

SUNY OLD WESTBURY COLLEGE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: December 3, 2021

Meeting Time: 12:30pm

Location: Virtual Meeting, conducted via Zoom

Attendance Appointed Members of the College Council:	Representatives of the College:	
Ms. Mili Makhijani, Esq. (Chair)	Dr. Timothy E. Sams	Dr. Duncan Quarless
Ms. Melissa Archbold	Dr. Edward Bever	Ms. Martha Santana
Ms. Martha Maffei	Ms. Monica Calzolari	Mr. Usama Shaikh
Ms. Theresa A. Regnante	Dr. Jennie D’Ambroise	Dr. Shalei Simms
Mr. William A. Hohausser	Dr. Amanda Frisken	Dr. Diana Sukhram
Ms. Oluwademilade O. Ogunlade,	Ms. Denee Jenkins	Ms. Lisandra Ramos
Student Representative	Dr. Michael Kavic	Dr. Jo-Ann Robinson
	Mr. Michael Kinane	Dr. Kinning Poon
	Ms. Claudia Marin Andrade	Dr. Manya Mascareno
		Dr. Fernando Nieto

I. Chair Welcome, *Chair Makhijani*

Chair Makhijani opened the meeting by thanking everyone for joining the second College Council meeting for the 2021-2022 academic year. Acknowledging that everyone had received a copy of the October 1, 2021, College Council meeting minutes, Ms. Melissa Archbold made a motion to accept which was seconded by Mr. William Hohausser. The council approved by unanimous vote the minutes.

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

The President thanked Chair Makhijani and welcomed the Council members. He stated that he had two pieces of his report. The first half of his report period would be the typical report and the second half would be a larger presentation from one of the College’s faculty members. The President started his formal report on the following items:

Fall 2021 Experience

- The President shared that the College has been very fortunate and effective in managing COVID on campus, with a rate being under half of 1%. The campus has had about 50 cases among more than 5,000 community members. He highlighted the residential population, who underwent a universal single policy, and in terms of the numbers that have come out of the residential platform that our campus has done fairly well. The President also highlighted the role that students played in keeping our numbers low by being mindful, adhering to the expectations all the way from vaccination, testing, wearing of masks, maintaining distance and engaging in smaller scale activities.
- The President shared that the campus had a dramatic increase in activity across campus. They have been able to strike a balance between increasing the level at which students are engaging with one another, while at the same time being mindful of COVID prevention behaviors. He thanked the faculty and staff across the campus for their all-in approach to help keep a low incident rate of COVID-19.

Performance Planning Update

- The President provided a quick reminder of the performance planning concept. He stated that is the College’s opportunity to annually offer up across the campus RFPs or proposals in response to the five priorities that were determined for the year. Those priorities are strengthening the college infrastructure, improving institutional capacity, innovating transformative programs, advanced educational models, and advancing a culture of excellence. The President share that we garnered 43 proposals representing

collaboration across the campus, departments, and units that involve students and external partners. The proposals now will go to the Budget and Planning Committee, who will do some vetting of those proposals, with the ultimate goal to figure out which proposals we are able to support for the next fiscal year. The model is to propose the initiatives in year one, and as in year two, where we get engagement of those proposals. The President states that he will continuously update the Council as they continue to move through the advancement of these proposals.

Matching Grants Update

- The President shared that there was no update or announcement from SUNY on the matching grant proposal. He reminded everyone that 3 proposals were submitted. The first was for Daycare Center students and Social Services Center, where the cost is \$3 million. The second is for Rathskeller, which will house the School of Business Applied Entrepreneurial-ship, where the cost is \$3 million. The third is for the Social and Environmental Justice Center.

Search for Vice President for Institutional Advancement

- The President shared that we had a good collection of finalists on campus for the Vice President for Institutional Advancement search. He heard from many of those who have been part of the interviews in the form of surveys or formal meetings with groups. Noted that he has some additional phone calls to make to be certain he has spoken to everyone who has touched the search process and gotten their input. Early next week, he will be rounding the bend and formally engaging in conversation toward making a hiring decision.
- Chair Makhijani added to the President remarks to first thank the Council members that participated in the interview process and to let them know that a call from the President will be coming shortly if it has not already.
- The President added that the process underscored how much work whomever gets this appointment has before them and he is excited that the applicants are excited about that work.

Update on Status of Capital Projects

- The President stated that he wanted to provide some updates regarding a couple of capital projects starting with the campus athletic field restorations. The tents and the gravel have been removed and now what remains is a flat track of dirt. There is no electrical and plumbing put in yet, the College is busily working with the Construction Fund, FEMA, and other powers that be to see if adjustments can be made. The main two adjustments include moving from grass to turf are used and changing the orientation of the fields. Some additional adjustments would be adding some facilities that that respond to the fact that we have both men and women using these facilities, as well as a couple of other items. The President provided an example of the problems with the fields:
 - Because the baseball and softball fields are misplaced, the teams are unable to go into post-season play. That coupled with not having turf, when the rest of the skyline conference has turf, means that no one wants to play postseason on activities on our fields. If the softball and baseball teams earn post-season and home play, the Skyline conference discourages us from using our fields.
 - Ms. Regnante posed a question about the status of the athletic fields. The President explained that FEMA has a policy to return a facility to how they found it, which would be 9 million for the fields with the defects he stated earlier. The College is asking FEMA to provide the College with the funds to take it back and then the SUNY Construction Fund to add to those funds to upgrade the fields.
 - Ms. Regnante posed a follow-up question on who the College is asking permission to do the upgrades and who is leading the request. The President shared that FEMA has given the OGS the funds that they would use to take it back to where they found it. Now the negotiation exists between OGS and SUNY Construction Fund.
 - Ms. Regnante asked if the College had 3 million dollars, this would not be an issue because the College could use the 9 million, plus the additional 3 million. Ms. Santana stated that the College will need another 14.6 million to complete the upgrades. Mr. Kinane added that they could find the money from elsewhere, it would make life easier, but the challenges of where that money

ends up, whoever is giving that money, what they must agree to, in terms of liability and some additional caveats that come in the way, especially when there are two agencies involved.

- Ms. Regnante asked if anyone had told this story to the senators. She added that there is a fair amount of round two of infrastructure, money, and the school sits in between two townships. For this size of the project, Ms. Regnante recommended to a senator, especially Senator Schumer understanding of how the College's land was used, what the College is trying to do, and seeking his advice on working with the towns in the money that they have available to help.
- The President stated that he will provide the Council with one as soon as he receives one.
- The other capital project that the President shared was about the Natural Science Building. The College has been working well over a decade to try to get an upgrade to the Natural Science Building. The President then introduced Dr. Kinning Poon, who was going to present and engage the Council in a conversation about the renovation.

The President closed his report.

III. New Business, Chair Makhijani

Chair Makhijani then turned the floor over to Dr. Poon.

Dr. Poon presented for the College Council about Old Westbury's growth in the Sciences, followed by an overview of the state of Natural Sciences Building and the concerns over the proposed renovations.

After her presentation, the ensuing discussion among Council members included:

- Ms. Regnante shared that this seems to be an advocacy and public relations problem and not necessarily a funding problem, which poses the question of how bold the College wants to be to start something and apply the pressure on the SUNY system to finish. She posed the following questions:
 - What is the advocacy plan? What is the public relations plan?
 - How are students that are in that program being marshaled with their legislative districts of where they live to put pressure on the Assembly and the Senate to make sure the College has the money?
- Ms. Regnante recommended the College have a plan and apply the pressure. She added to have the lead assembly and senator in the districts and take them through this from a place of they will be embarrassed not to get this done with the College. Ms. Regnante also recommended reaching out to Cold Spring Harbor and Brookhaven Labs and getting them to understand and help support the College's current dilemma because they need those students. Additionally, the College should have conversations with Cold Spring Harbor to use their lab space since the campus' proximity to them.
- The President added that he had a conversation with the Chancellor and the Chancellor is interested and feeling very committed to addressing this.
- Ms. Archibald shared that she has an extended relationship with Brookhaven National Labs and Farmingdale State College, and from 2010-2013 she conducted and ran a STEM program in collaboration with two of those agencies and campuses, which included Cold Spring Harbor. When she was doing this program at Farmingdale, she put them on the map to have all the extensions of the buildings for their campus. BNL has rented offices and spaces within the colleges, like Stonybrook and Farmingdale, so when they had to present any proposal, it was an easy decision. Ms. Archibald posed the following question: Is the College willing to collaborate with those agencies to be able to put itself on the map?

- Mr. Kinane added Ms. Regnante's remarks about being careful not to step over or around the Chancellor after he offered his commitment since he governs a lot of the things we need to be done. Chair Makhijani added to Mr. Kinane's remarks by stating that the next VP of Institutional Advancement should assist in this effort by putting that pressure, getting a seat at that table, and getting the voice heard on behalf of the campus.
- Chair Makhijani commented that this project is something that is very necessary for the faculty, students, and campus to continue this upward trajectory. Additionally, she stated that the plan of having lab trailers would detract from the campus.
- Ms. Maffei recommended the College to create a working committee to take actionable steps to move forward with the information provided from Dr. Poon's presentation.
- Ms. Archibald asked if the campus collaborates with BNL and Cold Spring Harbor. If not, it will make it a bit more difficult to try to pull a lot of revenue for those types of projects. She added that she has a friend in the local state senate that she will reach out to that may be willing to be involved especially since underrepresented students will benefit from these projects.
- Chair Makhijani stated that it is important to recognize the moving parts in this project, which includes understanding the political angle, PR angle, and whether it is private or public companies involved and that is where the pressure needs to be placed. She added that someone needs to be in charge of the plan and decide in unison what the goal and the plan will be.
- Dr. Quarless added that there are faculty members collaborating and/or are using the facility at Cold Spring Harbor and BNL. He was willing to follow up with Ms. Archibald and to have additional conversations that can help with some of the strategies for advocacy.
- Dr. Bever shared that the College in many ways was rejected by Nassau County and Nassau Community College was very reluctant to work with the College in the past, so that is the position we may be starting from. He underscored Ms. Regnante's remarks by saying that this is a PR and political issue, and our strongest leverage is that it is an embarrassment for the SUNY system and for the State of New York. College needs to push on that this is an issue of equity, accessibility, and promoting goals that everybody agrees with.
- Chair Makhijani thanked the President for his strong advocacy over the short period he has been here. She also thanked Dr. Poon for her presentation and highlighted that her slide about the square footage per student, our enrollment compared to other campuses' enrollment, and what their square footage is. She emphasized the importance of the College staying persistent to ensure this gets done for students and faculty.

Chair Makhijani closed the discussion. She shared with the Council members that for the next meeting Dr. D'Ambrose, Mr. Chitty, and Ms. Ogunlade to provide their reports for the next meeting.

IV. Open Meeting

Chair Makhijani opened the floor for public comments.

Seeing no other comments from the floor Chair Makhijani asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. William A. Hohausser moved the motion to adjourn, and Ms. Melissa Archibald seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 1:43 p.m.

V. Action Items

- Outreach for potential collaboration and advocacy between the College, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, and Brookhaven National Labs.
- Create a working group to develop strategies to advocate for the Natural Science Building renovation project, which would include outreach to senators and assembly people.

Submitted by:

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

Denee Jenkins
Executive Assistant to the President, SUNY Old Westbury