

**South Arkansas Community College
Board of Trustees Meeting
Minutes
September 21, 2021 – 3:45 p.m.
Admn. Board Room**

Trustees: Steve Cousins, Chair, Gary Griffis, Vice Chair, Crystal Yeager, Secretary, Kerri Brown, José Covas, Wayne Gibson, Melissa Jerry

Absent: Courtney Crotty

SouthArk Staff: Dr. Bentley Wallace, Dr. Derek Moore, Dr. Stephanie Tully-Dartez, Dr. Tim Kirk, Kathy Modica, Ray Winiecki, Cynthia Reyna, Philip Shackelford, Heath Waldrop, Christy Wilson

- I. **Call to Order** – Mr. Steve Cousins, Chair – Called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m.
- II. **Recognitions and Awards** – Dr. Bentley Wallace – Recognized Cynthia Reyna, Foundation Director, Faculty, Staff, and all others involved in making the 2021 Expo a huge success.
- III. **Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes** – May 18, 2021 – Cousins/Jerry. **Board Approved Minutes.**
- IV. **Approval of Special Called Board Meeting Minutes** – June 10, 2021 – Cousins/Jerry. **Board Approved Minutes.**
- V. **Approval of Consent Agenda** – Mr. Cousins – Mr. Cousins asked if any items needed to be moved from the Consent Agenda to the regular agenda for discussion/comments/questions. Mr. Cousins requested for the Monitoring Report be moved from the Consent Agenda to the regular agenda for discussion. Gibson/Covas. **Board Approved.**
 - A. Personnel Report
 - B. Monitoring Reports
 1. Student Success Pathways (Policy #23 ENDS 2)

Discussion: Dr. Stephanie Tully-Dartez reviewed the highlights of the monitoring report data (Student Success Pathways Policy #23 ENDS 2). Section C (Progression), and Section D (Completion) were reviewed in detail. Mr. Gary Griffis requested a follow-up report of Section D (Completion), with a break down by divisions. The requested information will be provided in the November's Board Packet. Griffis/Jerry. **Board Approved.**

Mr. Jose Covas commended SouthArk on the exceptional pass rate of programs for Licensure and Certification.

- VI. **Board Committee Reports**
 - A. Real Estate/Facilities Committee – Ms. Kerri Brown - None
 - B. Personnel/Planning Committee – Mr. Gary Griffis, chair, reported that the committee met on the following dates:

Monday, September 20, 2021. Mr. Griffis presented the committee's discussion of the following:

1. The President's Evaluation Review – The Board completed a 3rd party ACCT presidential evaluation in June 2021 on Dr. Wallace. Eight of the nine trustees responded to the following categories (Leadership, Crisis Preparedness, Finance and Accountability, Relations with BOT, Human Resources, Facilities, Academic and Student Affairs, Strategic Goals); with results of 79% on Strategic Goals and 73% on the other categories. The committee would like noted that since February 1, 2020, Dr Wallace has led South Arkansas Community College throughout a crisis and pandemic time all the while making improvements to better position SouthArk for the future. He has sustained the college with clear and strong leadership to navigate SouthArk into a successful and rewarding next chapter.

2. The President's Contract Update – Addendum changes and new language updates of the following were discussed and are to be formally written and presented to the Personnel Planning Committee for approval on Tuesday, September 21, 2021:
 - a. new language to satisfy Act 352 from the state legislature (insert into contract section 13.4)
 - b. amend renewal language to a rolling three year contract
 - c. financial adjustment to current salaryNo Action was taken

Tuesday, September 21, 2021. Mr. Griffis presented the committee's recommendation to approve the following formal Presidential Employment Contract dated September 22, 2021 – Addendum:

1. New language to the president's contract- (reviewed with the Attorney General)

In order to satisfy requirement of Act 352 of the 93rd General Assembly of the Arkansas Legislature, add the following language as the second paragraph of section 13.4 of the original contract dated January 22, 2020:

Per Act 352 of the 93rd General Assembly, a contract buyout agreement shall not use more than 12 months' worth of state funds to compensate an outgoing President of a state-supported institution of higher education. A state-supported institution of higher education is not in violation of this section if it compensates an outgoing president with state funds while the outgoing president or chancellor serves in either a tenured faculty position or other agreed-upon employment position within the state-supported institution of higher education. Funds not received from the state may be used for buyout purposes

2. Amend renewal language to rolling three year contract

In order to better define the appointment and renewal timeline of the contract, Section 3.1 is amended as follows:

This appointment renews for a term of thirty-six (36) months commencing on July 1, 2021, subject however, to prior termination as provided for in this Agreement. If Board does not give written notice of non-renewal to President on or before June 30th of each year of the term, the then existing term shall be extended by one (1) year, maintaining a 3-year rolling term at all times. This agreement is to be reviewed on an annual basis in order to determine the desirability of extending the term of this Agreement. This Agreement will be null and void if at any time funding necessary to fund this Agreement is not appropriated by the Arkansas Legislature.

Discussion – Mr. Griffis requested action of the Board to approve items 1 and 2 separately because of the complexity around language and wording. **Board Approved Items 1 and 2.**

3. Financial adjustment to salary

Following the performance evaluation (2/1/20 through 6/30/21) conducted by the Board of Trustees, President's annual salary to be increased by 4.5% ($\$180,000 \times 4.5\% = \$8,100$ increase) paid retroactively beginning July 1, 2021.

Discussion – Dr. Wallace thanked the Personnel Planning Committee and Board for his evaluation and proposed salary increase, but objected the 4.5% increase. Wallace stated that 2.0% adjustments were made to SouthArk employees this year, and therefor he would only accept a 2.0% salary adjustment also. Dr. Wallace requested the Board's approval of a 2.0% financial adjustment to his salary.

Adjusted Item 3- Financial adjustment to salary

Following the performance evaluation (2/1/20 through 6/30/21) conducted by the Board of Trustees, President's annual salary to be increased by 2.0% ($\$180,000 \times 2.0\% = \$3,600$ increase) paid retroactively beginning July 1, 2021. Griffis/Jerry. **Board Approved Adjusted Item 3.**

- C. Budget/Finance Committee – Ms. Melissa Jerry, chair, reported that the committee met on Tuesday, September 21, 2021. Ms. Jerry presented the committee’s recommendation to approve the following:
1. FY 20 – State Audit Response as presented
 - audit findings were presented and discussed
 - a plan of action to correct the audit findings was presented by Dr. Wallace

Discussion – Mr. Cousins requested for Dr. Wallace to elaborate on his plan of action. Dr. Wallace stated that due to the turn-over of key positions of the VPFA and the Controller, during the end of year close out, caused a significant hardship on the thorough and quality reporting of financial information submitted. His plan of corrective action is to:

- utilize outside consulting help for training/guidance
- change the position of Controller to AVP/CPA (a qualified individual with specific training)
- review all of prior year audit adjustments to ensure they were properly entered

Board Approved.

2. Plant Fund Budget as presented

• Dr. Wallace reviewed the Plant Fund Budget (unrestricted funds used to maintain facilities), and explained how the majority of the funds this year will be used to purchase a chiller for the Health Science Building, upgrade the SouthArk vehicle fleet, and the Housing Feasibility Study.

Board Approved.

- D. Policy Governance Committee – Mr. Steve Cousins - None

VII. **Chair’s Report – Mr. Cousins**

- A. Board Process and Performance Monitoring

Mr. Steve Cousins requested the Ratification of Mr. Jim Tidwell to the SouthArk Foundation Board. Cousins/Brown. **Board Approved.**

- B. Appointment of Nominating Committee for Officers (Odd Numbered Year)

Mr. Cousins requested for the existing Nominating Committee to remain in office for the remainder of the year. (Nominating Committee Members: Wayne Gibson, Jose Covas, Crystal Yeager)

Board Approved.

(The Nominating Committee shall nominate the following Board of Trustees Officers: a chair, a vice-chair, and a secretary. The committee shall have the responsibility of obtaining the agreement of each nominee to serve if elected. The **report** of the Nominating Committee shall be made to the Board of Trustees in the **November 2021 meeting of the Board**. The election of officers shall be held during the January 2022 meeting of the Board.)

- C. Board Review & Approve President’s Annual Goals

Dr. Wallace presented the following annual goals:

1. Community
 - Legislative
 - Community Outreach
 - Athletics
2. Sustainability
 - Organizational Structure Review
 - Safety and Security
 - Inquiry and Analysis of Independent Institution Status
 - Fundraising and Grants
3. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
 - Shared Governance
 - Long Range Planning
4. Student Success
 - Student Progression
 - Completion and Credentials
 - Affordability
 - Employment and Transfer

Board Approved.

Discussion – Mr. Griffis requested for Dr. Wallace to “bring back” and present a clear and defined 3 to 5 year growth plan of goals in the next Board meeting. Griffis/Jerry. **Board Approved.**

- D. Board Review & Approve Meeting Schedule Calendar
The current Meeting Schedule Calendar was presented and reviewed with no changes/edits.
Board Approved.

E. Reminders:

1. Annual ACCT Leadership Congress – San Diego, CA -October 13-16, 2021
2. Virtual Arkansas Community Colleges (ACC) Conference – October 11-12, 2021
(Kathy Modica will send out reminders to the Board)

VIII. **Financial Services Report**

A. May Monthly Statements

May 2021 highlights included total unrestricted revenue of \$11,471,112, which is 81.63% of the total budget of \$14,052,848. Total unrestricted expenses of \$10,653,372, which is 75.81% of the total budget of \$14,052,848. Total revenues over expenditures at May 31, 2021 were \$817,740.86. Total cash and investments at May 31, 2021, were \$7,801,642.38.

B. June Monthly Statements – June 30th is the end of the Fiscal Year

June 2021 highlights included total unrestricted revenue of \$12,657,840, which is 90.07% of the total budget of \$14,053,148. Total unrestricted expenses of \$11,849,519, which is 84.32% of the total budget of \$14,053,148. Total revenues over expenditures at June 30, 2021 were \$808,320.38. Total cash and investments at June 30, 2021, were \$6,273,998.66.

C. July Monthly Statements

July 2021 highlights included total unrestricted revenue of \$1,063,207, which is 7.81% of the total budget of \$13,621,541. Total unrestricted expenses of \$811,107, which is 5.95% of the total budget of \$13,621,541. Total revenues over expenditures at July 31, 2021 were \$252,099.32. Total cash and investments at July 31, 2021, were \$8,134,057.19.

D. August Monthly Statements

August 2021 highlights included total unrestricted revenue of \$3,378,680, which is 24.35% of the total budget of \$13,873,165. Total unrestricted expenses of \$1,596,696, which is 11.51% of the total budget of \$13,873,165. Total revenues over expenditures at August 31, 2021 were \$1,781,984.47. Total cash and investments at August 31, 2021, were 7,986,946.27.

E. El Dorado Conference Center Quarterly Marketing Report – Included in packet

IX. **President’s Report – Dr. Bentley Wallace**

A. Administrative Reports – Included in the packet

B. President’s Updates

1. SouthArk Outdoor Expo & 9/11 Event – The 2021 Outdoor Expo was very successful with 52 sponsors, 32 vendors, 10 food trucks, and 50 exhibitors. Dr. Wallace recognized Cynthia Reyna, faculty, staff, and students for their hard work and dedication.

The 9/11 Memorial Event went very well also. Special thanks to Dr. Sterling Claypoole, the El Dorado Fire Department, the Police Honor Guards, Rev. Robert Wetherington, the El Dorado School District Singers, Lt. Erick Meadows, Michele Hildreth, and all others involved with the honorable and acclaimed event.

2. Enrollment Update – The data report from ADHE, which detailed comparisons of fall enrollment for SouthArk and other colleges in the state of Arkansas; was shared with the Board. Dr. Wallace explained the data showing how on a 5 year running average of enrollment, SouthArk is out-performing the averages around the state.
3. Housing Feasibility Study – SCION is in the process of conducting surveys and gathering information needed towards the Housing Feasibility Study.
4. Vice President for Finance and Administration Search – SouthArk is continuing to monitor and search for applicants.

5. Conference Center Update – The final documentation for the new agreement is being prepared for signatures and the lawyer’s review.
6. Student Center Update – Great progress is being made on the transformation of the McWilliams House into the new Student Center. The Grand Opening will be next month. (more details will be sent out)
7. COVID Update – The HR department and Dr. Moore are doing a great job with reporting, providing COVID guidelines, and assisting faculty, staff, and students.
8. Scott Street – Mr. Scott Street has officially resigned from the SouthArk Board of Trustees, and is moving to Southwest Arkansas. (the replacement process is in motion with the governor’s office)

X. **Executive Session** – Mr. Gary Griffis requested an Executive Session at 4:55 p.m. Jerry/ Brown.
Board Approved.

The Board came out of the Executive Session at 5:08 p.m.

XI. Announcements

XII. Adjournment – 5:10 p.m.

Ms. Crystal Yeager, Secretary

Action Items/Requests – from the May 18, 2021 Board Meeting:

1. Courtney Crotty requested for calendar invites for the Board of Trustees Meetings to be sent to the Board.
2. The Board Self Evaluation Survey results will be sent out to the Board.
3. A date for the Board Retreat will be confirmed and sent out.

Follow-Up to Action Items/Request from the May 18, 2021 Board Meeting:

1. Calendar invites for the Board of Trustees Meetings were emailed to the Board on June 24, 2021.
2. The Board Self Evaluation Survey results were given to the Board at the July 30, 2021 Board Retreat.
3. The confirmed date of Friday, July 30, 2021, for the Board Retreat, was sent to the Board on June 17, 2021.

Action Items/Requests – from the September 21, 2021 Board Meeting:

1. Mr. Gary Griffis requested a follow-up report of Section D (Completion - with a break-down by division), of the Student Success Pathways Monitoring Report, to be presented in the November 16, 2021 Board Meeting.
2. Mr. Gary Griffis requested for Dr. Wallace to “bring back” and present a clear and defined 3 to 5 year growth plan of goals for the next Board meeting.
3. Kathy Modica is to send out a reminder of the ACC - 2021 Conference dates to the Board