

**MINUTES**  
**Bluegrass Community and Technical College**  
**Board of Directors**  
**Leestown Campus, M Building, Room 128**  
**September 11, 2019**

**Members Present:** Pamela Brough; Dr. Joshua Hoekstra, Secretary; Dr. Brian Houillion; Florence Huffman; Robert McNulty; Marissa Smith, Vice Chair; Seth Spears; S. Dudley Taylor; Theodore Vittos; Ron Walker, Jr., Chair

**Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Dr. Koffi Akakpo, Lisa Bell, Tammy Liles, Mark Manuel, Dr. Laurel Martin, Dr. Karen Mayo, Dr. Palisa Williams Rushin, Dr. Rebecca Simms, Michelle Sjogren, Cindy Tucker, Melanie Williamson

**I. Welcome/Introductions**

Chair Ron Walker called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. He welcomed the members and thanked them for their attendance. Members and others in attendance introduced themselves.

Chair Walker invited Seth Spears, who had several statements to make on behalf of the student. Mr. Spears emailed students and asked them what they would like the leadership of Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) to consider. The number one response was to help the adjunct faculty members. Several students knew of adjunct faculty who could not stay with the college due to financial hardship. Mr. Spears suggested providing adjunct faculty with benefits or raising their pay. Another concern was raising funding for student organizations. Mr. Spears conducted research and knows that social networks raise student retention rates. He noted that one of the goals listed in the annual priorities document included in the board packet is to increase the number of degrees earned by students. He recommended better advertising of student organizations, especially those that offer scholarships that may help students and increase retention rates. Mr. Spears remarked that many students choose BCTC for financial reasons, so this could help with increased enrollment and retention. Chair Walker thanked Mr. Spears for this information, noting that the board members and leadership will consider these matters as we develop plans for the future.

Robert McNulty noted the date and asked all in attendance to share a moment of silence to remember those who were impacted by the events in 2001. Chair Walker agreed that it was appropriate. Those in attendance observed a moment of silence.

## **II. Business Meeting**

### **A. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the June 5, 2019, Board of Directors meeting were presented for approval. A motion was made by Theodore Vittos to approve the minutes. Dr. Joshua Hoekstra seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

### **B. Election of Officers, 2019-2020**

Chair Walker invited Florence Huffman to share a report by the nominating committee. Ms. Huffman thanked Pamela Brough and Marissa Smith for volunteering for the committee and for providing input into this process.

On behalf of the nominating committee, Ms. Huffman presented the following slate of candidates for consideration:

- Chair: Ron Walker, Jr.
- Vice Chair: Marissa Smith
- Secretary: Dr. Joshua Hoekstra

Ms. Huffman noted that the by-laws allow for additional nominations from the floor. Chair Walker opened the floor to additional nominations. Hearing none, the floor was closed. Chair Walker asked the members for verbal approval of the slate officers as recommended by the nominating committee. All members voted in approval of the slate. Chair Walker thanked the committee for their work and congratulated the officers. He expressed his appreciation for the confidence the membership has shown him, and the opportunity to continue as board chair.

## **III. Information/Discussion**

### **A. Computer and Information Technologies Program Presentation**

Dr. Greg Feeney introduced Melanie Williamson and Cindy Tucker, two outstanding faculty members who have been with the college for some time. They are here, along with Dr. Karen Mayo and Tammy Liles, to share a wonderful achievement. Dr. Mayo played a part in the development of this program, and Ms. Liles has played a significant part in carrying it out. Dr. Feeney noted that Ms. Williamson is the Assistant Dean of the Business, Computer, and Information Systems (BCIS) division.

Ms. Williamson stated that there are between 400-500 students in the Computer and Information Technologies (CIT) program each semester. There are five tracks for students to pursue in two focus areas: Computer

Science and Informatics. These programs are a part of the work ready scholarship programs which is a wonderful benefit to assist students.

Ms. Tucker remarked that the National Security Agency (NSA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) developed the National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense (CAE-CD) program a few years ago. They look at academic programs at both two and four-year institutions and select those that meet stringent criteria in cyber security. There is a growing demand for cyber security specialists, and it is estimated that an additional 1.4 million people with these skills will be needed in the next few years. BCTC applied to be a Center of Academic Excellence on May 1, 2019, and the designation was approved in July. BCTC is the only community college in Kentucky with this designation. The first school to be approved in Kentucky was Northern Kentucky University, and BCTC has an articulation agreement in place with them. BCTC is the first program with a pathway that students can follow from high school, to community college, to a four-year institution. This pathway is a huge benefit for BCTC students.

As a Center of Academic Excellence, BCTC can use the NSA and DHS logos on marketing materials, and employers know what it means to be a designated institution. Graduates will be sought out for employment.

Ms. Williamson noted that any student in those five tracks could earn this designation. BCTC has opened this up as a possibility for all CIT AAs majors. There are four required classes, but they must be taken at BCTC because our courses are approved. There is a notation on the student's transcript showing that the student graduated from a CAE-CD institution.

Ms. Smith asked if students are eligible to return to school to retake one or two classes in order to be eligible for this designation. Ms. Williamson responded that BCTC's designation is in place from 2019-2024, so any student who graduates this year is eligible. If a student takes a course at another institution, they can retake the class here and BCTC has to confer the degree.

Mr. Vittos asked if the college must exemplify risk mitigation in the infrastructure, in addition to the course components. Ms. Tucker said the application was very stringent, and there were 400 specific topics that had to be addressed. Ms. Williamson and Ms. Tucker worked with the Information Technology department to revise the security plan to ensure that it met the criteria. The application had to illustrate that the college practiced good business principle and show that articulation agreements were in place with other universities. We had to prove that faculty are credentialed to teach, and we had to demonstrate outreach in the community, such as offering workforce development courses. Ms. Tucker noted that the institution holds the designation. The designation is in place because of the CIT program, and

that is why students must take the courses from BCTC. Ms. Tucker remarked that this was a lot of work, and there was a good team in place to ensure that we had a successful application.

Chair Walker asked if there were grants through the NSA that BCTC would be eligible to apply for because of this designation. Ms. Tucker said that there are grants only available to CAE-CD institutions, and there are other opportunities for schools holding that designation. This designation will open up several possibilities for BCTC.

Ms. Williamson stated that Dr. Akakpo will be accepting the designation on behalf of BCTC at a conference in November. Dr. Feeney will also attend.

Dr. Hoekstra said there is a push for students who are using the work ready scholarship to get them working as soon as possible. He asked if students would be ready to work with a two-year degree, or if it would behoove them to transfer to a four-year institution. Ms. Williamson said students can get a job upon completion here, but they will be encouraged to continue to get an additional credential. Students will make a good salary with our degree. Ms. Tucker said that cyber security is a new discipline. The Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) are two of the largest professional organizations that work in this space globally. They recognize that businesses have overinflated education requirements needed to do cyber security, and students can perform well with a two-year degree. Together, they are looking to reduce educational requirements from masters to bachelors and from bachelors to associates. Students with an associate degree can find work immediately, but there are jobs requiring additional training, so students will be encouraged to continue on to other institutions here in Kentucky.

Ms. Williamson noted that we already have a pathway from the Informatics Academy at the high school. Two of those classes are a part of this credential. If students continue on to BCTC, they will have completed four classes. While those four classes help meet the criteria, the designation is for the two-year degree, so we want them to persist and obtain the degree.

Chair Walker commended everyone for their work in support of this designation and offered congratulations for the successful outcome.

## **B. President's Report**

Dr. Koffi Akakpo asked Dr. Mayo to share her good news prior to his report.

Dr. Mayo announced that BCTC has been selected as the sole provider for Kentucky in the Department of Criminal Justice in Training (DOCJT). This is a similar partnership to what is already in place for the Lexington Policy

Academy and the Kentucky State Police. Cadets must complete 22 weeks of training to be in law enforcement. After completion, BCTC will articulate that credit over. Cadets will take five general education classes and will be awarded the AAS-General Occupational/Technical Studies (GOTS) degree. We anticipate there will be approximately 160-170 cadets per year in this program. Each of them will receive the AAS degree and two certificates in Criminal Justice.

Dr. Mayo noted that the college went through a significant selection process. This partnership will begin on September 22, 2019. Currently, classes are only offered online, but we may implement a hybrid model and are in discussion with the DOCJT. This program will increase the education level across Kentucky.

Dr. Mayo reminded the members of the partnership with the Lexington Police Academy on the Newtown Campus. The partnership was formed in the Spring 2015. Since that time, their cadets have been awarded 150 degrees, 306 credentials, and they have a 98 percent success rate. Cadets are committed once they enter the program. The partnership with the Kentucky State Police began in Spring 2018, and BCTC has awarded 16 degrees and 32 certificates to their cadets. Dr. Mayo stated that, as of today, BCTC educates the law enforcement personnel for the entire state of Kentucky, except for Louisville.

Dr. Mayo reported that the DOCJT is opening this opportunity to any officers who completed basic training, but we will need to review the curricula taught at the time of their training to make sure there is a match to the competencies that we teach. This is a one-year contract, but Dr. Mayo is very confident that this will be an ongoing relationship with the DOCJT. Dr. Mayo appreciates all the support that helped make this a reality.

Dudley Taylor asked how many campuses have police. Dr. Mayo said that the DOCJT is housed at Eastern Kentucky University, and cadets go there to be trained. Mr. Taylor asked if they would take the courses online or attend classes at BCTC. Dr. Mayo responded that everyone is taking the courses online currently, but we may eventually offer some in person, depending on the success rates and if there is a desire for in person courses. Faculty would go to Richmond to teach in person courses.

Ms. Smith asked how many cadets would go through the training. Dr. Mayo responded that there are approximately 160-170 cadets who attend the academy each year. Coursework will be free for the cadets, as the DOCJT has a funding source to pay for the classes. Cadets who have already graduated and want this training will need to self-pay. Dr. Mayo noted that there are currently 120 officers who have already graduated who are

interested in coming back for this training. This group has been added to a wait list. We hope to get them enrolled as soon as possible.

Chair Walker said this is a significant achievement for the college. As someone who works in the law enforcement field, he knows that cadets who go through this program will benefit greatly. He expressed his appreciation to everyone.

Dr. Brian Houillion asked if this program was a requirement for all cadets, or if it was optional. Dr. Mayo responded that it is optional, but it is free so we hope most will take advantage of the opportunity.

Dr. Akakpo reported that enrollment is up 6.2 percent over the last year, as of this morning. BCTC has done a good job of raising funds for buildings in the past. He has decided that the next 12 months to help students finish what they started. Dr. Akakpo has asked employees to consider giving to the Foundation with goal of 100 percent participation. He reported 14 participation last year, and this year we are currently at 31 percent participation. He hopes we will continue to get closer to 100 percent, as it helps to share with potential donors that 100 percent of employees have given.

Dr. Akakpo asked the board members to consider giving, as it helps make a compelling argument when speaking with potential donors. It demonstrates that we all help. He noted that the amount is not relevant, but the statistic is what helps make the case. In the end, all gifts will be directed to help students. Dr. Akakpo cited reports indicating that 60 percent of students have hunger and shelter issues, so we need to do what we can address those problems. Chair Walker remarked that he is fully in support of the board showing their support of this initiative.

Dr. Akakpo referenced a report from Spring 2019, which flagged students who cannot complete their degree because they are on a payment plan with the state. Dr. Akakpo worked with the Bursar's office to clear those debts so those students can finish their degrees with BCTC and go on to better lives.

Ms. Huffman asked how board members should give. Dr. Laurel Martin responded that she will work with members to make it easy. She offered to bring information to the next meeting as well. Chair Walker asked members to email Dr. Martin with specifics about their gift so Dr. Martin can report the success.

Robert McNulty asked if this was in addition to a previous gift, or simply a gift to the Foundation. Dr. Akakpo responded that this is a separate campaign. Dr. Martin will provide more information with options.

Dr. Hoekstra recognizes that there are some short-term issues. He also noted that it is a challenge to keep alumni connected to and identifying with the college. He knows there are people who have long-standing personal and professional connections to BCTC. He wondered if there was a way to grant emeritus status to faculty, or other ways to keep faculty connected in a meaningful relationship. Dr. Martin said that is something we need to work on, and she is working with Human Resources to get information to cultivate those relationships. She stated that we are sharing newsletters with those groups and working to create an event for former faculty and staff that may be meaningful to them, such as a program to share academic and current issues. There are some networks currently in place that we can tap into that will help us reach that goal.

Ms. Smith said some staff feel weird sending in a small check and wondered what could be done to share that a \$5 or \$10 check is good because it helps get us to 100 percent participation goal. Dr. Martin will work to address that in the future messages. There are employees who give \$1 each paycheck, so she will work to normalize that type of gift.

Mr. Spears said that many students do not know that BCTC offers scholarships. He asked how they would know that these funds were available. Dr. Akakpo responded that once the funds are in place, we will advertise it, so students know that scholarships are available. Dr. Akakpo wants to do more and hopes to increase the scholarship dollars available to students.

Chair Walker agreed that we should encourage former faculty and staff to stay engaged with the college and hope they will be invited back so they continue to share experiences with students. He hopes to hear more at the December meeting.

Dr. Akakpo noted that board members receive the monthly newsletter but wondered if anyone wished to receive press releases as they were sent out. Dr. Houillion said he did not know about the recent shooting close to the Newtown Campus and he thought it would be helpful to be made aware of it. Dr. Akakpo said that he did not like that it happened, but it did allow us to look at our plans to position ourselves better for future incidents.

Chair Walker thanked Dr. Akakpo for his report.

### **C. SACSCOC Reaccreditation Update**

Dr. Feeney stated that the onsite committee will arrive in 11 days, and the team is in the process of finalizing all the components. The off-site review went well, and we submitted a focused report in August. Dr. Feeney is working with the committee chair to prepare for the visit from September 22-

26, 2019. During that visit, the committee will meet with the leadership, faculty, staff, and students. They will give us a report at the end of the visit. Dr. Feeney is optimistic, as he feels we have worked hard and are in a good place. The committee is comprised of our peers, and we have two presidents and a mix of faculty and staff from multiple areas.

A final report will be sent after the visit, and college leadership will have the opportunity to respond to their comments for a final review in December. At that point, there will be a vote and it will be official the following June.

Chair Walker thanked Dr. Feeney for his report.

#### **D. Annual Priorities, 2019-2020**

Dr. Akakpo referenced the annual priorities document in the board packet. He noted that leadership narrowed the priorities down to four, as the first and second items were similar, so they were combined. In addition, the Sub-WIG was changed. At the June meeting, Dr. Akakpo reported that 1,300 students were placed on probation and 200 were dismissed last fall. The Sub-WIG will help us focus on students so we can reduce that number. He noted that our job is equity and social justice, and we must give everyone a chance.

The annual priorities will help us focus on reducing the achievement gap. We will do this several ways. For example, we have already added more advisors. In the past, students were not assigned an advisor until the end of their first term, but we were losing students in week four and week ten. Going forward from this term, every student will be assigned an advisor from day one. This will give them someone that they can talk to, and who will check in on them throughout the semester. By doing this, we should be able to improve that number, as we do not want to put that many students on probation.

Ms. Huffman agreed that students do not always feel comfortable asking questions. She knows several former students who are very successful, but they were very afraid when they started taking classes because they did not think they could succeed in college, and they did not want to be thought of as stupid or ill informed. She asked what kind of workload we were putting on existing staff due to the implementation of this model. Dr. Akakpo responded that he is watching the workload. We hired four additional advisors, but we will do what is right. An advisor's caseload varies, and some have 500-600 advisees. Dr. Akakpo does not want advisors to have that many, as he wants them to be able to focus on their caseload.

Ms. Huffman asked what strategies were in place to encourage new students to ask questions and feel comfortable. Dr. Akakpo responded that his message to students at orientation is for them to learn to ask questions. We



must reach out to them and build their trust. Once they trust us, they will come back. Dr. Akakpo met with Aaron Akey and his team of advisors last week and they are doing a good job. They are preparing a message to send to students, so they know we are here to help them. There are plans to buy laptops for advisors, because we know that adult students often do not have time to set up an appointment. Laptops will allow advisors to help students while they are in the classroom.

Dr. Palisa Williams Rushin stated that we have assigned advisors to 4,300 new students. Once a student registers for classes, they are assigned an advisor who will start contacting them. All new students will be contacted by the second week with a message from their advisor. Another message will go out by the fourth week. Students are responding positively to this change. On October 1, students will transition to a faculty advisor, but they will continue to connect with a transition advisor to help them make that change. There is a great deal of intentional and intrusive advising to help students, so they are successful.

Chair Walker said that during the search, Dr. Akakpo made specific points about being student orientated and emphasizing the student. He was very clear that students were the emphasis and that is where priorities would be placed. Board members should feel that they were successful in getting someone to stay on course with their message and to bring that commitment to the college. We are all seeing those results through the enrollment increase and the opportunities that are being advanced for students at the college. Chair Walker commended Dr. Akakpo for his vision and he thanked the faculty and staff for buying in and following up so that student success continues to be the priority.

Dr. Hoekstra noted that faculty are invited to provide advising assistance at the summer orientation programs. He remarked that the advising model is based on relationship building. Students are assigned an advisor and they are the main contact for that student. This works well because he can help a student or find someone to help them as needed. Summer orientation is based on open advising; so many students he meets with are not his advisees. Dr. Hoekstra asked how the new model would address this as he still gets questions from students that he advised during the summer. Dr. Akakpo said that if you treat a student well, they will come back to you. The new model will use teamwork during the transition, and it will take some time to get it right.

## **E. Enrollment Report**

Dr. Rushin provided updated enrollment information. She remarked that the total headcount is up 6.2 percent, with 9,867 students compared to 9,287 last year. Full-time enrollment, where students are enrolled for at least fifteen

hours, is also up, as well as the online headcount. The Newtown Campus is the largest campus.

Ms. Huffman asked for a clarification on the reference to home campus and how that designation is assigned. Dr. Rushin said that Bluegrass is the home campus for our students. The delivering campus is the campus where the class is being taught. Students who take our online courses from other colleges will show Bluegrass as the delivering campus.

#### **F. Budget Update, 2019-2020**

Lisa Bell greeted the board and remarked that she did not prepare any additional information other than the narrative. Yesterday's tuition report shows that we are up \$1.1 million in revenues, equating to 6.8 percent. She noted that we will see a dip because the 12-week session begins on Monday, so we will do a drop for nonpayment on that date, and we will enroll students who do not show up for class during the first week of that session. The enrollment increase is very good news.

Ms. Bell noted that FYE 2019 is not complete yet, but the data as we know it was included in the board packet. She does not anticipate any additional pending journal entries.

Ms. Smith asked for information about the compression study, how that will change salaries and when that might be implemented, if ever. Ms. Bell does not have any additional information to share. The last time she asked, she was told there was not knowledge to provide. Ms. Bell noted that there were no raises for employees this year, but there will be a one-time, \$1,000 stipend paid to qualifying employees in October. Dr. Akakpo has discussed pay with Dr. Jay Box and he expects further discussion to occur this fall.

Ms. Bell remarked that she hopes BCTC is a light for students and that we bring a little good into the world. She thanked the members for their time.

#### **G. Functional Area Updates**

Mark Manuel noted that the Foundation Board has recently added new board members. They include Terry Stein, Lexington; Christy Hockensmith, Georgetown; John Omahondro, Winchester; and Gabe Uebel, Lawrenceburg.

The Foundation just completed their annual audit, and it is believed that everything went well. We will receive a report in the coming weeks.

Work continues to obtain grant funding and BCTC has been successful in receiving several small grants. One is MENTORLINKS grant from the National Science Foundation. This is a pathway into a larger grant, and there is a

team working toward that goal. We are also working on renewals for the Student Support Services grant.

Faculty and staff are engaged in customer service training, and we have seen good results through the implementation. The Information Technologies staff is moving file storage to the cloud, so there has been significant training to help employees navigate those changes. In addition, we have continued the cultural competency training, which is very important for all employees.

Strategic Communications provided a report on the Summer 2019 marketing campaign results. Mr. Manuel provided a handout with additional information. The campaign budget was \$5,000 and the college realized a \$9,514 return on investment. The Strategic Communication staff will continue to utilize digital marketing campaigns in the future.

Dr. Rushin reported that the Title III grant is ending this month. This grant was awarded by the Department of Education. Dr. Rushin noted several long-standing outcomes, including the following:

- A First Year Center on the Newtown Campus
- A strong peer mentoring program
- A faculty studio
- An increase in the first-year retention rate of 3.4 percent
- An endowment of \$140,000 and Dr. Akakpo is raising funds to match that amount
- New equipment and collaborative furniture at all our campuses

Dr. Rushin reported that BCTC has been awarded the Stronger by Degrees grant through the Council on Postsecondary Education. Erin Howard is working diligently on this program to provide culturally responsive dual credit opportunities for Latinx and African American students. We are offering these classes through a partnership with Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Lafayette and Bryan Station High Schools in Lexington.

Dr. Rushin expressed appreciation to Ms. Bell and her staff and several staff in the Student Development and Enrollment Management group for their hard work for students who were on the drop for nonpayment list. Staff contacted all these students to help them make payment arrangements. There were 532 accounts cancelled, as compared to 957 last year, which is an outstanding result.

#### **IV. Announcements**

Chair Walked asked the members to join us at the groundbreaking ceremony at the Danville Campus tomorrow morning. We are breaking ground on the Advanced Manufacturing Center at that location.

Chair Walker expressed hope that the faculty, staff, and students are seeing the results of Dr. Akakpo's agenda and vision for the college. The board has heard very positive results this evening and is very encouraged. He asked Dr. Akakpo to let faculty and staff know that the board is very happy with these results and supportive of the initiatives that are in place. Chair Walker thanked everyone for their hard work, and he hopes to see continued momentum going forward.

**V. Adjourn**

At 7:19 p.m. with no further business to come before the board, Ms. Huffman made a motion to adjourn. Mr. McNulty seconded the motion and the motion carried.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the board will be held on Wednesday, December 4, 2019. The meeting will be held at the Leestown Campus.

12/4/2019

Date Approved by the  
BCTC Board of Directors

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Ron Walker, Jr., Chair  
BCTC Board of Directors

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Dr. Joshua Hoekstra, Secretary  
BCTC Board of Directors