

SUNY COLLEGE AT OLD WESTBURY COLLEGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2020

Location: Campus Center, Room H-427

Attendance: **Members of the College Council**

Ms. Mili Makhijani, Esq., Chair

Dr. Phillip Elliott

Hon. William Hohausser

Ms. Cania Infante

Mr. Kalief Metellus

Ms. Theresa Regnante

Representatives of the College

Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III, President

Ms. Lillian Colella

Mr. William Kimmins

Invited Guest (by phone):

Mr. Paul Patton, Sr. Vice Chancellor & Chief Human Resources Officer – SUNY

I. Chair's Welcome

- Chair Makhijani opened the meeting, thanked those in attendance, and moved straight to new business.

II. New Business

- Chair Makhijani noted the meeting was being held to review the status of the Presidential Search process, particularly as it related to the selection of the prior composition of the Search Committee made by past Chair Mignone and changes made by Chair Makhijani upon her appointment to the position. The discussion included:
 - A review of the April 5, 2019 meeting minutes held by the past Chair where the Council had discussed the search process. The meeting minutes noted no mention of the search committee membership and a subsequent review of video of the meeting found no discussion of who specific members might be. Those minutes had been approved without dissent at the December 2019 meeting of the Council.
 - The process whereby the Council Chair names the members and that, while members may have previously expressed an interest in participating, no committee could be formed because the College Council had no formally appointed chair between September 2017 and December 2019.
 - A review of the standard SUNY Presidential Search process, whereby Chair Makhijani reported that the full Council would vote on the final three candidates who ultimately would be forwarded as finalists to SUNY Chancellor, Dr. Kristina Johnson.
 - An acknowledgement that Chair Makhijani made the difficult decision to change the members of the Search Committee, namely two Council members, who had originally expressed an interest in serving. Instead she added two newly appointed members of the College Council believing particular strengths and experiences of these members relating to governmental organizations and philanthropy were needed on the Committee. The final Council member appointed to the Committee was named as he possessed the longest tenure and history with the College, dating back to 2008.
- In addition to reviewing the selection of Council members to serve on the Search Committee, Chair Makhijani reviewed other appointments that had been made from the student body and professional staff and discussed changes that were required due to staffing changes at the College that had

transpired after the summer 2019 election of members from the faculty. Each appointment was reviewed with SUNY and approved before the membership of the Search Committee was ultimately finalized.

- Ms. Makhijani then asked the other Council members if they had any comments or questions. Hearing none, she asked Mr. Patton to discuss the search process and to comment on whether the selection process was in compliance with SUNY guidelines and whether the current configuration of the Search Committee is sufficiently diverse based upon what the Chancellor requires.
- Mr. Patton thanked the group and discussed the current state of SUNY relative to Presidential Searches, where nine are currently underway. His discussion included an emphasis on the confidentiality of the search. In his comments he noted that SUNY is convinced that Old Westbury's Search Committee represents the diversity of thought required and that the process has followed the guidelines established to provide a roadmap to a successful search. During question-and-answer, Ms. Infante asked Mr. Patton to clarify for the record that the College Council, its chair and members had followed the guidelines in the creation of the Search Committee and to comment specifically relative to the potential discussions of membership at the April 5, 2019 meeting. Mr. Patton responded by noting that SUNY General Counsel had advised that, without a full Council (quorum) and without a chair appointed by the Governor, any actions taken in respect to this would be null and void.
- With no further questions of Mr. Patton forthcoming, Ms. Makhijani asked if there were other comments or business to be raised.
- Hearing none, a motion to adjourn was made by Judge Hohausser and seconded by Dr. Elliott. The meeting adjourned at 1:38 pm.

Submitted by:

Irene Cotton
Administrative Assistant to the President