

# SUNY OLD WESTBURY COLLEGE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: October 1, 2021

Meeting Time: 12:30pm

Location: Virtual Meeting, conducted via Zoom

<b>Attendance Appointed Members of the College Council:</b>	<b>Representatives of the College:</b>	
Ms. Mili Makhijani, Esq. (Chair)	Dr. Timothy E. Sams	Mr. Usama Shaikh
Ms. Melissa Archbold	Dr. Duncan Quarless	Dr. Diana Sukhram
Dr. Phillip E. Elliott	Dr. Jo-Ann Robinson	Ms. Lisandra Ramos
Ms. Martha Maffei	Ms. Monica Calzolari	Ms. Martha Santana
Ms. Theresa A. Regnante	Mr. Randy Daniels	
Mr. Scott Reich	Dr. Amanda Frisken	
Mr. William A. Hohausser	Ms. Denee Jenkins	
Ms. Oluwademilade O. Ogunlade,	Dr. Michael Kavic	
Student Representative	Mr. Michael Kinane	
	Ms. Claudia Marin Andrade	

## I. Chair Welcome, *Chair Makhijani*

Chair Makhijani opened the meeting by thanking everyone for joining the first College Council meeting for the 2021-2022 academic year. Acknowledging that everyone had received a copy of the June 25, 2021, College Council meeting minutes, Mr. Scott Reich made a motion to accept which was seconded by Ms. Martha Maffei. Council approved by unanimous vote the minutes. Chair Makhijani then welcomed Denee Jenkins as the new Executive Assistant to the President and College Council Liaison

## II. Report from the President, *Dr. Timothy E. Sams*

The President thanked Chair Makhijani and welcomed the Council members. He stated that he would spend the first half of his report period seeking the Council’s advice on two of the following items:

### *SUNY Matching Grant*

- The President shared that SUNY has invited all SUNYs to apply for a matching grant, two for every one dollar we put in, to the tune of \$300 million across the SUNY system. Before sharing the three projects that the College has identified for the grant, he asked the Council members to identify potential partners that the College can contact over the next two weeks, as well as financial opportunities to help us raise the number of funds that would be needed to contribute toward the matching grant effort.
  - **Project One - Day Care Center:** The Day Care Center has been in the Campus Center and it was thought to use that space of approximately 8,000 feet for instructional space, especially with COVID and the need for more instructional spaces, but the Day Care Center is a central activity associated with our College’s mission. The thought is to move the Day Care Center to Trainer House and bring in under the aegis of the Residential College, to provide both academic and co-academic efforts. With the move, the plan is to bring in the School of Education and create a teaching-learning laboratory that will be part of the curricular structure, providing practice opportunities for students. In addition to that, we would put a Student Social Service Center, providing to students the full gamut of State and Federal aid, opportunity, and support for their success for both students and their families. This one-stop location would have anything ranging from financial insecurities to childcare needs to developmental needs. This site will be an

- academic site and that interfaces with our curricular activity and student graduation. This project will be about \$3 million.
- **Project Two – Academic Village Rathskeller:** The Rathskeller was in the original AV (Academic Village), the site where it was a small kind of Student Center with a place that hosts a lounge area, a performance art area, and an eatery. The College is looking to revive it to function as a more mature setting for Juniors and Seniors who reside in that area. This space would then tie it to the curriculum through the School of Business to teach managerial skills to our students by providing student services in the form of an eatery, a performing art site, a lounge, game room, etc. This project is estimated to be about \$3 million.
  - **Project Three – Academic Village Building A:** Building A functions as the kind of gateway entry point for all the College’s utilities. The plan is to put into place a Social and Environmental justice center, which would be an interdisciplinary program that offers a range of academic offerings and degrees associated with the areas of social and environmental justice. Additionally, this space would be a Tinker Center designed to capture the imagination and entrepreneurial ambitions of students. It would be an entrepreneurial center sponsored by external business partners, who will teach students how to move from idea to market. The third piece will be a Multicultural Intercultural Center, which will enable students to have full-throated agency and ownership of our campus. There will also be an Engagement Center that enables Juniors and Seniors to avail themselves of internship externship opportunities geared toward their career pursuits. Finally, it would host a Career Innovation Center, which is designed to ensure students are familiar with the kinds of careers associated with social justice, sustainability as well as the new cutting-edge job opportunities that are being offered across the country. This project is estimated to be about \$10 million to occupy around 16,000 square feet.
  - The President then opened the floor for any suggestions around fundraising and partnerships for these three projects.
    - Ms. Regnante posed a question regarding the timeline for the College to come up with the money and who operationally is extrapolated for this grant. The President explained that the grant is capital intensive and SUNY would like for it to relate to the classroom. Partners don’t necessarily have to bring money to these projects, they can bring in partnerships, however, we need to make sure that it fits our long-term budget. Additionally, the President shared that it is not required to have the money upfront, instead, we have to demonstrate a plan for securing the money. Once SUNY, notifies the College that we are a recipient then, we have to go about securing the funds.
    - Ms. Regnante posed a follow up question on if it matters where you raise the funds from and if it has to cash. The President explained that it the third that the College has to raise has to be cash, but there is no limit to the number and the profile of the partners that are engaged.
    - Ms. Regnante shared that County could be an avenue to secure some funding for these projects. The President shared that he and Mr. Kinane have spoken with the County Executive and they are interested in collaborating and are awaiting a proposal from the College. Ms. Regnante asked to be looped in on the proposal so that she can support the Colleges efforts with the County’s Deputy Commissioner.
    - Ms. Regnante shared that for the Rauch Foundation might be another partner of the College’s childcare project. Nancy Douzinas with the Rauch Foundation have been financing training for childcare professionals so the College might be able to position itself to become a training engine for the childcare industry. Patti Schaefer is the Managing Director for the foundation, specifically in the area of investment in education.
    - Mr. Reich shared that Friends of Old Westbury might be an organization that might be helpful for prospective leads for network purposes. This is a group of affluent people that are looking to give back to the Old Westbury community. He suggested that the College asks to give a brief presentation for all their members at their next quarterly meeting.
    - Dr. Elliott shared that he serves as the treasure on the Nassau County Equal Opportunities Commission and they have considerable funding, particularly in the daycare area, which includes

the teachers that serve there. Dr. Elliot then asked about who would be the students in the daycare project. The President shared that it would service both students and folks outside the campus. To Follow up Dr. Elliot asked are some of those parents and students economically challenged, which the President stated yes. Dr. Elliot then stated that this project could be an excellent partnership and he would be happy to forge it.

- Chair Makhijani asked if the students that would be training would also serve as the caretakers within the daycare. Dr. Sukhram replied that the childcare would do is they would work within collaboration with faculty within the School of Education and the College would provide training for our students who are preparing to be teacher educators to work alongside faculty members and other partners to get hands-on the hands-on training. This will also be where students will complete their student teaching and their fieldwork experiences.
- Ms. Maffei shared that the Long Island Presbyterian Church are funding local projects and she is willing to reach out to them to see if they would be interested to introduce the community to the College and do a presentation on the projects.

### ***COVID-19 Vaccination Site***

- The President shared that the Department of Health asked if the College would allow the vaccination center, which is currently occupying the Clark Center, to stay six more months, with an expectation that they would be able to stay an additional six months if needed. He stated that the College has not answered their request and instead has given a two-week kind of period to allow us to explore this topic. Our students are now on campus and cannot use the center. Additionally, all the athletic teams have to practice and play their home games at Farmingdale. The President requested the groups advice on this matter.
- Chair Makhijani requested more clarification regarding the parameters of what our ask could be. The President shared that they do not use the entire space, so there might be an ability to partition the facility to enable our students to use a good deal of the space. Additionally, there is an idea to put smaller gyms (exercise rooms and gym activities) within the residential communities.
- Chair Makhijani confirmed that the request is not an expectation and it is entirely within the campus's purview whether to deny or grant the request.
- The ensuing discussion among Council members included:
  - Ms. Archbold asked if the schedule can be flexible to accommodate both students and the vaccination center. The President shared that it might be hard for them to move the 50 to 75 partitions in the room. Chair Makhijani added that could potentially pose some sort of a risk to the students to have the back and forth without full sanitizing.
  - Chair Makhijani asked what would it cost to set up the gyms in the residential halls. The President respond it would be \$25,000 each. Chair Makhijani suggested asking them to pay the costs of building the residential gyms.
  - Dr. Frisken shared that years ago when a facility study was conducted and the College learned that our athletic fields were tilted 15 degrees away from the ideal. She suggested if the College could put in an ask for a commitment to help us redesign those since they are not yet seeded and they could be positioned better with respect to the sun. Chair Makhijani added that the Council bounced the idea in the past about a new turf field and wanted to know where those discussions went. The President shared that the answer right now is no, but there is a meeting scheduled for Monday, October 4, 2021, to persuade a different answer.
  - Dr. Kavic shared if there is anything they could do to provide us with facilities or leave parts of the gym in such a way that faculty can use them as overflow space during the renovation in the Natural Sciences Building, that would be extremely helpful.
  - Ms. Archbold suggested the vaccination center could utilize some of the parking lot area and create that site just for that just like the way that they do it in Jones Beach. Chair Makhijani added that since the College has lots of acres to offer a different space that does not interfere with the students use and enjoyment of the campus facilities, but also works with the Department of Health.

The President then reported the following updates:

- The College has completed some beautification efforts around campus which include banners, updates in the Campus Center Atrium.
- Students are now living in Academic Village and the College is moving quickly to improve the physical space that they are living in.
- For enrollment, we are about 87% of where we were this time last year at around 4,359. This number includes both a vaccination requirement for on-campus students and financial cancellation.
- Currently, the College is in the process of conducting interviews in the next two weeks for the Vice President for Advancement. There are nine applicants that will be interviewed and which will then be narrowed down to three candidates for on-campus.
- As the campus opened this fall, there has been a lot of challenges around electricity on our campus which resulted in a number of outages, even on move-in day for first years and our sophomores. The source of the outages was discovered and repairs have begun in terms of switch gears to resolve the problem. In the past two weeks, there were two outages in Hall 1 and 2 in The Woodlands. The latest power outage was a major overload of power in Hall 2 that caused a great deal of damage to student electronics. The College is requesting students to give us a sense of what was damaged to be able to work with the vendor who provided the generator that gave this massive powered surge to provide the level of refunds they are due.

The President closed his report.

Chair Makhijani thanked the President for his empathic leadership during the outages since he also experienced outages in his home on campus.

### **III. New Business, Chair Makhijani**

Chair Makhijani opened the floor over to Ms. Calzolari to briefly air in the Council meeting, the issue that the students are having with transportation. She stated that Ms. Regnante has already been contacted on this issue, but wanted to provide the opportunity for some of the other Council members to share their own thoughts and/or ideas.

Ms. Calzolari shared that she heard from Lionel Chitty that two students from Oyster Bay High School needed transportation to campus. Public transportation is available, but it would take the students an hour and a half to get to OW, and an hour and a half to get home. Both students have full-time jobs and so they're using an Uber at the moment that Oyster Bay High School is paying for. Ms. Calzolari shared that the College offered them residential scholarships, but because these two students are breadwinners for their families and being DACA dreamers they weren't able to live on campus. Additionally, after meeting with the high school, they shared that they're probably at least eight or nine more rising seniors that are interested in coming to SUNY Old Westbury next Fall, and it would be advantageous for us to build the relationship with local schools.

The ensuing discussion among Council members included:

- Ms. Regnante confirmed that she received the email about this concern and sent some more follow-up questions that included reaching out to those organizations in relationship for a grant for Uber and/or Lyft. Ms. Calzolari shared that she did not reach out yet because she thought Uber drivers are independent contractors and wouldn't want to fund a scholarship for students. She stated that she would be happy to look into that further and reach out to their corporate office.
- Ms. Regnante added and shared that her parent organization, United Way Worldwide, has a contract with Lyft, specifically for people with vaccinations and they funded this region with about \$200,000 worth of

rides. Ms. Regnante then asked who is the bus service provider for that school district and if it is a district or private contract. Chair Makhijani shared that it is a private bus company.

- Ms. Regnante added that the superintendent asking what would it cost to have the service and what could you do to defray that service, goes a long way. She stated that she is willing to support, but needs to know the context of the request that would help solve the problem. Ms. Calzolari stated she would get Ms. Regnante those numbers.
- Chair Makhijani stated that once all that research is done, and Ms. Calzolari figures out the numbers and Ms. Calzolari can give Ms. Regnante an approximation to move forward with next steps. Additionally, Chair Makhijani mentioned that Ms. Santana posted in the chat a site about Uber offering 10 million free discounted rides and how they already started partnerships with the National Urban League, Morehouse School of Medicine, and National Action Network. These organizations have deep ties to the communities of color that have been disproportionately hurt the pandemic.
- Ms. Calzolari stated that Mr. Daniels did offer a \$500 emergency awards to each of the students and they haven't used yet because the school is still paying for the Uber.
- Ms. Regnante asked why wouldn't the College Foundation set up a transportation fund for matters like this. She added that if all the transportation providers who are out there providing transportation give to that fund, and get that fund up to \$100,000 a year would be feasible, especially if there was case positioning around the need for students. Chair Makhijani stated that she liked the idea and opened the floor for Mr. Daniels to respond. Mr. Daniels stated that the existing support for transportation for students resides in the Foundation. He then added that if we wish to launch another initiative that is more robust and comprehensive that serve people who are not students, the Foundation can do that. There are a number of initiatives before the foundation right now that are being reviewed and analyzed and once that data is finalized then we can propose solutions.

Chair Makhijani closed the discussion. She shared with the Council members that there is a lunch at the President's house scheduled for October 20 for an intimate gathering between the Council members and the Cabinet. Chair Makhijani stated that she would appreciate everyone's attendance and to be on the lookout for that invitation. She added that for the symposium between the College Council and the College Foundation, the Foundation members will be unable to meet in person until at least 2022 so that will be on hold until then.

Chair Makhijani opened the floor for any Council members to share any general comments.

Dr. Elliott shared that he and the President are working on a collaboration between SUNY and the Nassau Police Department in terms of getting minorities involved in the police department because there is a big disparity there. They both meet with the police department to try to see if we can synchronize our criminal justice program with their pursuits and it was a healthy conversation.

The President stated that he and Dr. Elliott discussed in their last meeting, the issues related to not having enough black and brown folks in Nassau are taking advantage of the housing support provided by the federal government. The question he posed was what can we do to help them complete the process. Dr. Elliott added that 89% of the money for housing assistance has not been spent because the outreach effort is not there. If this applies to any of the families and students of the campus community, he asked if we could do a collaborative outreach and share this opportunity. The ensuing discussion among Council members regarding this issue included:

- Ms. Regnante asked who is reaching out to these agencies because there are agencies contracted from the county with his money in every municipality. She suggested having an ERAP counselor be on the campus

of the College to conduct outreach. There are two barriers Ms. Regnante highlighted. One is the people who are renting illegally or having a tough time walking through that door because landlords have to sign off. The other is their legal status. She suggested the College contact Peter Eelkowitz to have an ERAP counselor on campus to try it two or three days a week for a few hours and see if any students show up. Additionally, if the college can identify students by zip code and then give them communication that says a council is here on campus between x and y, so if you're in arrears on your rent please call this number.

- Chair Mikhijani shared that the person or office that would be going to be doing this, it is one of those 10 candidates that's going to be interviewing for the Vice President for Advancement. We talk about these ideas and who's going to pay, but the responsibility has to be on an office or an individual to do the research to get the facts to get the program's going and.
- Ms. Regnante shared that she would talk to Peter and have him call Mr. Kinane or another individual to get someone on campus. She added that then the College has to take responsibility in terms of how are we going to alert students that we know are renters. If the College has the demographic data on students who are renting you could sort of come up with that microcosm of a group for different towns since all towns have this money.
- Dr. Elliott shared that is a trust issue and it needs to be someone who the persons who the benefit trusts as an intermediary in the outreach. If you put somebody that talks and looks like them, they will respond. Chair Mikhijani agreed and added that we're talking about getting someone to be in charge of putting this together and basically spearheading it.
- Mr. Hohausser shared that the landlords are refusing to take the ERAP money and that is a very common occurrence because of all the strings that are attached to the legislation. If they take the ERAP money of in any amount they waive the rest of it, and they cannot maintain another type of proceeding against the tenant for at least another year and cannot raise the rent for another year. Chair Mikhijani added that Mr. Hohausser sees what happens when things go south, and it ends up before him in court and that this might become a constitutional issue. Mr. Hohausser added that he wanted everyone to be aware that he has many landlords from Hempstead who have attorneys saying they will not accept the ERAP and will not cooperate in the filing of any ERAP application.

#### **IV. Faculty Senate Chair**

Dr. D'Ambroise was not present so the report was skipped

#### **V. Alumni Representative's Report**

Mr. Chitty was not present so the report was skipped.

## VI. The Student Government Association Report

- Ms. Ogunlade reported on the following:
  - ⊘ SGA hosted SGA week this week and have done the following programs
    - **BK Chat:** An opportunity for folks to discuss relevant and controversial topics.
    - **Community Drive:** Raffling off prizes to the people who donate the most and will donate the items collected to Haitians at the border.
    - Brunch
    - **Open Forum:** Where students voiced their concerns. Ms. Ogunlade has a document of organized notes that she can send to others.
  - ⊘ SGA focus areas include:
    - Pushing for more effective advising because students are complaining about their student advising experience.
    - **Dining:** Freshens is not done so the Den is not open at the moment, so the only dining option on campus is the Cafeteria, Starbucks, and Coffee/Tea Cafe. The cafeteria closes at 8 PM and then Sunday through Thursday they have a late-night menu which ends at 1 AM. This means that on Friday and Saturdays after 8 PM there's no food. The Academic Village does not have a kitchen and only one microwave per building which poses a problem for students trying to eat.
    - **Off Campus Vendors:** SGA is working with Carol in ASC to look to get student IDs to work in different places. This will allow students who have to go off campus to have somewhere else to swipe their ID.
    - **Student Employment Opportunities:** Students are stating that they do have anywhere that they can work on campus and most places require that they're eligible for work study. If they don't qualify for work study students are left unemployed or having to catch the shuttle to go off campus to work.

Chair Mikhijani thanked Ms. Ogunlade for her report and sharing these critical issues. She requested to set up a Zoom meeting with her, Ms. Ogunlade, and the President to discuss these issues in more detail, especially the food issue.

## VII. Open Meeting

Chair Mikhijani opened the floor for public comments.

- Ms. Calzolari shared that the Office of Admissions is hiring tour guides and has a \$100 stipend for Open House Day. She also shared that there is a Halal truck on campus in front of the Campus Center.
- Ms. Regnante shared that United Way is reaching out to the veterans on the campus that are known to them, and continuing to give them gift cards. They have done three rounds already and asked if anybody can forward her the new veterans list on campus, we'll be happy to make sure include them on the list of 37 they have now. Ms. Calzolari shared that there are 54 to 56 veterans on campus and she is happy to send over that list to her. Ms. Regnante added that it is okay if they're not from Nassau and Suffolk County, they will help them anyway.

- Mr. Kinane thanked Ms. Regnante for offering funds for students as an incentive to become vaccinated that they ran in the late summer and beginning of the semester that equated to \$5,000 for students Panther Bucks accounts.
- Dr. Quarless shared that there are some veterans that have a gap in terms of their funding support. It would be helpful for us to identify those veterans, in addition to highlighting them in that list that Ms. Calzolari had mentioned. He stated that he would be happy to make sure that we do that as well.

Seeing no other comments from the floor Chair Mikhijani asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Cania Infante moved the motion to adjourn, and Ms. Melissa Archibald seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 1:44 p.m.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Denee Jenkins".

Denee Jenkins  
Executive Assistant to the President, SUNY Old Westbury