

SUNY COLLEGE AT OLD WESTBURY COLLEGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: Friday, December 13, 2019
Location: Student Union, Multipurpose Room C

Attendance: **Members of the College Council**
Ms. Mili Makhijani, Esq., Chair
Ms. Melissa Archbold
Dr. Phillip Elliott
Hon. William Hohausner
Ms. Cania Infante
Ms. Martha Maffei
Ms. Theresa Regnante
Mr. Kalief Metellus

Representatives of the College

Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III, President
Dr. Nancy Brown
Mr. Lionel Chitty
Mr. Len Davis
Dr. Wayne Edwards
Dr. Barbara Hillery
Mr. William Kimmins
Mr. Michael Kinane
Ms. Claudia Marin Andrade
Mr. Andrew Mattson
Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan
Ms. Mona Rankin
Mr. Usama Shaikh

Invited Guest

Mr. Steve Siena, Chief, University Police

I. Welcome and Meeting Opening

- Prior to the official call to order, Dr. Butts welcomed the new members of the College Council. He then turned the meeting over to Ms. Mili Makhijani, newly appointed Chair, who introduced herself as Principal Law Clerk to Justice Randy Sue Marber in Supreme Court, Nassau County, for approximately the last three years. Prior to this she was in private practice in various areas including plaintiff civil rights work with Fred Brewington and defense work in the areas of legal malpractice, employment law and medical malpractice. She is honored and privileged to have been selected as Chair and to be working with such an esteemed, accomplished group of people. There is a lot of work ahead, but she looks forward to navigating the journey together.
- Ms. Makhijani called the meeting to order at 10:48 am, gave an opportunity to review, and asked for any comments or changes to the minutes of the April 5, 2019 meeting. With no comments or changes forthcoming, she asked for a motion and second to approve the minutes. Judge Hohausner moved to accept and Ms. Infante seconded. The minutes were approved.

II. Old Business

- Ms. Makhijani mentioned that she had a partial list of the composition of the Presidential Search Committee. There are still a few positions to be filled to complete the committee. According to the guidelines there should be a total of seventeen members. She then asked Mr. Len Davis, Sr. Vice President, Business & Finance and CFO, to inform those in attendance about the selection of the search firm. Mr. Davis said that there was an independent committee formed from various College areas, including the faculty, which reviewed a list of twenty-eight search firms recommended by SUNY. The committee narrowed the list down to nine firms. At several subsequent meetings the merits of each were discussed, and eventually the committee narrowed down the list to one firm. The name was submitted to SUNY and we should have official notification next week, though we were advised that the firm was approved. Contract negotiations are expected to start next week.

Ms. Makhijani asked Mr. Davis to forward the search guidelines to the search firm to ensure they were part of the negotiations.

- Ms. Regnante inquired about the composition of the search committee, as to whether it was internal or external to the campus. Mr. Kinane replied that approximately two thirds of the search committee membership was from the campus. The entire committee consists of: 4 members of the College Council, including the Chair; 6 members of the full time teaching faculty; 1 student, 1 alumni representative, 1 campus related Foundation member; 1 academic dean; 1 professional or support staff member; 1 incumbent or retired SUNY President from another campus or a member of the Chancellor's senior staff designated by the Chancellor. Ms. Makhijani said that she had spoken to the Chancellor the prior week regarding the liaison she is appointing, and she advised that Mr. Paul Patton is the representative appointed to assist and advise in the search process.
- Ms. Makhijani said she hoped to have a Search Committee meeting in January, if possible, and reminded everyone that Search Committee meetings are confidential.
- Ms. Makhijani then turned the meeting over to Dr. Butts for his report:

III. President's Report on the College

- Before giving his report, Dr. Butts asked the other new College Council members to say a word about themselves.
- Ms. Maffei introduced herself as an immigrant from Peru who came to the United States 15 years ago. She is Executive Director of Services for the Advancement of Women at SEPA Mujer and serves on the boards of other organizations as well.
- Dr. Elliott introduced himself as an ordained minister for 44 years and a pastor, a seminary teacher for approximately 35 years, and has served two terms as Deputy County Executive involved in bringing community education to the voting apparatus of Nassau County. Formerly he was the Director of the Legal Aid Society of Virginia for 10 years, and for a few years was a Systems Controller for what is now Key Food.
- Ms. Theresa Regnante introduced herself as President and CEO of United Way of Long Island for approximately 11 years. She has been in the health and human service field, fundraising development and marketing for 30 years.
- Dr. Butts introduced Mr. Kalief Metellus, a Politics, Economics and Law major who is the SGA President.
- Dr. Butts also acknowledged the passing of our former Designated Chair, Dr. Mario Mignone.
- Dr. Butts announced the retirement and move to Las Vegas of Ms. Mary Marquez Bell, former Vice President for Enrollment Services.
- We have received a major grant totaling \$2,007,925 over five years. The grant is part of the US Department of Education's Title III – Strengthening Institutions Grant Program. Dr. Butts asked Dr. Barbara Hillery, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, to explain the grant. Dr. Hillery said that the goal of the Title III – Strengthening Institutions Program is to help increase the capacity of institutions to serve students with lower incomes. We will use these funds for student support services and professional development activity. The goals of the grant are the standard ones of increasing our retention and graduation rates. We have promised the government that our graduation rates will go up by at least three percentage points; we plan to go higher than that. The grant will help us bring in a Director to run a Tutoring Center and it will help us to pay students to be peer tutors. Since many of our students are low income and need to work, we are trying, as much as possible, to get jobs for them on campus, thus allowing them to make money while at the same time remaining engaged with the community. The grant will also help us to hire a Director to run our Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. We will be able to do much more to help faculty develop their pedagogy, find ways to use innovative technology in the classroom if they wish, etc. All of this will help retention and graduation rates. We are also going to be focusing a lot on the sophomore population. We do a lot of work in our First-year Program to increase retention rates and help students make the transition from high school to college, but they can then get lost as sophomores, and frequently have discovered that they do not want to major in their original choice. We will have a program that will help sophomores with their academics, help them find a place to belong on campus, and help them with social activities as

well. If we can increase sophomore retention and get students to their junior year, we can graduate them two years later.

- Dr. Butts continued his report, stating that for the second year in a row we have been ranked by *Money Magazine*, in its “Best Colleges” issue, as being among the colleges and universities that are the best values in America.
- The College, also for the second time, has been awarded the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award from *Insight into Diversity* magazine. The HEED award is the only national honor recognizing US colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion across their campuses. One of our consistent mission goals is to keep our diversity robust and to make sure that we are representing all and the best of our population.
- Dr. Butts mentioned that Ms. Priscila Ortega, a senior Politics, Economics and Law major, is the 2019 recipient of the Act for Excellence and Student Initiative scholarship, a \$1,000 award that was presented to just seven SUNY students this year by the Association of Council Members and College Trustees of SUNY.
- Ms. Joy Alonge, a senior majoring in Business Administration, received the inaugural Norman R. McConney Jr. Award for Student Excellence from SUNY. An Elmont, NY resident, she was one of forty-two Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) students statewide to receive this honor.
- Dr. Butts mentioned that recently a student had posted a threat on social media. The student was arrested. We immediately reported this to the Nassau County Police who reported the incident to the Federal government as a terroristic threat.
- On the subject of admissions, last fall we surpassed, for the first time, overall enrollment of 5,000 by enrolling the largest student body in College history...5,079 students. At the start of Dr. Butts’ presidency enrollment was just over 2,900. 5,000 was our goal in order to remain a small college. This fall we have again enrolled the largest student body in College history...more than 5,100 students. The potential for growth is still there, particularly in the STEM area.
- We have an antiquated Natural Science building. One of our major efforts is to renovate this building and then expand it into a larger STEM Center. Our fundraising goal for this is approximately \$70 million to be raised by public, private, and foundational support. The entire project is \$130 million, but if we get the \$70 million we can move forward.
- With the largest undergraduate and graduate enrollment in the College’s history, we keep moving towards the goal of a 5,400 headcount by 2023.
- We have students who are receiving Excelsior Scholarships. This has helped a little with recruitment and admissions, but the College has to advance the money and will then hopefully be refunded by the state.
- We have two new graduate degrees: the MS in Data Analytics and the MS in Students with Disabilities (Grades 1-6).
- Dr. Butts asked Dr. Patrick O’Sullivan, Provost & Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs to comment on three new Micro-credentials programs. In the graduate program there are micro-credential programs in Business Taxation and in Estate, Gift & Trust Taxation, and in the undergraduate program there is a micro-credential program in Foundational Counseling Skills.
- Dr. O’Sullivan distributed a handout which addresses micro-credentials, and went on to say that this is a new initiative of the SUNY system. The goal is for a student to take two or three courses or modules and then receive a certificate or micro-credential that attests to a specific skill. Schools such as Harvard, Carnegie Mellon and MIT also offer micro-credentials. Dr. Elliott asked if these were the equivalent of an interdisciplinary or a minor. Dr. O’Sullivan said they are similar to a minor, but a minor at Old Westbury requires five or six classes, whereas a micro-credential could require just two courses. A major factor is that you are building a resume that shows you have skills in areas outside your degree. Micro-credentials are stackable, in that you can accrue several of them towards a degree and then go on to complete the degree. You still need to participate in the normal curriculum.
- Mr. Andrew Mattson, of Media and Communications and Faculty Senate Chair, stated that Micro-credentialing was spearheaded by Dr. Ed Bever of the School of Professional Studies as a way to attract non-traditional students of all ages who are looking for a credential to move them forward in their careers. We are trying to create micro-credentials that will serve our students to give them an extra credential. We are working with a company call Credly that provides on-line

badges that will appear on a student's Linked-in page in addition to degrees, majors, minors, etc. They are developing two new ones in his own department, and they already have a micro-credential certificate in video production.

- Mr. Michael Kinane, Vice President of Communications mentioned that the Psychology Department has packaged a series of electives as a micro-credential.
- Dr. Butts went on to mention that we have an expanded effort in the health career partnership with SUNY Downstate. Graduates of Old Westbury's BS program in Health and Society will be given priority consideration for admission into the Masters of Public Health program at SUNY Downstate. We are interested in getting more of our students engaged, as Michael Dowling of Northwell Health says that he hires 100 new people every day. We want these students to be able to take advantage of the career opportunities in health.
- The School of Business has launched the "Justice for Fraud Victims Project", linked to the College's Masters program in Forensic Accounting. The goal is to assist victims of suspected financial fraud in cases where forensic investigative services are limited or too costly. It enables graduate students who are majoring in Forensic Accounting to help small businesses in the community to investigate fraud. Prof. David Glodstein is leading this effort.
- Dr. Butts then noted that the renovation of the campus library is complete and expressed his gratitude for the library being named in his honor.
- Five classrooms in the Natural Science Building were retrofitted for active learning collaborations and pedagogy, but we also continue to advocate for the funding for expansion and renovation.
- Dr. Butts mentioned that College Council members can be very helpful by keeping the name of Old Westbury in front of everyone they meet and requesting support from potential donors.
- Dr. Butts said that the Division of Student Affairs, led by Mr. Usama Shaikh, Vice President for Student Affairs and Chief Diversity Officer, is undertaking an assessment process. Using the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education's domains will allow for both departmental program review and self-assessment, along with identifying student learning and development outcomes. Mr. Shaikh said that several years ago the Division centralized its assessment process and recognized that while it was meeting the goals of Middle States accreditation, it was not sufficiently analyzing its strengths and weaknesses. With the help of the Dean of Students and the Director of Residential Life, the Division has revamped the entire assessment process so that the Division is able to align itself with high impact practices within the industry at a national level. This will be a two-year process for Student Affairs.
- Dr. Butts mentioned that five members of the College's police department were commended by the SUNY Police Chiefs Association in November.
- Dr. Butts asked Mr. Davis to share anything he wanted with regard to the budget. Mr. Davis said that the budget requests prepared by SUNY sought \$28 million more in direct state aid. If that is successful, it will filter down through the colleges. The capital request was the same. Each year SUNY asks for \$850 million and receives \$600 million.
- Recent and upcoming infrastructure projects include paving work on Ring Road; roof replacement on the Natural Science Building and renovation of the Duane Jones Recital Hall in Campus Center.
- Last month the Shanti Fund and the Consulate General of India planted 150 trees on our campus in recognition of the 150th birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. This is a beautiful recognition of Gandhi and a beautiful expression towards our campus. Dr. Butts introduced Dr. Wayne Edwards, Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Executive Director of the College Foundation, who is working very hard to raise money.
- Ms. Regnante asked whether we had reached out to NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research and Development Authority) for funds for the STEM Center and under what area of the College would that fall. Dr. Edwards said it would fall under the fundraising rubric. We have said that the building design would be zero net and have built that into our funding request from the state. Mr. Davis said that we have contacted NYSERDA on several energy projects. During the summer we were seeking Regional Economic Development grants of which a subset was NYSERDA money. We attempted to present proposals, but didn't quite meet some of the requirements. However, we are not going to give up. Ms. Regnante offered her assistance in this area, as her organization has received NYSERDA support.

- Dr. Butts mentioned that this was his last College Council meeting, as he was leaving the Presidency on January 20th. He said he deeply appreciates having had the opportunity to serve SUNY Old Westbury. Ms. Mona Rankin, Chief of Staff, who is also retiring on January 20th has been his partner in leading the College, and her participation has been absolutely essential to its progress. Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan, Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs, is retiring January 20 after forty-five years at the College. Many of the new and creative academic offerings and growth of the faculty from 107 to 188 full time members came about during Dr. O'Sullivan's time here.
- Dr. Butts also mentioned that he had just learned that School of Education Dean, Dr. Nancy Brown was also retiring. Dean Brown said that a long commute and some health issues have led her to this decision. She said that working here in the School of Education has been an honor and the highlight of her career. The School of Education has been informally told that we are receiving an additional \$149 thousand on top of the \$329 thousand we already receive for the Teacher Opportunity Corps (TOC) grant, allowing us to support 75 teachers of color through their teacher education program. We are also involved in a grant that, while not providing funds, will enable us to do the right thing. We will be working with Western Suffolk BOCES to prepare teacher aides for the teaching force. Fourteen new students will be joining us this spring. Dr. Brown thanked everyone for the opportunity to work at Old Westbury. Dr. Butts said that Dean Brown was an incredible force, and drew in other faculty members, students and staff to work together.
- Dr. Butts introduced the other people sitting at the table, and then ended his report.
- Ms. Makhijani commended Dr. Butts for his accomplishments and leadership which have been unwavering and assured him that as a search is conducted for a new president, his legacy will be carried on. Projects and goals that have been important to him, such as the STEM Center and attracting and retaining faculty, will be kept in mind as the search goes on. They will also make sure the new president is able to raise money and has the sensitivity to understand the diverse composition of this school.
- Dr. Elliott asked that those gathered give Dr. Butts an ovation for his leadership.

IV. New Business

- It was agreed by the Council that, in the interest of time, review of the Resolutions to be voted on would start with *Resolution 3: Proposed Changes to the to the College's Vehicle Registration Program*. Ms. Makhijani read the resolution into the record and a motion to consider the resolution was made by Judge Hohausser and seconded by Ms. Archbold.
- Mr. Davis provided background information and explained that while we have tried to keep fees low, the cost of the operations we have in place is exceeding the fees and fines derived. We also have to ensure that in the future we implement necessary measures for the safety of the campus community. We surveyed 16 SUNY schools and compared services and fees and determined that this was the time for change. We have presented modest changes in the vehicle registration fees as well as several changes in the traffic fines and violations. Dr. Elliott and Ms. Makhijani thanked Mr. Davis for the thorough analysis he put forth in requesting these increases.
- Ms. Regnante asked how much revenue was derived from the operation. Mr. Davis replied that approximately \$50 thousand was raised from vehicle registration. She asked about the amount of revenue raised from fines. Mr. Davis responded that because of a problem we had a few years ago, wherein we had less than a desirable amount of parking, we have not had a robust fines program. Discussions with the unions played a part in determining the amount of the requested increase in the vehicle registration fees. Mr. Davis said he just wants to cover costs. The Council voted 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention. Resolution 3 passed.
- The Council then moved on to *Resolution 1: Proposed Policy on Student Rights and Assembly Procedures*. Ms. Makhijani read Resolution 1 into the record. Dr. Elliott motioned to consider the resolution and Judge Hohausser seconded the motion. Ms. Makhijani asked what brought about the need for the resolution. Mr. William Kimmins, Assistant to the President for Administration, responded that while we have procedures in place enabling faculty, staff, students and the public to request to use our facilities for events, they do not apply to controversial free speech issues. Because other SUNY institutions have had free speech issues resulting in litigation, SUNY Legal

has advised that we have specific policies for controversial events. Ms. Makhijani pointed out that it is important, when delineating rights, to be wholly inclusive, because if you potentially omit some rights you are de facto limiting rights. She questioned the fact that there was no mention of the College not retaliating or discriminating against any group. These are standard provisions, and she is concerned that should there be any future litigation, the omission of these provisions might create a problem for the College. Judge Hohausser took issue with some of the wording in the Student Application for the Use of Facility/Space Reservation.

- Mr. Shaikh pointed out that the policy had been adapted from the policy at the University at Albany that had been approved following a number of legal challenges. Ms. Makhijani felt the policy had a lot of issues. It was agreed that Mr. Kimmins would talk with SUNY Legal and that he, Ms. Makhijani and Judge Hohausser would remain in touch in order to resolve issues before the next College Council meeting on February 7. Judge Hohausser asked Mr. Shaikh for any context he might have regarding the litigation at the University at Albany. Mr. Shaikh did not have that information, so Judge Hohausser said that he would reach out to someone on the College Council at the University at Albany to get some background information.
- With these issues unresolved, Dr. Elliott motioned to table discussion of Resolution 1, and the Council voted unanimously to do so.
- Ms. Makhijani read *Resolution 2, Proposed Policy on Public Forum Free Speech*, into the record. She then asked for a motion to consider the resolution. None was forthcoming because similar issues existed with this resolution as with Resolution 1.
- Ms. Makhijani asked for Council member Mr. Kalief Metellus, SGA President, to report. Mr. Metellus stated that the SGA had approved a resolution calling for the SGA to allocate funds to the campus food pantry. Another SGA Resolution that was approved called for fraternities and sororities to receive a budget line from the SGA for the programs they conduct which serve the campus community. An SGA Resolution was approved calling for the SGA to supply some dehumidifiers. This will require further conversations with Mr. Kimmins, Residential Life, and the Dean of Students and Student Affairs. An SGA Resolution clarifying wording in the SGA Constitution was approved as well.
- There are 21 new clubs and organizations.
Some initiatives the SGA is trying to accomplish are as follows:
- Extending library hours to 1:00 am to accommodate commuter students whose classes end at 10:00 pm.
- Getting computers in Residence Halls. Mr. Metellus is working closely with the IT Governance Committee, of which he is a member, and Residential Life to accomplish this by spring 2020.
- He and his team are working with the Auxiliary Services Corporation (ASC) to enable the Panther Card to be usable off campus in locations such as CVS, Target and Blink.
- The SGA is working to extend the food pantry hours since it is currently open only on Tuesday and Wednesday.
For next semester the SGA is working on issues such as:
- Registering an activity fee; they are working with Mr. Davis on this.
- Establishing an SGA Engagement Award
- Party Smart Campaign using Club Bash
- Working with the bookstore to conduct a Panther Pride Day one day per week during which students would receive discounts
- The SGA will be collaborating with the following campus constituencies next semester: University Police, Residential Life, First-Year Experience, CSTEP (Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program), EOP (Educational Opportunity Program), ASC, Food Service Advisory, IT Governance Committee, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and the Center for Student Leadership and Involvement (CSLI).
- Ms. Makhijani commended Mr. Metellus on all of the work the SGA has undertaken and then requested the Deans to comment.
- Dr. Barbara Hillery, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, pointed out the fall 2019 issue of the School of Arts and Sciences' magazine *Unfettered Inquiry* that she had distributed to those gathered. The magazine reports on what has happened over the past year in terms of events

and faculty and student achievements. She mentioned that the College is serving as the host for the Regional SUNY Undergraduate Research Symposium in the spring.

- Mr. Andrew Mattson, Faculty Senate Chair, said he would postpone his report until the next meeting, but wanted to welcome the new College Council members and tell them that faculty members are so happy that they are here, as the transition begins to a large extent with the College Council. Faculty is excited to work with the Council and the administration to make the transition work.
- Ms. Makhijani asked what topic Mr. Mattson was tabling. He said it concerned the anxieties about the transition. It also concerned the work that the faculty is doing with the administration on Middle States, which is a major commitment by the faculty and the administration, entailing many committees. This is a “deep dive” into what Old Westbury does academically, in terms of governance, etc., and is the major project currently. Faculty governance is also working with the administration on the Strategic Plan. The plan we are working on is 2018 – 2023. We have a plan and an implementation plan. We also have the SPAAR Committee (Strategic Plan Analysis and Assessment Review Committee) which is charged with seeing that we are actually moving toward the goals and implementation of the plan.
- Ms. Makhijani requested, since this was Dr. Butts’ last Council meeting, that Mr. Mattson address the issue regarding anxieties about the transition. Mr. Mattson stated that faculty has been very concerned about the progress of the transition because the College Council was not meeting and there was the obstacle of not getting new appointments from the governor. The SUNY Chancellor and the Office of the President worked very hard to get those appointments made. The faculty thanks both the Chancellor and the President for their tireless efforts to get Council members appointed. The President recently had a Town Hall Meeting. The President reassured the campus community about the progress that had occurred. It was very good to hear from the Office of the President about the timing of the transition, the process itself, what is happening, etc. Sharing information about the process, the fact that new Council members have been appointed, and that search committee meetings will take place in January goes a long way towards assuring the entire College community that this is an orderly transition, that progress is being made, that it will have integrity, and that there will be continued communication and transparency.
- Dr. Butts said that we have been waiting to hear about the Officer-in-Charge, Interim President, or whatever term is used, and this, for him and for the faculty particularly, is crucial. Cabinet members have prepared reports about their Divisions, and Dr. Butts would like to be able to welcome this person. Ms. Makhijani said that she would follow up with SUNY Chancellor, Dr. Kristina Johnson, who has the ability to make this appointment. They did have a brief discussion because the search process is just beginning in January 2020.
- Discussion ensued as to what title the incoming person would hold. This is still to be clarified by SUNY.
- Dr. Edwards remarked that the angst experienced by people he spoke to did not concern what the person’s title would be, but rather whether the person was coming.
- Mr. Mattson mentioned that Ms. Makhijani was the spokesperson to communicate to the Chancellor on behalf of Administration as the Administration cannot participate in the Presidential search. He also commented that what Ms. Makhijani was saying is very reassuring.
- Ms. Makhijani said that she takes everyone’s concerns seriously and they will be communicated effectively. She thanked everyone for putting their trust in her.
- Dr. Butts remarked that he had been told there would be an emergency meeting at the end of the week whereby an Officer-in-Charge would be named. He understood that there were two strong possibilities, and either the Chancellor or the Chancellor and the Board would have to make a decision about who that is. Dr. Butts said he did not know the names in question and whether or not the meeting was called, but he’s sure that Ms. Makhijani can inquire. Dr. Butts stressed that he has always wanted to have a smooth transition. Dr. Butts said that Mr. Mattson was right, and that based on today’s meeting, the Governor has appointed four very good members to our College Council. He also thanked the other College Council members for “hanging in there”, raising difficult questions at an important time, and making their suggestions. He thinks that the Governor has made the right choice for Chair of the Council and he congratulates and welcomes

Ms. Makhijani. Dr. Butts also thanked Ms. Mona Rankin, Chief of Staff, who has been a true, Chief of Staff, friend and confidante.

V. Open Meeting

As there were no members of the public remaining to put forth questions or comments, Ms. Makhijani requested a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was made by Judge Hohausser and seconded by Mr. Metellus. The meeting was adjourned at 12:54 pm.

Submitted by:

Irene Cotton
Administrative Assistant to the President