

**AIKEN COUNTY COMMISSION FOR TECHNICAL
AND COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION
AIKEN TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

**March 14, 2022
5:15 p.m.**

**President's Conference Room 102
Ashley Little Administration Building**

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

**NOTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE SOUTH CAROLINA FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION ACT**

ROLL CALL

Present:

Mr. Joe Lewis
Mr. Bill Windley
Mr. Ed Romero
Mr. Alvin Padgett
Ms. Keyatta Priester
Mr. Mike Uhle
Ms. Teresa Haas
Mr. King Laurence

Not Present:

Mr. Charlie Hartz
Mr. Daniel Lloyd
Mr. Stuart MacVean

Also Present:

Dr. Forest Mahan
Mr. Andy Jordan
Ms. Mechelle English
Ms. Sylvia Byrd

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 14, 2022

Mr. Mike Uhle made the motion, seconded by Mr. Alvin Padgett, to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2022, meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

A. Administrative Services – Mr. Andy Jordan

1. Fiscal Year 2021 Single Audit

Summary of Issue: Mr. Jordan presented the FY21 Single Audit for the Commission's information. Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC prepared the Single Audit. FY21 expenditures included federal Higher Education Emergency Relief (HEERF) dollars. The College has additional HEERF dollars to spend in FY22 and FY23. The Single Audit received a clean unmodified opinion.

Action Taken: None taken.

B. Human Resources – Ms. Sylvia Byrd

1. 2021 Equal Employment Opportunity Report

Summary of Issue: Ms. Byrd presented the College's Status of Equal Employment Opportunity Report for 2021. The College achieved overall goal attainment of 90.0%, a 5% increase from last year, and the College ranked #29 among the 90 state agencies. The report indicates a continuing trend of representation of women and minorities in the workforce is increasing slightly. The College continues to utilize various recruitment tools, networks, and job fairs to recruit diverse applicants. Ms. Keyatta Priester shared an example of another college using a hiring committee to review applicants, with gender, race, and name removed from the applications. The committee reviews applications before Human Resources. Mr. Byrd responded that ATC does not have a pre-screening committee, but applications do not disclose race or gender. The HR Peer Group has discussed removing the applicant's name, which can influence an applicant's ranking. Removing the applicant's name also further increases the diversity of an organization. Ms. Byrd will suggest masking of applicants' names be discussed at an upcoming HR retreat. If the College does not receive diverse applicants in a search, the College extends or re-advertises the search process. Faculty and staff demographics are similar to ATC's student demographics. In response to Ms. Priester's question, Ms. Byrd provided a breakdown of student demographics reported in the ATC Community Benefit Report which is more detailed than the EEO Report. The College is also enhancing employee retention efforts by showcasing minority testimonials and opportunities, multiple check-ins during the employee's first year, collecting feedback on the interview process, and more. Ms. Priester reiterated the importance of hiring minorities that look like the community to serve in larger capacities in the community and at the College.

Action Taken: None taken.

C. Academic and Student Affairs – No Report

D. Advancement – No Report

E. Office of the President – Dr. Forest Mahan

1. College Update

Summary of Issue: Dr. Mahan reviewed the South Carolina Technical College System funding in the South Carolina House Ways and Means Committee proposed budget for FY23. Under Maintenance, Renovation, and Replacement, ATC would receive almost \$1.6M and \$1.5M for the Welding Lab. The Committee did not include Tuition Mitigation. The College does not want to raise tuition next year, so the College is working with the South Carolina Senate to include Tuition Mitigation. The Committee also did not include funding for the new Nursing building. The College, Commission members, and partners have contacted their legislators to support funding or a placeholder for the Nursing building in the FY23 budget. The Committee proposed a 3% pay raise and a one-time \$1500 bonus for State employees. The proposed budget also increases the employer's healthcare contribution by 18.1%. The College is working with the Senate to budget dollars that would help negate the impact of a pay raise, bonus, and increased health insurance costs. Mr. Lewis asked how the Commission could help as a whole to support the Nursing building. Dr. Mahan encouraged Commission members to contact their legislators.

Dr. Vinson Burdette, the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, leaves the College on March 30. The Commission is invited to Dr. Burdette's Farewell Drop-In on March 28. The College has started advertising to fill the position.

The College is in the final stages of completing the 2022-27 Strategic Plan with consultant Dr. Tony Robinson. The College is working with World Design Marketing on the new rebranding of the College website, signage, logo, and other marketing initiatives.

The College dropped its COVID-19 facemask mandate today, March 14, as more people feel comfortable not wearing facemasks. Facemasks are still welcome for those who wish to wear them.

The College will hold a ceremony on March 30 to rename the Sheriff's Substation Security Building on campus in memory of Sgt. John McCord, the former Campus Deputy who passed away in 2020. Members of Sgt. McCord's family, Aiken County Public Safety, and ATC employees will attend. A plaque dedicating the building to Sgt. McCord will be placed inside the building.

Action Taken: None taken.

2. Reserve Fund Discussion

Summary of Issue: The Commission Building and Finance Committee met today to discuss the need for investment in retention technology and personnel at the College. The College is in a sound financial position. The investment is timely considering the College's plan for growth, the 50th Anniversary, the new 2022-27 Strategic plan, and the spending down of COVID-19 relief dollars in

the next two years. The College requests utilizing up to one million dollars from its Reserve Fund for the needed investments. The investment goal is to see a 5% growth in enrollment per year over the next five years focusing on retention, which would increase enrollment to just above pre-COVID-19 numbers. Mr. Windley noted the College does have about \$20 million in cash. A one-million-dollar investment would still leave much more than required for an expense Reserve Fund. Mr. Ed Romero added the request is reasonable considering the College's reserve would cover over one year of operation.

Action Taken: Mr. Windley motioned on behalf of the Building and Finance Committee to allow the College to invest up to one million dollars from the Reserve Fund for strategic improvements in the coming fiscal years. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Upcoming Events

- April 11, 2022 – Commission Meeting
- May 3, 2022 – Commencement, USCA Convocation Center
- May 9, 2022 – Commission Meeting
- June 13, 2022 – Commission Meeting
- July 2022 – No Meeting
- August 8, 2021 – Commission Meeting
- September 12, 2022 – Commission Meeting
- September 29, 2022 – ATC 50th Anniversary Celebration

Ms. Mechelle English noted that ATC alumni from as far as Texas and Tennessee, from the classes of 1973, 1974, and 1975 will attend Commencement on May 3 in celebration of the 50th Anniversary. Alumni will be seated in the front row wearing white regalia. Alumni will receive a goodie bag of ATC swag items.

F. Executive Session – There was no Executive Session.

Ms. Teresa Haas made the motion, seconded by Ms. Priester to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.



Joe Lewis, Chair



Keyatta Priester, Secretary



Date Approved

May 9, 2022

Date Approved