee Kevin O'Connor. President Bonahue shared that Trustee O'Connor was appointed to the Board of Trustees by Governor Cuomo in 2018. During his years of service, Kevin served as a member of the Budget Committee for a few years, and then became chair of the Budget Committee in 2021 until this year, 2026. He served as Secretary of the Board from 2024 to 2026, and then briefly as Second Vice Chair. President Bonahue noted that Trustee O'Connor's background in banking and finance was crucial to strengthening the College's financial position over the years. As a leader in the business community, he has advocated for workforce and economic development, which is part of the College's mission to serve students and at the same time the business community and employers as well. As an alumnus of Suffolk County Community College, he consistently remembered that the students are ultimately the most important stakeholders, and has kept that in the forefront as a member of the Board. Dr. Bonahue thanked Trustee O'Connor for his years of service and congratulated him on his new job.

Trustee O'Connor expressed it has been a wonderful eight years on the Board; however, he shared he was disappointed by recent events going on and reminded everyone that the mission of the College was to serve the students.

Trustee O'Connor was presented with an award in appreciation of his years of service. Chair Coverdale and members of the Board also shared their appreciation for Trustee O'Connor's years of service to the College.

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Chair Coverdale moved to the swearing in of new Trustees Belinda Pagdanganan, Kevin Peterman and Nova Ventura-Rios. President Bonahue welcomed the Trustees to the Board and gave an overview of each Trustee's background and experience. Suffolk County Clerk Vincent Puleo swore in Trustees Pagdanganan, Peterman, and Ventura-Rios. After the signing of the oath of office, photos were taken.

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Chair Coverdale asked Carol Wickliffe-Campbell, Chief of Staff and Interim Associate Vice President for Workforce Development, for the recognition of guests. She introduced and welcomed Terry Maccarrone, Ben Zwirn, Joan Vaccaro, Desiree Evangelista and Joe Callari from the Suffolk County Association of Municipal Employees (AME).

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Chair Coverdale introduced Ben Zwirn and Terry Maccarrone as registered speakers for public comment.

Mr. Maccarrone first congratulated and welcomed newly appointed Trustee Kevin Peterman, newly elected Student Trustee Nova Ventura-Rios, and returning Trustee Bel Pagdanganan. He expressed AME's enthusiasm for working with the Board of Trustees and wished the new and returning members productive terms in service to Suffolk County Community College. He also thanked outgoing Trustees Kevin O'Connor, Gemma deLeon-Lopresti, as well as outgoing Student Trustee Nathan Ermmarino, for their years of dedicated service to the College. In addition, he extended appreciation to outgoing Guild President Sean Tvelia, and congratulated incoming Guild President Stephen Clark on his new leadership role. Mr. Maccarrone's remarks focused on recognizing Maggie Eng-Salvaggio, College Gifts Coordinator for the Suffolk County Community College Foundation. He noted her service to the College for 11 years, and praised her for her exceptional contributions through her work with the Foundation, where she oversees major fundraising events and initiatives. Mr. Maccarrone highlighted her success in securing a major donation to establish a Center for Science Education at the Ammerman Campus, obtaining naming rights sponsorship from Empire Automotive Group for the new Automotive Technology Center on the Grant Campus, and securing a partnership and donation from Genesis, which brought Hyundai Genesis online training into the College's automotive curriculum. He shared

AME's pride in Maggie's accomplishments and thanked her for her continued dedication and service to the College.

Mr. Zwirn began by congratulating Sean Tvelia on his appointment as Executive Dean and Stephen Clark on becoming the new President of the Guild. He welcomed Trustee Kevin Peterman, noting his appointment by the Governor and highlighting their long history of working together when Trustee Peterman served as Faculty Association President. He praised the Faculty Association's leadership and advocacy, emphasizing its important role in helping secure state funding, capital projects, and legislative support for the College. Mr. Zwirn also acknowledged several longtime colleagues and welcomed new Student Trustee Nova Ventura-Rios, while recognizing outgoing Student Trustee Nathan Ermmarino for his active engagement, leadership, and participation in advocacy efforts in Albany. He then addressed Student Trustee Ventura-Rios and stressed the importance of the student trustee role, encouraging her not to be intimidated and reminding her that she is an equal member of the Board. He emphasized that she brings a unique and valuable student perspective and should actively ask questions and help ensure Board decisions positively impact students. Mr. Zwirn shared a concern he had mentioned at the previous Board meeting regarding the creation of an Assistant General Counsel position. He noted that the proposed salary was approximately $165,000 plus benefits, while the College had reportedly spent less than $20,000 on outside legal counsel for specialized work. He questioned whether creating the new position was necessary given other institutional needs, such as addressing HVAC issues across the campuses. Mr. Zwirn said his concern was not necessarily the outcome, but whether Board members had sufficient information before voting. He concluded by encouraging Trustees, especially the Student Trustee, to ask thoughtful questions, carefully evaluate proposals, and remain engaged in the decision-making process.

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Chair Coverdale requested a motion to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2026, Board of Trustees meeting. Trustee Dolan so moved, Student Trustee Ventura-Rios seconded, and Trustee Peterman abstained. The motion to approve the minutes was approved (7-0-1).

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Chair Coverdale then introduced Controller for Business and Financial Affairs, Holmer Avellan, to present the College’s financial report. Controller Avellan presented the College's financial report for the period ending July 31, 2026, and noted that the College was entering the final month of fiscal year 2025-2026 and projecting a stronger-than-budgeted financial position. Tuition revenue is projected to exceed budget by $3.4M (4%), driven largely by stronger than expected summer enrollment and tuition collections. Total revenues from all sources are projected to come in $4.3M (2%) above budget. Expenditures are trending below budget. Personnel services and employee benefits, which together comprise approximately 90% of the College's budget, continue to be closely monitored. Personnel costs are trending $740K (less than 1%) above budget. Employee benefits are projected to be $2.8M (4.1%) below budget. Combined, these categories are expected to generate approximately $2M in savings. Overall, College expenditures are projected to finish $1.7M (just under 1%) below budget. With revenues exceeding projections and expenditures remaining below budget, the College now expects to increase its fund balance reserves by approximately $1.6M by year-end. This projection includes the College's customary $1M annual write-off for uncollectible accounts. The result represents a significant turnaround from the original budget, which anticipated a $4.5M deficit and use of reserves. The projected year-end fund balance will be approximately $28.2M, about 13% of the College's adopted budget.

Mr. Avellan noted that this is the first time since the post-COVID period in FY 21/22 that the College is positioned to add to its reserves.

In regards to the FY 25/26-year end audit, the College's external auditors have begun preliminary work for the fiscal year-end audit. The College is implementing new accounting standards: GASB 103, involving changes to financial statement presentation and management discussion reporting; and GASB 104, requiring additional disclosures related to intangible and capital assets. The College expects compliance with these standards and will submit its annual report to SUNY by October 31, 2026.

Mr. Avellan reported that the 2026–27 College operating budget has been approved by the Suffolk County Legislature and signed by County Executive Ed Romaine. The budget was submitted to SUNY on August 3, 2026, with final SUNY approval expected in September. Upon approval, the College will receive an additional $1.384M in state funding: $928K restricted for expansion of high-demand programs through SUNY Reconnect and $456K unrestricted and added to the College's base state aid.

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President Bonahue provided a detailed overview of College Resolutions 2026.43 to 2026.50. Discussion continued with further explanation of the Liberty Partnership Program.

Chair Coverdale called for approval of College Resolution No. 2026.43–2026.47 and Resolutions 2026.49–2026.50. Trustee Bost so moved, and Trustee Dolan seconded. The motion to approve College Resolutions 2026.43–2026.47 and Resolutions 2026.49–2026.50 was approved (8-0).

RESOLUTION NO. 2026.43 – Authorizing an Increase to the Hourly Wage Rate for the Employee Titles of Part-Time Registered Nurse and Part-Time Call Center Representative

WHEREAS, Suffolk County Community College employs part-time Registered Nurses who provide critical support to the operations of the Campus Health Services Offices, and

WHEREAS, the College employs part-time Call Center Representatives to staff the college-wide, centralized call center to respond to questions related to admissions, advisement, financial aid, registration, cashier, and general inquiries from the public, and

WHEREAS, it is recommended that the hourly wage rates for such part-time Registered Nurses and part-time Call Center Representatives be increased to recruit and retain qualified employees and serve the needs of the College community, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the hourly wage rate for the employee title of part-time Registered Nurse be increased from $32.00 per hour to $34.00 per hour, effective 9/1/2026, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the hourly wage rate for the employee title of part-time Call Center Representative be increased from $18.00 per hour to $19.00 per hour, effective 9/1/2026.

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RESOLUTION NO. 2026.44 – Approving Monthly Sponsor Services for Suffolk County Community College

WHEREAS, the State University of New York Regulation No. 602.7 requires Suffolk County Community College Board of Trustees to review and approve all Sponsor provided services and their estimated value in advance of the service being rendered, and

WHEREAS, the regulation also requires the approval of the payment of each Sponsor Service satisfactorily performed, and

WHEREAS, health insurance is considered a Sponsor Service, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the health insurance payment to the County of Suffolk in the amount of $2,552,304.18 for the month of June 2026, and $3,577,343.33 for the month of July 2026 *(Attachment I)* is hereby approved by the Board of Trustees.

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RESOLUTION 2026.45 – Amending the 2025–2026 College Operating Budget to Reflect an Increase in the Grant Award from the New York State Education Department, for the Liberty Partnerships Program (LLP)

WHEREAS, the 2025-2026 College operating budget provides $522,864, including indirect costs, for a grant award the New York State Education Department, for the Liberty Partnership Program (LPP), and

WHEREAS, the grant award has been increased by an additional amount of $14,470 bringing the total amount of the grant award to $537,334, and

WHEREAS, the LPP at Suffolk County Community College represents a cooperative effort between the College and the Longwood Central School District to provide a unique, comprehensive and supportive environment for at-risk students, and

WHEREAS, no matching funds are required, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the 2025–2026 College operating budget be amended to reflect an increase in the amount of $14,470, including indirect costs, from the New York State Education Department, for the Liberty Partnerships Program, and the College President, or his designee, is authorized to execute any necessary documentation, including a contract amendment with the administering agency, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel.

Project Director: Elizabeth Altman-Giron, LPP Director

Note: No full-time personnel for amendment
In-kind contribution required

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RESOLUTION NO. 2026.46 – Amending the 2025–2026 College Operating Budget for a Grant Award Increase from the County of Suffolk, Department of Health Services, to Receive Funds for a Mental Hygiene/Opioid Settlement Funding Contract

WHEREAS, the 2025–2026 College operating budget provides $573,383 of remaining funds from the County of Suffolk, a municipal corporation of the State of New York, acting through its duly constituted Department of Health Services, for the distribution of the Mental Hygiene/Opioid Settlement Funding Contract, for the period of September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2026, and

WHEREAS, the grant award has been increased by $101,168, bringing the total amount of the grant award to $674,551, and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to amend the 2025–2026 College operating budget in the amount of $101,168 to provide for the increase in the grant award, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the 2025–2026 College operating budget be amended to reflect an increase in the amount of $101,168 from the County of Suffolk, a municipal corporation of the State of New York, acting through its duly constituted Department of Health Services, for the distribution of the Mental Hygiene/Opioid Settlement Funding Contract, and the College President, or his designee, is authorized to execute any necessary documentation, including a contract amendment with the administering agency, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel.

Project Director: Dr. Hector Sepulveda, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

Note: No full-time positions

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RESOLUTION NO. 2026.47 – Accepting a Grant Award from the NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) for a Project Entitled "Opioid Settlement Funds – Addiction Professionals Community and Technical Colleges Scholarship Program"

WHEREAS, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant in the amount of $95,052 from the NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) for a project entitled, "Opioid Settlement Funds - Addiction Professionals Community and Technical Colleges Scholarship Program," for the period of August 1, 2026 through July 31, 2028, and

WHEREAS, the program will provide tuition and fees scholarships along with paid internship opportunities, and

WHEREAS, matching funds are not required, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that a grant in the amount of $95,052 from the NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports for a project entitled, "Opioid Settlement Funds -Addiction Professionals Community and Technical Colleges Scholarship Program," for the period of August 1, 2026 through July 31, 2028, is hereby accepted, and the College President, or his designee, is authorized and empowered to execute any necessary documentation, including a contract with the administering agency, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2025–2026 and 2026–2027 College operating budgets are hereby amended as necessary to reflect the applicable portions of this grant award.

Project Director: William Rule, Adjunct Associate Professor of Addiction Studies

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RESOLUTION NO. 2026.49 – Amending the 2025-2026 College Operating Budget for a Grant Award Increase from the Suffolk Community College Foundation in Support of Suffolk County Community College's Johnson Controls College Partnership Program

WHEREAS, the Suffolk Community College Foundation (Foundation) has received additional funding in the amount of $100,000 from Johnson Controls, Inc. for the 2025–2026 school year to advance excellence in workforce preparation by engaging HVAC, electrical technology, and fire safety professionals from Johnson Controls, Inc. in support of Suffolk County Community College's HVAC Program, and

WHEREAS, the Foundation Resolution No. 2025 F.05 has authorized a portion of the additional funding in the amount of $45,000 to be transferred to Suffolk County Community College to support 25% of the cost of a full time Professional Assistant in HVAC, including fringe benefits, and up to 1100 hours for Student Aides to work in HVAC instructional laboratories, bringing the total amount of the grant award to $155,364 and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to amend the 2025–2026 College operating budget in the amount of $45,000 to provide for the increase in the grant award, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that a grant award increase in the amount of $45,000 from the Suffolk Community College Foundation, which constitutes a portion of the grant award increase received by the Foundation in support of Suffolk County Community College's HVAC Program for the 2025–2026 school year, is hereby accepted, and the College President, or his designee, is hereby authorized and empowered to execute any necessary documentation, including a contract with the awarding and/or administering entity, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2025–2026 College operating budget be amended as necessary to reflect the applicable portion of the grant award increase.

Project Director: James Leopard, Instructor, HVAC

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RESOLUTION NO. 2026.50 – Approving Annual Sponsor Services for Suffolk County Community College for FY2025–2026

WHEREAS, the State University of New York Regulation No. 602.7 requires the Suffolk County Community College Board of Trustees to review and approve services provided by its Sponsor, the County of Suffolk, and

WHEREAS, the regulation also requires the approval of each Sponsor Service satisfactorily performed, and

WHEREAS, Workers Compensation, Liability Insurance and Fleet Services are considered Sponsor Services, and

WHEREAS, the College is also responsible for costs related to the administration of the Sponsor Services, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the following charges for Sponsor Services totaling $2,009,254.61 for the College's 2025–2026 fiscal year are hereby approved by the Board of Trustees:

Workman's Compensation	$ 914,239.15
Liability Insurance	$ 695,189.58
Administrative Charges	$ 241,414.31
Fleet Services	$ 18,496.09
NYSLRS Payment	$ 139,915.48
TOTAL	**$2,009,254.61**

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Chair Coverdale called for approval of College Resolution No. 2026.48. Trustee Peterman so moved, and Trustee Dolan seconded, Trustee Arens and Student Trustee Ventura-Rios abstained. The motion to approve College Resolutions 2026.48 was approved. (6-0-2).

RESOLUTION NO. 2026.48 – Accepting a Grant Award Subcontract Sponsored by the Research Foundation for the State University of New York for a Project Entitled "PEPNYS2023: Peconic Estuary EPF Lineout"

WHEREAS, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant award subcontract in the amount of $12,000 sponsored by the Research Foundation for The State University of New York, for a project entitled "PEPNYS2023: Peconic Estuary EPF Lineout," for the period of January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026, and

WHEREAS, the project will provide funds to assist the Peconic Estuary Partnership (PEP) a non-profit organization associated with SUNY Research Foundation at SBU, in monitoring alewife and glass eel populations at the fish pass on the Peconic River in Grangebel Park and Woodhull Dam, and

WHEREAS, matching funds are not required, and

RESOLVED, that a grant award, in the amount of $12,000 sponsored by the SUNY Research Foundation at Stony Brook University (SBU), for a project entitled "PEPNYS2023: Peconic Estuary EPF Lineout," for the period of January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026, is hereby accepted, and the College President, or his designee, is authorized and empowered to execute a any necessary documentation, including a contract with the administering agency, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2025–2026 and 2026–2027 College operating budgets are hereby amended as necessary to reflect the applicable portions of this grant award.

Project Director: Dr. Kellie McCartin, Associate Professor, Marine Science

Note: No full-time personnel

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Chair Coverdale called for the Committee reports.

Trustee Pagdanganan reported for the Student Success Committee. The Committee met on August 12th to further understand the role of the College's marketing in support of student success. Associate Dean Drew Fawcett provided the College's comprehensive marketing strategy and how it supports enrollment, retention, and student engagement. He highlighted the College's multi-channel approach, which includes digital advertising, social media, streaming TV, search marketing, email campaigns, website promotions, public relations, print, radio, and out-of-home advertising. Digital marketing now accounts for the largest of the marketing mix, and is heavily data-driven, with campaigns targeted to prospective students, current students, parents, adult learners, workforce participants, and community stakeholders. One of the key discussion points during the meeting was marketing's role in driving awareness and engagement, while enrollment management is responsible for converting interest into enrollment through recruitment. The use of analytics, landing pages, and Slade CRM to track prospective student engagement and support enrollment pipelines. The retention of focused campaigns targeting students who have not yet registered for upcoming semesters and the ongoing assessment of marketing effectiveness through engagement metrics, perception studies, and strategic reallocation of resources are the most impactful channels. The committee also discussed sharing a version of the presentation with the full board of Trustees, potentially during the upcoming retreat.

Trustee Pagdanganan reported for the Foundation. The Foundation continues to make a lasting impact by investing in student success and strengthening educational opportunities across the College's campuses. The Foundation established a $26,000 endowed scholarship in memory of Dr. Peter Spina, a longtime College instructor and former Executive Dean of the Ammerman Campus. The endowed scholarship will provide lasting financial support to students while honoring Dr. Spina's legacy of leadership and dedication to higher education. In addition, a $1,000 scholarship was created to benefit the Eastern Campus student majoring in healthcare studies, helping to reduce financial barriers for students pursuing careers in the healthcare field. A transformative $70,000 donation was secured to establish the Center for Science Education at the Ammerman Campus, creating new opportunities to enhance education and student learning. The Foundation also received a $50,000 in donated artwork.

Sean Tvelia, Chair of the Association reported for the Association Committee. The Association Board of Directors met on June 23rd. The Association is reporting revenues of $4.64M, expenses of $3.83M, with continued costs for orientation over the summer. Most operations remain financially stable, although the Peconic Cafe is expected to continue operating at a loss for the reasons discussed in previous meetings. The board discussed investing $1M in a high-yield money market account, and recommended developing a formal investment policy through the Finance Committee. The Board approved six resolutions, including the 2026-2027 Association budget, adopted salary schedules, and revised the CAAC membership structure, (the committee that looks at all the budget of the association), a personnel appointment for Kids Cottage, Assistant Director stipend adjustments, and a new practicum and observational policy for the child care centers. He announced this would be his last report as Chair given his recent transition to Executive Dean of the Ammerman Campus.

Student Trustee Venture-Rios reported as Student Trustee. She shared she is currently serving as a Peer Mentor for the 2026-2027 year. She is very hopeful to see what they're going to come up with. Some students have expressed interest and passion with representing students and joining SGA. She is excited to see what they're going to come up with this year, given when she stepped down as President of SGA for the Ammerman campus, they were working on the resolution regarding public safety officers and hopes that will be voted on by the end of the Fall semester.

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Chair Coverdale moved to the Chair's report.

Chair Coverdale noted that given the recent shift within the Executive Committee's membership, she reached out to Trustees to update the membership of several committees. Trustee Dolan will Chair the Budget and Finance Committee, Trustee Horsley will Chair the Facilities Committee, and Trustee Gordon will Chair the Personnel Committee.

Chair Coverdale then asked Trustee Bost as Chair of the ad-hoc nominating committee to present the slate of officers for the Board's review and approval given the vacancies created by the recent change in Board membership. Trustee Bost shared the new proposed slate of the Executive Committee of the Board as follows: Shirley Coverdale as Chairwoman, Priscilla Zarate as Vice Chair, Jerome Bost as second Vice Chair and Michael Arens as Secretary.

Trustee Bost requested a motion to approve the Slate of Officers for the remainder of the 2026–2027 term. Trustee Dolan so moved; Trustee Peterman seconded. The motion to approve the Slate of Officers for the remainder of the 2026–2027 term was approved (8-0).

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Chair Coverdale moved to the President's report.

President Bonahue first announced and recognized some transitions within the College:

- Dr. Lauren Tacke-Cushing, newly appointed as Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- Professor Sean Tvelia, who after many years of providing leadership for both the Guild of Administrators and the Physical Sciences Department, went through the national search process, and is now Executive Dean for the Ammerman Campus.
- Lastly, Dr. Donna Ciampa, Executive Dean for the Grant Campus, plans to retire at the beginning of October. Dr. Ciampa has worked at Suffolk for more than 20 years as a faculty member and led many initiatives and projects throughout her career at the College.

Enrollment Update:
Dr. Bonahue reported that Fall enrollment is currently trending flat to slightly below last year's levels. For much of the enrollment cycle, year-over-year enrollment had remained relatively stable at 97% to 98% of the prior year's figures, but the College experienced a decline to approximately 95% of last year's enrollment during the previous 48 hours. College administrators are closely monitoring this recent change to better understand its causes.

One factor that may be affecting enrollment is that the Fall 2026 semester begins one week earlier than Fall 2025, which may have caught some prospective students off guard. In response, the College has intensified its enrollment outreach efforts, including targeted messaging, reminders, and direct phone calls to students who have started but not completed the application, registration, or scheduling process. Dr. Bonahue also noted that the College continues to offer late-start classes and terms, providing opportunities for students who register after the semester begins to enroll and continue their studies. These options may help bolster enrollment numbers even after the start of the traditional semester.

Personnel and Labor Relations:
The College has been actively preparing for the Fall 2026 semester through a significant summer hiring effort. Many new employees have been recruited across all employee groups to replace a large number of retirements that occurred throughout the spring and summer. The College is also planning to add instructional positions supported by approximately $930,000 in restricted SUNY funding designated for high-demand academic programs through SUNY Reconnect. Following a strategy used successfully last year, the administration has identified six faculty positions eligible for funding through these SUNY resources and has identified six additional positions this year, pending final approval from SUNY. In addition to those hires, the College expects to expand staffing in other priority areas due to salary savings generated through normal employee turnover. Planned hires include positions in the High School Dual Enrollment Office, Information Technology Services (ITS), and other departments across multiple employee units, based on priorities established by Cabinet leadership. Lastly, the search committee for the Director of Legislative Affairs has been formed and has begun the process of reviewing and evaluating candidates for the position.

President Bonahue reported that the College is entering a period of labor negotiations with all three of its employee unions. The Faculty Association has indicated its readiness to begin negotiating a new contract stipulation, while the Guild of Administrators' contract expires this month. AME remains in contract discussions with Suffolk County and is expected to begin its own negotiations once those talks are completed. He reminded trustees, particularly newer members, that negotiations with all three labor groups are likely to begin as early as this Fall and will be an important area of focus for the Board. He also cautioned that the College may face a significant increase in health insurance costs next year. Given this uncertainty and other financial pressures, he emphasized the importance of maintaining a conservative budgeting approach and carefully evaluating the addition of new positions.

Academic Affairs:
President Bonahue reported that a major focus of Academic Affairs this summer has been the College's ongoing Middle States accreditation reaffirmation process. The College is currently working toward its next accreditation review and is preparing for the first visit from the visiting committee chair, scheduled for November. A significant portion of the summer effort has been devoted to developing the institution's self-study report, a key component of the accreditation process that evaluates the College's performance, effectiveness, and compliance with Middle States standards. To provide further details on this work, he invited Dr. Tacke-Cushing and Dr. DiSanza, who serve as co-chairs of the Middle States Steering Committee, to update the Board on the progress made over the summer in drafting the self-study and preparing for the upcoming accreditation review.

Dr. Tacke-Cushing provided an update on the College's ongoing Middle States accreditation reaffirmation process, which occurs every eight years and evaluates the institution's educational quality, effectiveness, governance, student success, and compliance with federal requirements. She explained that the accreditation self-study is a two-and-a-half-year process overseen by a Steering Committee co-chaired by Dr. Tacke-Cushing and Dr. Raymond DiSanza. Over the past 18 months, seven working groups, each focused on one of Middle States' accreditation standards, have gathered evidence and prepared reports demonstrating the college's compliance. These reports were completed at the end of the Spring 2026 semester. During the summer, a writing team composed of faculty and administrators reviewed the working group reports and developed a draft self-study report, while also identifying areas requiring additional evidence or clarification. The report is intended to highlight the college's strengths, accomplishments, and opportunities for improvement, and it is expected to help guide future strategic planning and institutional priorities. The College now has a working draft of the self-study and will conduct a broad campus review during the Fall semester, allowing faculty, staff, and administrators to provide feedback.
Dr. Tacke-Cushing noted that Dr. Tanya Millner, Interim President of Anne Arundel Community College and Chair of the visiting evaluation team, will visit the college on November 18, 2026, to review the draft report, provide guidance, and discuss preparations for the full accreditation review. The full Middle States evaluation team visit is scheduled for April 4-7, 2027. During that visit, seven to eight peer reviewers from other community colleges will review the self-study and meet with college stakeholders, including the Board of Trustees, to verify the report's findings. Following the site visit, the evaluation team will issue a report identifying the College's strengths and areas for improvement. The Middle States Commission will then review the report and make a decision regarding the reaffirmation of the College's accreditation in Summer 2027.

President Bonahue continued and announced that a team of Suffolk faculty and administrators has been invited to participate in the inaugural Campus Governance Excellence Institute, a new professional development initiative sponsored by SUNY, the Statewide Faculty Council of Community Colleges, and the University Faculty Senate. The program is designed to promote best practices in shared governance, with a focus on clarifying the roles and responsibilities of faculty and administrators and strengthening collaboration in institutional decision-making. Suffolk's delegation will include the College President, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and leaders from the College's faculty governance organizations. Representatives from all three campuses, along with the chairs of the college's two college-wide committees, are expected to participate. He emphasized that SUNY has assured participants that the institute is not intended to evaluate or compare colleges, systems, or individuals, but rather to provide an opportunity for learning, reflection, and the sharing of effective governance practices. The inaugural cohort will include teams from Suffolk County Community College, Farmingdale State College, SUNY Delhi, and SUNY Sullivan.

Student Affairs:
Dr. Bonahue reported that SUNY is placing a strong emphasis on expanding the Empire State Service Corps, a statewide initiative that supports student participation in community service and civic engagement activities. The program provides financial support to students who engage in volunteer work and service opportunities that strengthen community connections and workforce skills. The state is committing financial resources to encourage student involvement in civic engagement, environmental stewardship, financial aid and FAFSA completion including SNAP application assistance, early childhood education, K-12 tutoring. He encouraged Trustees and College stakeholders to suggest community organizations and service opportunities where Suffolk

students could participate, noting that both SUNY and the College are eager to expand student involvement through the program.

Facilities Update:
The College expects to receive the final design drawings for the Grant Campus Automotive Building by late August. Plans for the Workforce Development Building expansion are being revised to incorporate a congressional earmark secured through Congressman Andrew Garbarino, along with a hoped-for matching contribution from SUNY. The additional funding would allow the College to expand the project's scope and design. On September 2, appropriations for the College's approved capital projects will be considered by the Suffolk County Legislature's Education, Labor, Consumer Affairs, and Diversity Committee, and College representatives will advocate for the necessary funding approvals.

As he had reported in June, the extreme heat experienced in June placed significant strain on the College's aging HVAC systems, particularly in some older campus buildings. He thanked facilities and plant operations staff across all three campuses for their responsiveness and efforts to address air-conditioning issues and support employees during the challenging conditions.
The College continues to experience HVAC-related concerns in the Huntington Library and on the second floor of the Ammerman Building, where elevated temperatures and humidity levels have persisted. While operational adjustments have led to some improvements, Dr. Bonahue has asked Associate Vice President Jon DeMaio and his team to conduct a more comprehensive evaluation of those systems. To support that effort, the College plans to issue Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for engineering consultants to assess the overall HVAC design in the affected buildings. If the review determines that system redesigns or major upgrades are necessary, the college could utilize available capital infrastructure funding to support those projects. He emphasized that while the College has invested heavily in maintaining its mechanical equipment, it may be time to move beyond routine maintenance and evaluate whether larger-scale renovations or redesigns would provide a more effective long-term solution.

Upcoming Events:
President Bonahue highlighted a series of important welcome-back and preparation activities scheduled for the coming week, including: New Employee Orientation, Department Chair Opening Conference; Adjunct Faculty Orientation and College-Wide Faculty Planning Day.
He noted that these events will focus on preparing employees for the start of the academic year and reinforcing the College's commitment to student success. At each gathering, he plans to remind faculty and staff that students are the College's most important stakeholders and that the true measure of the institution is the quality of the experience students have every day on campus. President Bonahue shared a story from the recent SCOPE Educational Services Dinner. A local school board member told him about her son's enrollment experience at the Eastern Campus. Initially hesitant about attending college, the student was reportedly looking for reasons not to enroll. Instead, he encountered friendly and supportive staff at every step of the process, from the campus greeter to counseling, financial aid, and cashier services. According to the parent, the positive and welcoming interactions changed her son's perspective and demonstrated that Suffolk is a place where students feel valued and supported. He thanked everyone at the Eastern campus for doing such a remarkable job welcoming that family.

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Chair Coverdale called for Roundtable:

Trustee Arens posed questions regarding the following: pros and cons to having three campus leaders; the applicant response to the Government relations position; which enrollment reporting SUNY monitors; student success measures; and the difference between the Beacon program and dual enrollment programs. President Bonahue and several members of Cabinet addressed the questions and concerns Trustee Arens raised. Discussion was had by the Trustees related to the questions Trustee Arens raised.

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Opportunity for Public Comments on Matters Pertaining to the College:

Chair Coverdale introduced registered speaker Ben Zwirn, who addressed several issues related to College governance, transparency, facilities, and enrollment.

Mr. Zwirn stated that information obtained through Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) requests raised concerns about a hiring process and search committee on which he served in 2023. He indicated that, had he known certain information at the time, he would have asked different questions and potentially reached different conclusions during the selection process. Mr. Zwirn did not discuss specific details publicly, but emphasized that transparency and avoiding conflicts of interest are critical for a public institution and urged Trustees to review the materials he distributed. He expressed appreciation that the College is examining its HVAC challenges but suggested that the reported list of priority facilities issues appeared incomplete. Mr. Zwirn stated that he could identify additional problematic locations and planned to share that information with the Board before its next meeting.

He then focused on Board attendance and the use of videoconferencing. While praising the current Board for its active discussion, questioning, and engagement, he questioned whether video participation rules were being applied appropriately. He noted that state and Board policies generally allow remote participation only under extraordinary circumstances and argued that the reasons for such participation should be disclosed in a transparent manner, while still respecting personal privacy. Mr. Zwirn referenced a previous contentious Board meeting where a Trustee participated remotely and cast a deciding vote after having missed multiple meetings. He expressed concern that the public was not informed of the circumstances justifying the remote participation and argued that greater transparency is necessary to maintain public confidence. He also pointed to Board attendance rules that can result in removal after repeated absences and suggested that exceptions should be clearly documented.

Mr. Zwirn concluded by emphasizing that enrollment remains the College's most important challenge, noting that despite the additional students attracted through the SUNY Reconnect initiative, overall enrollment is now reported as flat or slightly declining. He argued that enrollment growth is essential to the institution's long-term success and financial health. He also cautioned against becoming overly reliant on SUNY Reconnect funding and enrollment gains, noting that the program depends on state support and future political and budget decisions that could change. He encouraged the College to remain cautious and avoid building long-term plans on funding sources that may not be guaranteed.

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Chair Coverdale requested a motion to enter in Executive Session to discuss the employment history of a particular person, the proposed lease or license of real property, and to seek/receive legal advice, which is made confidential by law. Trustee Dolan so moved; Trustee Peterman seconded. The motion to enter Executive Session was approved unanimously (8-0).

Chair Coverdale requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Arens so moved, Trustee Peterman seconded. The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously (8-0). The meeting adjourned to executive session at approximately 5:44 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,
Michael Arens
Secretary