

**ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY AUGUST 9, 2023, 10:00 A.M.**

The Alabama Community College System Board of Trustees (also referred to herein as the Board) held a meeting at 10:02 a.m. on Wednesday, August 9, 2023, in the Board Room of the Alabama Community College System building in Montgomery, Alabama. The meeting was called in accordance with Act No. 2015-125.

**PRESIDING: MR. LLEVELYN RHONE  
CHAIRMAN**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Rhone.

The invocation was delivered by Pastor Jennifer Blair Foster from Heritage Baptist Church and followed by the pledge of allegiance.

On roll call, the following Board members were present:

Mr. Jeb Shell  
Mr. John Mitchell  
Mr. Llevelyn Rhone  
Mr. Goodrich Rogers  
Mr. Britton Lightsey  
Ms. Valerie Gray  
Dr. Yvette Richardson  
Mr. Tim McCartney  
Mr. Ron Houston

Also present was Mr. Jimmy H. Baker, Chancellor of the Alabama Community College System.  
Absent was Governor Kay Ivey

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

On motion by Mr. Rogers, second by Mr. Lightsey, the Agenda was approved unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On motion by Mr. Shell, second by Mr. Houston, the Board voted unanimously to adopt the Minutes of the July 12, 2023 meeting as presented without discussion.

**SECTION VI  
PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no individuals registered to speak during the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

**SECTION VII**  
**COLLEGE SPOTLIGHT**

Dr. Joe Whitmore introduced a presentation highlighting Snead State Community College student Edwin Jarquin Perez. Per Dr. Whitmore, he and his staff did not take long to decide which student to select. Mr. Perez recently graduated from Snead State in May and received the prestigious Jack Kent Cook Foundation Scholarship, which is a nation-wide scholarship only given to 60 students annually out of thousands of applications. Edwin is the first Snead State student to receive it and the only student in the State of Alabama to receive it this year.

Per Dr. Whitmore, Edwin just returned from Washington, D.C., with his fellow scholarship recipients for an orientation session. He is originally from Mexico and was raised by his grandparents. Dr. Whitmore stated that early in Edwin's life, his mother left her children with his grandparents to come to America to establish herself and to have a better life for her family. Edwin was raised by his grandparents and he told the story of being awakened in the middle of the night when he was kindergarten age, put in the back of a pickup truck, and driven through immigration to be reunited with his mother. He was then dropped into a kindergarten class where he spoke no English. But in spite of that, he has successfully graduated from Snead and has stuck with them through the summer, staying involved with student activities and being involved with helping other students get registered for class.

Dr. Whitmore introduced a short video showcasing Mr. Perez and the obstacles he has overcome in life to achieve his goals and his success. After the video, Dr. Whitmore introduced Mr. Perez, who thanked Snead State, the ACCS, and the Board for allowing him the opportunity to tell his story. Per Mr. Perez, without Snead State and the ACCS, his story could have turned out very differently. He stated he is very grateful and looks forward to continuing his journey in higher education at the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

Chairman Rhone commented to Dr. Whitmore that choosing Mr. Perez as the student to highlight was a very good decision. Chairman Rhone also thanked Mr. Perez for sharing his story.

Chancellor Baker asked Dr. Whitmore to introduce his wife, Janet, whom he stated is the head cheerleader for Snead State.

**SECTION VIII**  
**(EXECUTIVE, LEGAL, AND PUBLIC INFORMATION)**

**ADOPTED**

**WALLACE STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE – HANCEVILLE**  
**NAMING OF WELDING CLASSROOM SUITE IN THE TECHNICAL CENTER FOR**  
**WELDING AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

On motion by Mr. McCartney, second by Mr. Lightsey, the Board unanimously authorized the President of Wallace State Community College - Hanceville to name the welding classroom suite in the Technical Education Center for Welding and Entrepreneurship as the Donald R. Clay Welding Classrooms in memory of Donald R. Clay and to add appropriate signage.

**Fiscal Consideration: \$25,000**

**WALLACE STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE – HANCEVILLE**  
**NAMING OF CONFERENCE ROOM IN THE TECHNICAL CENTER FOR WELDING AND**  
**ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

On motion by Mr. Houston, second by Mr. Shell, the Board unanimously authorized the President of Wallace State Community College - Hanceville to name the conference room in the Technical Education Center for Welding and Entrepreneurship as the Sandra Phillips Self Conference Room in honor of Sandra Phillips Self and to add appropriate signage.

**Fiscal Consideration: \$25,000**

**NORTHWEST-SHOALS COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**NAMING OF BASEBALL FIELD**

On motion by Mr. Rogers, second by Mr. Shell, the Board unanimously authorized the President of Northwest-Shoals Community College to name the baseball field as Mark Lee Legacy Field and to add appropriate signage.

**Fiscal Consideration: \$100,000 to be paid over a period of 10 years**

**REID STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE**  
**REVIEW OF REVISED MISSION STATEMENT**

On motion by Mr. Lightsey, second by Mr. Mitchell, the Board unanimously approved the revised Mission Statement of Reid State Technical College.

**Fiscal Consideration: None**

**ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM**  
**REVISION TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING SCHEDULE**

On motion by Mr. McCartney, second by Mr. Shell, the Board unanimously approved the revised Board of Trustees meeting schedule.

**Fiscal Consideration: None**

**SECTION IX**  
(INSTRUCTION, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, ADULT EDUCATION, FACILITIES,  
FISCAL, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT)

**ADOPTED**

**TRENHOLM STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
ADDITION OF INSTRUCTIONAL SITE

On motion by Mr. Mitchell, second by Mr. Houston, the Board unanimously approved an additional instructional site for Trenholm State Community College at the Baptist Health Resource Center in Montgomery, AL.

**Fiscal Consideration: The operation of this site proposed herein is within the budget of the college.**

**CALHOUN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
ESTABLISHMENT OF DORM RENTAL FEES

On motion by Mr. Rogers, second by Ms. Gray, the Board unanimously authorized Calhoun Community College to establish rental fees for the newly constructed dorms in Decatur, AL. The fee will take effect Spring Semester 2024.

**Fiscal Consideration: \$225,00 Auxiliary Revenue Annually (revenue estimate is based on the assumption that Athens State University will share 50% of the estimated costs and revenues which is estimated to be \$450,000)**

**TRENHOLM STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
INCREASE IN SPECIAL BUILDING FEE

On motion by Mr. Mitchell, second by Mr. Rogers, the Board unanimously authorized Trenholm State Community College to increase the College's Special Building Fee from \$7 to \$15 per credit hour. The fee will take effect Fall Semester 2023.

**Fiscal Consideration: \$172,432 – Estimated additional revenue**

**JEFFERSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**WORKFORCE EDUCATION CENTER**

On motion by Mr. Houston, second by Mr. Lightsey, the Board unanimously authorized Jefferson State Community College to proceed with construction of the project named Workforce Education Center. This project will construct a new slab on grade, single story Workforce Education Center for Jefferson State Community College. This facility will be approximately 10,500 SF and will provide training classroom space, skilled trades labs, a storm shelter, and offices. Construction contracts for the project shall be executed no later than October 1, 2023, or this authorization shall expire.

Fiscal Consideration: **Total Project Cost \$5,188,329.00**

**SHELTON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**MARTIN CAMPUS THEATRE RENOVATION**

On motion by Mr. Houston, second by Mr. Shell, the Board unanimously authorized Shelton State Community College to proceed with the Martin Campus Theatre Renovation. The project scope includes replacement of the stage flooring, structural and mechanical improvements to the orchestra pit, new paint, new theatre flooring, and the replacement of theatre seating. Construction contracts for the renovation shall be executed no later than October 1, 2023, or this authorization shall expire.

Fiscal Consideration: **Total Project Cost \$785,823**

**SHELTON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**MARTIN CAMPUS RENOVATION OF ELT/ILT FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

On motion by Mr. Lightsey, second by Mr. Rogers, the Board unanimously authorized Shelton State Community College to proceed with the project Martin Campus Renovation of ELT Lab for Community Education. Construction contracts for the project shall be executed no later than November 1, 2023, or this authorization shall expire.

**Fiscal Consideration: Total Project Cost \$1,477,238**

**NORTHWEST-SHOALS COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**PHIL CAMPBELL CAMPUS RENOVATION**

On motion by Mr. Shell, second by Mr. Houston, the Board unanimously authorized Northwest-Shoals Community College to proceed with the purchase of long lead time mechanical equipment that is part of the construction for the project named Phil Campbell Campus Renovation. This project includes demolition of buildings 302, 303, and 304. Renovations of buildings 301, 305, 306, 307 and gym level 308 with the addition of a new building named the Patriot Plaza. The renovated space is approximately 56,489 square feet and another 5,800 square feet of new construction that will modernize and provide academic and administrative space to accommodate program needs. Construction contracts for the mechanical equipment shall be executed no later than November 1, 2023, or this authorization shall expire.

**Fiscal Consideration: Equipment Cost \$1,600,000**

**LURLEEN B. WALLACE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**MACARTHUR CAMPUS ROOF RESTORATIONS**

On motion by Mr. Mitchell, second by Mr. Lightsey, the Board unanimously authorized Lurleen B. Wallace Community College to proceed with construction of the project named MacArthur Campus Roof Restorations. This project will repair structural damage, building fascia, and restore the modified bitumen roofing systems on Buildings B, C, H, I, & J located at the MacArthur Campus. Construction contracts for the project shall be executed no later than October 1, 2023, or this authorization shall expire.

**Fiscal Consideration: Total Project Cost \$1,317,928.00**

**WALLACE STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE - HANCEVILLE**  
**ARLEY/WINSTON COUNTY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER**

On motion by Mr. McCartney, second by Mr. Rogers, the Board unanimously authorized Wallace State Community College to accept the bid packages for site work, plumbing, and electrical for the Arley/Winston County Community Learning Center project. The building project will provide space for adult education, workforce development training, and technology access solutions for the community of Arley and Winston County. Contracts for the modular building shall be executed no later than November 1, 2023, or this authorization shall expire.

**Fiscal Consideration: Total Project Cost \$1,231,644**

**BEVILL STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**CLEM GYMNASIUM RENOVATION**

On motion by Mr. Lightsey, second by Mr. Rogers, the Board unanimously authorized Bevill State Community College to proceed with the construction project named Clem Gymnasium Renovation. The project scope includes modernized exterior finishes, updated interior finishes, new seating, new equipment and fitness room, improvements to locker rooms and update to all building systems. Construction contracts for the project shall be executed no later than November 1, 2023, or this authorization shall expire.

**Fiscal Consideration: Total Project Cost \$6,108,370**

**SECTION X**  
**PERSONNEL**

Charlene Finkelstein introduced the following new employees to the system office:

Destiny Smith - Workforce Coordinator for the Innovation Center  
Jessica Franks - Office Manager for the Innovation Center  
Cari McCanless - Community Outreach Navigator for Adult Education

**SECTION XI**  
**CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**

Chancellor Baker introduced Dr. Neil Scott to give an update on enrollment numbers. Dr. Scott began by reviewing the 2022-2023 school year. He said the enrollment metrics from that term are very encouraging and even staggering. In Fall 2022, 18 of our 24 colleges were ahead in head count and over 78,000 students were registered for Fall courses. This is the second fall semester in a row where numbers increased. Spring 2023 showed a continuing trend in increased enrollment with 22/24 colleges having increased head count, a 5% gain over Spring 2022. Summer 2023 numbers are not finalized, but 20/23 colleges showed increased head count from Summer 2022. Per Dr. Scott, these are just "for-credit" numbers. Dr. Scott further added that unduplicated headcount for 2022-2023 school year totaled over 115,000 students. This is 8,800 more students than in 2021-2022, an 8.2% increase. Credit hour production for the same period was almost 97,000 more credit hours than in 2021-2022. This was a 7.13% increase. Dr. Scott stated that the staggering piece is that the 2022-2023 head count is the highest that we have seen since 2016-2017. These are pre-pandemic numbers. He stated that we are in a very good position with head count right now and are expecting an increase this fall. Dr. Scott recognized

the Presidents, the student services staff, the recruiters, the enrollment managers, and the deans of students, and he stated that instruction plays a critical role in these increases.

Dr. Scott added that applications still look great for Fall 2023. Colleges have received over 88,000 applications for admission, a 13.27% increase. This includes first-time freshman applications. As of August 7, over 68,000 students have registered for Fall 2023 classes, a 13.84% increase.

Dr. Scott thanked the Board for their support and thanked the colleges for their hard work to make these enrollment numbers happen.

Trustee Rogers commented that nationwide community college enrollment is down 13-14%, which is a significant difference from the ACCS. He thanked Dr. Scott and the Presidents for their work.

Chancellor Baker asked Dr. Coretta Boykin, President of Reid State, to give an update on the college. Dr. Boykin stated that the college has been working for the last year on three different accreditations. She stated that she has been at Reid for 20 years, and that in 2004, Dr. Karolewics came to the college and talked about pursuing SACSCOC accreditation. Per Dr. Boykin, it has taken Reid almost 20 years to get there, but the college successfully submitted an application for accreditation in less than a year, with the help of Dr. Glenda Colagross and the faculty and staff at Reid State. Dr. Boykin thanked the Board for approving a revised mission statement for Reid which was needed for the accreditation.

The college has also been working on accreditation for Nursing Programs. A visit from that accreditation committee is scheduled for September 6-8, the reaffirmation visit for the Council on Occupational Education is set for the second week of November, and the college anticipates a visit at end of Fall 2023 with the SACSCOC candidacy review team. Dr. Boykin stated the college has also started athletics and multiple apprenticeships, and has increased enrollment every semester since the pandemic. Dr. Boykin thanked everyone for their support. Chancellor Baker stated that in the two years Dr. Boykin has been President, the environment has changed and things are being accomplished. He stated how much he appreciated the job she is doing.

Dr. Boykin asked Sara Calhoun and Dr. Colagross to speak on the timeline regarding the accreditations. Ms. Calhoun stated that SACSCOC is requesting Reid's FY23 financial statement audits to be completed by November 15, 2023, which is a very tight timeline. Per Ms. Calhoun, we have started our support schedule with the college already, their finance team is completely on board, the audit team of Carr, Riggs, Ingram is on board, and they are moving forward quickly to get everything collected, the year closed, financial statements drafted, and the audit completed by November 15 so SACSCOC can have everything in line for their December 15 meeting.



Dr. Colagross, Special Assistant to the Chancellor for Accreditation, walked through the timeline steps for the Reid accreditation. She stated she has been involved with accreditations before, but has never sought an initial accreditation until now. She further stated that the accreditation process started with three people from Reid State attending a pre-application workshop in November 2021. The application was submitted with the first half of 77 standards in September 2022. It took six months to receive permission from USDE to apply for SACSCOC accreditation, which is why the process has taken so long. SACSCOC predicts completion by June 2025, but Reid expects to be completed by December 2024, six months sooner than the SACSCOC estimate. A draft of the second half of required standards has already been completed ahead of time to speed up the process.

Dr. Jimmy Hodges briefly spoke to his experience with SACSCOC. He stated that when he became President at Calhoun about two years ago, he discovered that the college was on SACSCOC monitoring. Dr. Colagross assisted his staff and the college is no longer on monitoring thanks to her help.

Dr. Colagross stated that accreditation is all about quality. She said it is a grueling process and requires making changes for the better. She further stated that the reason for accreditation is that without it, the colleges cannot give federal funds, or Pell grants, to the students. Per Dr. Colagross, 22 of our 24 colleges are accredited by SACSCOC. Reid State and Ingram State are accredited by the Council on Occupational Education which is similar to SACSCOC, but students cannot transfer in a COE school.

Dr. Colagross stated that, for the last two years since being assigned to her current position, she has been helping with accreditations in various capacities, including working with Mr. Roger Bates on changing all the prison campuses from SACSCOC institutions to new campuses for Ingram State. She has also been involved in creating an accreditation interest group in August 2021 to talk about best practices. This has been instrumental in getting two colleges off monitoring with no follow-up. Dr. Colagross related several success stories as a result of her position and this group. She stated that other states have asked how to develop a similar resource to assist them.

Chancellor Baker asked Sara Calhoun to speak regarding our annual credit rating report with Moody's. Per Ms. Calhoun, we now have an A1 stable rating, which is very good for higher education in today's market. Our goal is to achieve an AA or AAA rating. She stated she has been involved with Moody's for the past nine years and we have now moved into an environment where we can easily highlight our strengths and the support of the Board of Trustees, and also the positive economic impact we have made, as well as the Innovation Center contributions, and our timely audits and financial reporting. Per Ms. Calhoun, all we have done in the last 5-6 years has led to great stabilization for our Moody's conversations. Per Moody's, we have credit strengths including our position as the dominant provider in the state for two-year

degrees, positive enrollment numbers, oversight and significant funding from the State of Alabama, and the management of the Chancellor and Board to leverage resources to offset shortfalls at the colleges if needed.

Per Ms. Calhoun, some of our credit rating challenges are a very high pension plan, which is difficult to change for several reasons. The volatility of enrollment is another challenge, but we have a positive increase in this direction. Ms. Calhoun added that we will continue to make improvements to increase our credit rating.

**SECTION XII**  
**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

None.

**SECTION XIII**  
**(DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING)**

The next Board meeting will be held in Mobile at Bishop State Community College at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, September 13, 2023. A work session will follow at 10:20 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Board meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

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Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chancellor