

**MINUTES OF THE
GASTON COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES RETREAT
Gaston Country Club
February 11, 2022**

Members Present: Judge Jesse Caldwell, III
Sheriff Alan Cloninger
Mr. John Dancoff, Chair
Ms. Jennifer Davis, Vice Chair
Mr. Jonathan Fletcher
Mr. Steve Hall
Ms. Iris Hopper
Ms. Resa Hoyle
Mr. Steve Huffstetler
Mr. Tom Keigher
Ms. Janie Peak
Mr. Tim Smith
Ms. Julie Stroupe
Mr. Randy Vinson
Mr. Joseph Wittmer, SGA President

Dr. John Hauser

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Ms. Shelly Alman, Mr. Todd Baney, Dr. Dewey Dellinger, Ms. Mary Ellen Dillon, Ms. Guyann Howe, Ms. Emily Zimmer Moree, Mr. David Nutt, Mr. Spencer Peterson, Mr. Greg Smith, Mr. Adam Tucker, Mr. Luke Upchurch, and Mr. Carl Stewart, College Attorney.

- **Chair Dancoff called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.**
- **Ethics Awareness and Conflict of Interest Reminder**

Chair Dancoff reminded Trustees of the ethics requirements of public servants and also requested they identify any conflicts of interest or appearance of conflicts of interest present. None were identified.

I. Welcome

Chair Dancoff welcomed everyone to the Retreat and commented it was great to have everyone present.

II. Board Survey and Self-Evaluation

Chair Dancoff asked the trustees to review with him the results of the Gaston College Board of Trustees Survey and Self-Evaluation questionnaire located in their packets. There had been 15 responses to the survey. A copy of the Survey will be kept with the minutes.

On page 1 of the Survey, Chair Dancoff noted that Questions 1, 2 and 4 were all in the top ten as far as agreement between the Trustees. Chair Dancoff asked if there were any comments or discussion points related to those responses. There were none.

Survey Question 6, which related to a Trustees' skills and abilities being well used by the Board, was scored a little lower. Chair Dancoff told the Trustees that the Board was blessed with people who had great skills and experiences; however, if at any time they had something they wanted to offer to be sure to feel free to do that. He and Dr. Hauser relayed several instances where Trustees were particularly helpful in arranging media contacts, business introductions, and/or educational partnerships for the College.

On page 2 of the Survey, Questions 8, 9, 12, 14, and 17 were also questions in which the Trustees had agreement that these were things they did well. Per Question 16, which related to participation in discussions and decision making, Chair Dancoff encouraged all Trustees to contribute to topic conversations. Judge Caldwell, as a new member, did not see this as a negative as he felt sometimes it's best to listen at first. All Trustees do have several opportunities to have their voice heard and an opportunity to vote as they feel. For Question 18, which related to identifying solutions to problems, Chair Dancoff stated that it was not always possible to have a solution to every problem, but he still encouraged the Trustees to bring up their concerns.

On page 3, Question 20, which related to discussions consistently reflecting thoughtful and useful comments, most Trustees agreed positively. Question 24, which related to the Board's knowledge and skills, coupled with data supplied by the College to allow effective monitoring of the College's fiduciary responsibilities and financial performance, was scored a little lower. Chair Dancoff asked for comments as to where the Board could improve in that regard. A comment was made to thank Mr. Huffstetler, as Finance Committee Chair, for his explanations during Committee meetings that helped new Trustees to understand what they were reading so they could ask informed questions. Mr. Dancoff added that he, Dr. Hauser, Ms. Alman, and Mr. Huffstetler all keep the lines of communication open so as to better understand all situations. Ms. Hoyle added that she wants to understand more of the finances, especially with all the new programs and facilities being discussed, not because she is questioning anything, but because they are a vital part of the community college big picture.

On page 4, Question 26, which related to delegation of the administration of the College operations to the President, the Trustees agreed positively. They also agreed positively

regarding Question 27, which related to the Board and President working well together. Sheriff Cloninger stated earlier he was unsure when Dr. Hauser first discussed bringing sports back to Gaston College; however, he has since heard from officers on the police force and others in the community that are so glad to have sports for their sons and daughters to play during their College experience. Dr. Hauser thanked him for his comments and said that at the Board meeting in March a report on the academic and athletic performance of the athletes would be given. They are exceeding expectations. In the fall, enrollments were down, and the 60 athletes now on Campus are helping to bring up those numbers.

Ms. Peak commended members of the staff, in particularly Mr. Baney, who works both the basketball and the baseball games, for their commitment to the athletics' programs. Dr. Hauser thanked Mr. Baney, too. Then he stated that many times at games, faculty come forward and introduce themselves to him to say one of the athletes playing is in their class. It's very rewarding to see the staff so supportive of the student athletes. Mr. Hall added that there has also been excitement about Gaston College's athletics in the Gaston County Schools.

On page 5, Question 30 received agreement. However, on Question 31, which related to effective advocacy, a lower score was noted. Work had been done in an advocacy effort once before, but efforts would need to be renewed and reorganized. Chair Dancoff felt it is important to reach out to legislators in an on-going capacity to keep them informed of College happenings and not just when the College needs funding. A card, an email, or phone conversation with them is always welcome. Judge Caldwell suggested that there are several things Trustees could do in an advocacy capacity that do not require a detailed plan of action: spotlighting distinguished alumni such as Sheriff Cloninger, Mr. Doug Arthurs, and Mr. Carl Stewart; noting to people that Gaston College is the best deal around for their education, and not a second choice; and having regular conversations with people relaying the many opportunities at the College.

Sheriff Cloninger commented that it does take time for new trustees to learn the College's practices, the ways and means to set up scholarships, about all the College's business and industrial partnerships, and its educational agreements. A suggestion was made to create an "elevator" speech to help new Trustees become aware of all the opportunities available at the College. Ms. Stroupe added that at the NCACCT meetings, there were sessions where information was provided to help trustees understand the reports they were reading, such as the budget process; the upcoming Spring session will have a session on advocacy.

Also on page 5, Question 34, which related to attendance at Campus sponsored events, Chair Dancoff invited all the Trustees to come to the games as everyone always had a good time. Dr. Hauser would work to get back to his weekly email to apprise the Trustees of all College events weekly. Currently, the College has Alumni Speaker Series events, Rhino Chats with faculty and staff, several Fine Arts showings, events hosted by the Multi-Cultural Affairs Committee, many SGA activities, and other events to celebrate the students and donors. With athletics, he wants game live-streaming links set up as a matter of practice so everyone can view the games if they can't attend in person. Ms. Hopper added that as she talks to students in the community, when she brings up sports, she sees a sparkle in their eyes. She is working to find ways to reach that underrepresented community, whether by economics or race, and get them to the games as sports really speaks to them. They need to know that while they

play sports, they can get the education that will give them hope for a brighter future. Dr. Hauser added that he, Mr. Baney, and Dr. Dellinger are working on some programs/projects to reach that targeted community. More information about that will be coming out soon.

On page 6, Question 35, which related to the Board's sense of performance and actions during the last 12 months, very good responses were received. Regarding Question 36, several wonderful accomplishments were noted for the year. How well the College had handled the COVID pandemic was mentioned a few times. Question 37, which related to strengths of the Board and College, several items spoke to how well everyone worked together to get things done.

On page 11, Question 38 mentioned items that Trustees felt needed improvement. Chair Dancoff reviewed these with the Trustees and asked if they wanted to discuss any particular one more in depth. He then spoke of the comment raised related to funding of the athletic programs when there are so many capital projects that need attention and repairs. Chair Dancoff offered that over the last six months, some building pricing quotes changed due to the supply chain and other sports' quotes changed due to additional knowledge about what each sport needed, but he urged the Board to be patient over the next year as these things do happen. He asked the Trustees if anyone had any other comments. There were none.

Chair Dancoff then told the Trustees that he had one item he did want to bring to their attention, which was building the relationship between the Board of Trustees and the Foundation Board of Directors. As Chair of the Board of Trustees, he has the honor to serve on the Foundation Board. The President of the Foundation Board is Mr. John Lowery, a passionate supporter of Gaston College. He and Mr. Lowery have planned a meeting with Dr. Hauser and Mr. Upchurch to discuss ways that both Boards can work together in a mutually beneficial way for Gaston College. It is hoped in the future that a meeting, lunch, or other social event can take place between the two Boards in an effort for everyone to get to know each other, understand what each Board does, and find ways to help each other as both groups want what is best for the College.

Judge Caldwell then spoke of the need on Campus to assist visitors in finding the building, classroom, or service they wanted to locate. He would be interested in finding out what other Colleges do to assist in that effort. As more and more visitors come to Campus for events, this will be very important. Dr. Hauser relayed that at his previous college position, he had implemented a directional app to assist visitors coming to the college. More conversation on this issue will be discussed later in the meeting.

Ms. Peak added that she would like to see more scholarship videos of the students promoting the College. Her thought is that students listen to other students. Dr. Hauser then asked Mr. Nutt to relay the story of the basketball player whose buddy forgot to bring him his shoes for practice so he ran 2.9 miles to his room to get them, and then 2.9 miles back, so he could practice with the team. Coach Nutt said you never know what students have endured to come to the College to play ball or attend classes. Dr. Hauser added that currently the College has a nursing student who is the mother of five children, and she, too, is determined to succeed. Gaston College's students and student athletes are resilient, committed, and determined to make a difference in their lives and are willing to put in the effort to do that.

With no further discussion related to the Board Survey and Self-Evaluation, Chair Dancoff deferred to Dr. Hauser to present the next items.

III. College Presentation

Dr. Hauser had invited representatives of the Zimmer Development Company to the meeting to provide a presentation to the Board related to housing. As they had already arrived, he indicated they would be the first presentation.

A. Housing

Dr. Hauser began by explaining how some students and student athletes commute one-two hours each day to the College, each way, through multiple counties to take part in the College's programs. Currently, members of the softball team rent space in a couple of houses, the basketball team lives at the Holiday Inn for 32 weeks of the year, and baseball players commute, too, some from a good distance.

As far as the NCCCS is concerned, housing on a community college campus is a non-issue; it is simply not allowed. North Carolina community colleges cannot build, own, or manage housing for students on their properties. This fall the College was approached by a land agent, Mr. Kevin Smith, as he represents sellers of 4.4 acre track of property on the Cherryville side of the Dallas Campus that is next to Gaston College. It is not enough room for an educational size building, but it is a good size for a student housing development. The College discussed with Mr. Smith its needs for housing, and he said he'd work to find investors that might buy the property with the intention of building and managing student housing. Mr. Smith came back and brought a possible option to Chair Dancoff, Dr. Hauser, Mr. Stewart, and Mr. Huffstetler, which led into a discussion with the Zimmer Development Company as to how this housing project might work.

The Zimmer Development Company representatives had come to the College to provide information on the student housing properties they have built, manage, and maintain. Presenters included Ms. Emily Zimmer Moree, Esquire, who had been with the company eight years and together with Mr. Adam Tucker, Director of Development for the last 15 years, lead the Public-Private Partnership Group. Also attending was Mr. Spencer Peterson, Assistant Development Manager with Zimmer Development.

During their PowerPoint presentation, they would cover an introduction of the Zimmer Development Company as a whole, their Student Housing portfolio, a Gaston College Financial Overview, a Gaston College Schematic Site Plan, and conduct a Q & A session. A copy of their presentation will be maintained with the minutes.

The company was founded in 1989 by Ms. Moree's father and began with development of a Food Lion shopping center with typical small shop spaces alongside it. They continued with a lot of CVS and Walgreen store development, so their early beginnings were in the commercial real estate market. In the last ten years, they have gotten in to the multi-

family and student housing development area. They now have several public/private partnerships with many community colleges and universities. In the last five years, they have led in the top 25 for student housing developers in the nation. They are currently in 18 states, primarily focused on the East Coast but do go as far west as Michigan. Zimmer is a family owned business, and they do not have any outside investors so every dollar spent is theirs. They are long-term holders who rarely sell their properties and are totally self-sufficient.

A slide of Zimmer's Recent Student & Multi-Family Housing Development History was presented, and then the presentation continued with slides of the various student housing completed projects. Their projects are built with durability, maintenance, longevity, and economy in mind. Zimmer would do the construction of the project, furnish the property, provide management on the properties' site, and maintain it.

Zimmer properties are sometimes built with a game room with a pool table, a club room with video games and a tv, shuffleboard, pool, fitness facilities, study areas, lounges, jumbotron, and can be done in many styles, for example, dorm or apartment style. Slides were shown depicting the various common areas for a student housing project. Gaston College could pick which amenities they want included, which type of units were preferred, and have as much or as little involvement with the project as wished. Units can have one person or four people in them, each with their own bedroom. Rooms have solid surface granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, luxury vinyl tile plank floorings, and students just need to show up with their bags and sheets. A typical bedroom would be 12' x 12', have a single bed, desk, dresser, television, walk-in closet with racks, bathroom, and a shower. The rent would be very economical, with students in mind.

Zimmer Development Company is independent of the community college system, and it is perfectly allowed for them to come in as a third-party developer to build housing on their own property. For a smaller project, which this would be, it is hard for a builder to get traction with a lender and build student housing for a small school. With the help of the Gaston College Foundation and the athletes helping them with a master lease or financial commitment, a lender is much more open to that commitment or partnership.

The land will be owned by Zimmer, who would design, permit, and construct the buildings. Working with the College, and understanding the need for housing, the Gaston College Foundation would guarantee the rent for "X" amount of rooms in the project. Under this master lease agreement, if the College guaranteed 10 rooms, and two renters didn't show, the Foundation would be liable for that funding. Mr. Tucker relayed that this sounds very simple, but there is a world of details in such an affiliation agreement with a college. Zimmer would work with the College to use their logo to advertise, but the College would not have any financial commitment other than the affiliation agreement. Just using the College's logo would tell students that this housing is part of Gaston College.

A schematic site plan of the projected project was shown to the Trustees. The project will be built in phases and developed on an as-needed basis. Their proposal is to build four, three-story buildings, with 24 units in each for a total of 96 units, allowing for 168 beds. In the center of the site is a clubhouse and pool. There are two entrances/exits to the

property, with one accessing from the College's existing parking lots. They realize using that parking lot is a leap of faith, but it would be extremely helpful to the design. It would also be beneficial if emergency services were needed. Mr. Tucker added that the first building phase is typically developed in the frontage area of the property as that lends itself to more visibility thereby creating interest.

Mr. Tucker asked if there were any questions about the project and opened up the Q & A session.

Why do you want the College's logo on the building? There is never a greater benefit or amenity to a student than to be a part of the Campus. It also increases retention of students, as the College might get them to come, but this helps to keep them.

What happens if there is a student party? Zimmer has systems in place to handle such situations. There are Resident Advisors (Ras) and site managers at the property every day that would close down such a situation immediately. Their physical presence is very important and insures stability in the property.

What happens if a student renter does not pay? Ms. Moree replied that Zimmer's rental model works. Evictions have only happened 1% of the time. If a student seems to be getting behind, they work with them to find a solution. They have never had a student housing project that failed. They have also never sold a student housing partnership building.

At first the property will be new, but what happens as the building ages? Ms. Moree replied that there are mechanisms in their ground lease that require them as a development company to maintain the facility and replace certain items at different years so a property does not fall into disrepair. They insure that it doesn't happen.

Has Zimmer ever sold any of their public-private partnership buildings? No, they have not. They have only sold independent/conventional properties. In the last 15 years, only three projects have been sold.

If Zimmer builds a project for 100 renters, and the College only guarantees 50 of those renters, to whom do they rent the other rooms? The rooms would only be rented to someone affiliated with the College. It could be a nursing or vet tech student or faculty moving into the area to teach. Zimmer will determine how many rooms will be built based on how many Gaston College will guarantee. That determination is based on various factors according to which and how many amenities the College would want in the property. It is important to know that Zimmer has a company hired to manage their properties, Asset Living, which is a nationwide property management company, and that company would come to discuss which amenities the College wants to include and their upkeep. These types of conversations will be held when more of the projects' details are in place.

Could a nursing student with five children rent a room? Yes, but she would need to leave when she graduated. Dr. Hauser stated that right now the College has 65 athletes,

but all of them might not need housing. The College could still hold 65 rooms, but keep five of them for other students, visiting faculty, College presenters, faculty moving to the area who need temporary housing, or other College affiliated purposes.

Who holds the liability if a student is raped? Historically, with the properties Zimmer has built, the colleges or universities have not been targeted. It is adjudicated through the courts.

Will the room rents go up if there is a waitlist for them? If the rent starts out at \$700, there is a cap in place so rents cannot go up more than 3% a year. This is to insure the rental rates remain affordable for students and in line with what market forces dictate.

What amenities are included in the rent? The rent includes the utilities, trash, cable, sewer, internet, and access to all student activities held at the building. This might include breakfast before exams, an open coffee bar before school starts, a cooking class, a pool event, or access to the gym. In some instances, Zimmer has worked with the Campus IT department so the rooms are part of the Campus Intranet Network. They have also worked with colleges to have a room access security card issued from the school.

If the College found it was losing money, could they give notice and get out of the agreement in 30 days? No, but this affiliation agreement is not a life-time commitment. Zimmer has never had a college or university they have worked with that owes them money. They have always made the affiliation agreements with the various university and colleges feasible propositions.

To what extent does the College's Foundation Board need to be brought into this discussion? Dr. Hauser said that after the presentation today, the Board of Trustees need to have further discussions, with input from Coach Dickie Nutt, related to issues the College is having related to housing. Preliminary conversations have taken place between him and Mr. Upchurch, but once certain details are nailed down and questions satisfied, the Board of Trustees would make a recommendation to the Foundation Board of Directors, which signals their approval in this endeavor.

Could the College buy out the property? If the College obtained a big donation and wanted to purchase the property, Zimmer typically includes a buy-back provision in the paperwork. However, that could be a very elongated process.

Ms. Moree stated that the Zimmer Development Company currently has the property under contract at this time and have already put money into the project to be sure it's feasible. They are conducting the land survey and researching the land title as they believe in this project.

In conclusion, Dr. Hauser stated that the County and the Town of Dallas are aware of this proposed project, and they have assured him there would not be any zoning issues. He also wanted the point made that Gaston College would not have any capital investment in the property or the building – they would not own it. Dr. Hauser thanked the Zimmer Development Company for their presentation.

Housing Discussion Continued

Dr. Hauser relayed to the Board that he felt this housing option was a good fit for the College without incurring a tremendous investment. He asked Coach Nutt to tell the Board of some of the challenges the players are running into related to housing.

Coach Nutt told the Trustees how excited he was to come to Gaston College as it would be great to build a program from the inside out. However, to do that, you need to recruit good players and sometimes they come from all over the country. A local athlete would have transportation, meals at home, and a bed at home. But for athletes coming from across the country, transportation, housing, and food are a big deal. Currently, 13 of the 14 basketball players do not have vehicles so just getting to practice is a problem. Gaston College has a beautiful Campus and great academic programs, and if the College had housing, he believes it would take the College to a new level.

Previously, Coach Nutt had been Head Coach at Arkansas State University for 13 years. When Zimmer came to Jonesboro Arkansas, he had been reluctant to agree to the housing. However, when they did build with Zimmer, it made an unbelievable difference to what they were able to get accomplished. And right now, Zimmer is building campus housing for Coach Hamilton at Florida State. One thing he could confirm was that they do watch and maintain their properties. His vision is to not only have 75 athletes, but to one day have 300 athletes on Gaston College's Campus. This type housing would help to get this done.

Ms. Davis commented that she didn't want to do too much too soon or too little too late. It will be important for the Board to think ahead and carefully plan for the future.

Mr. Wittmer, the SGA Student Trustee, added that he felt such housing would be what pushes community colleges to students, and they'd feel proud to go there. This type housing and the other partnerships, for example the one with NC State, will be huge for students and will increase enrollment. He added that having athletics and the sponsorship agreement with Nike will push Gaston College to the top, and if the College doesn't move to housing, other people will do it. He sees this as another opportunity for Gaston College to be a leader.

Mr. Huffstetler asked that a statement be included in this agreement so that in the future if Zimmer was offered a deal and wanted to sell the property, the College would be protected. Mr. Stewart said he'd be sure to see that wording to that effect was in the contract. He concluded that he felt the proposal does have a lot of traction.

Coach Nutt said that an issue that came up repeatedly when trying to find housing for the students was that they did not have financial backing to get an apartment lease. They did not have funding for application fees, deposits, or damage deposits. Dr. Hauser stated that the Zimmer group would not have those types of requirements or upfront payments for the students. They understand how financial aid works as they customarily work with colleges.

Judge Caldwell asked how the College learned about the Zimmer Development Company? Dr. Hauser replied that Mr. Smith, who is with the Marcus and Millichap Property Company and represents the land sellers, had come to the College hoping the College would want to purchase the land. Dr. Hauser had met with them and explained the plot was not large enough for an educational facility, but the College did need housing. In discussions with a couple of different local developers in the community, it became clear they couldn't handle such a project. Mr. Smith's group jumped in and agreed to put out an RFP for investors who can handle this type of project. They received three bids and vetted each one. That is how the College came to know the Zimmer Development Company.

Mr. Keigher inquired about the responsibility of the College toward any funds the College may have to pay, and secondly, are the funds from the Foundation guaranteed? There will not be any county or state funds used for this project. As for funds from the Foundation, an agreement will be drawn up to clarify that partnership, but those details have not yet been discussed or finalized.

Ms. Stroupe inquired if this concept was approved by the state office. As this housing facility will be privately owned, it doesn't involve the state office at all.

Chair Dancoff asked that all the Trustees in favor of moving forward with the project in an exploratory mode please raise their hand. The general consensus was positive.

B. Capital Project Funding Worksheet

Dr. Hauser asked the Trustees to locate in their packet the Capital Funding Worksheet, where proposed projects were listed that could possibly be funded by an allocation from the state through State Capital Infrastructure Funds (SCIF). Gaston College has been allocated \$9,009,858 in funding from the NCCCS over the next four years.

The items to be discussed included:

1. David Belk Cannon Expansion
2. De-Escalation Law Enforcement Facility
3. Community Center/Gym
4. Workforce Development Center Lincoln County
5. Beach Volleyball Courts and Facility
6. Fire Training Facility Burn Prop
7. Three Campuses Signage and Beautification
8. Firing Range Parking – Gastonia Partnership

Item 1 on the project list was the **David Belk Cannon Expansion**, which had been shown last year. This would include space for the Medical Science Early College High School, the Health Sciences expansion, the gymnasium, and an auxiliary gym. It originally began as a two-story structure but has now grown to a three-story building with room for a dental assisting or hygiene program, or just room for other programs. The video of the project was shown. It is now 122,000 square feet with a \$53M price tag.

Currently, CaroMont has its own expansion projects going on, so they will not be able to help us with capital towards this project. They are committing resources in scholarships and also just committed \$300,000 over the next two years in support of the College's faculty positions for starting new health sciences programs. It is hoped that the County can help with funding for this project. Mr. Vinson commented that he felt it might be good to ask the County about a bond referendum for the DBC Expansion as prices would escalate substantially over the next few years and interest rates are low right now. He then asked Mr. Keigher how the County felt about the project, but Mr. Keigher stated it hadn't come to the Board yet. Dr. Hauser added that Dr. Eagle had said she would have individual conversations with the commissioners about the idea. As health and wellness is a top priority for the county in their strategic plan, Dr. Eagle sees the project aligning very well with the public schools and the Medical Science Early College High School, the Colleges programs, and access to the facility for community events.

If the College doesn't get the \$53M, it may need to do portions of the project separately. Per Phillip Steele with ADW, a **gym/community center** would cost approximately \$15-17M; it is **Item 3** on the Capital Project Funding Worksheet. Dr. Hauser wanted input from the Trustees as to what the College should do for a facility for our basketball, volleyball, and graduation ceremonies for the Early Colleges and the College. The gym would also have other uses as it would tie into our health and physical science programs and exercise programs. Other program possibilities include a sports broadcasting program, a refereeing program, and training for umpires. Another use would be to host trade shows and community events. Dr. Hauser said the question for today is whether the College should be intentionally considering a separate facility for a gymnasium using the SCIF funding. It could be considered phase I of the DBC project or possibly located somewhere else on Campus. Chair Dancoff asked the Trustees if Dr. Hauser should go ahead and have ADW prepare a conceptual drawing of the project. They agreed. However, there are other Campus projects to be considered, too.

Item 2 on the Capital Project Funding Worksheet was the **De-Escalation Law Enforcement Facility**; there are currently no facilities of this type in the NCCCS. Dr. Hauser asked Mr. Greg Smith, Vice President of Economics and Workforce Development, to explain the De-Escalation project to the Trustees. Mr. Smith stated that last summer discussions had started about a potential facility that could enhance the College's law enforcement training capabilities. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department had built a De-Escalation Training facility with federal funds, which is always completely booked. Discussion had centered on building such a facility on Campus that could serve as regional training de-escalation center for many local counties and municipalities in the same manner as the College's RESTC facility.

This type of facility would allow law enforcement personnel to practice scenario-based tactics in de-escalation to avoid use of force in many confrontational and/or deadly situations. Mr. Smith referred the Board to an informational handout in the packet where they could see the outward design of a classroom building, the inside of the classroom with its monitors, the interior of the De-Escalation Practice Facility with its movable walls, rooms and targets, and the control room with the multi high-tech cameras and screens

where students could watch as other officers/students practice de-escalation techniques. Both live and simulation rounds could be used during practice sessions.

A meeting had been held in the summer of 2021 with Dr. Hauser, Mr. Dennis Crosby, Sheriff Cloninger, Chief Travis Brittain, and the architect of De-Escalation Center in Charlotte to discuss possibilities. One question they needed to consider was where the College would put this type of facility. The logical answer seemed to be to put it behind the Albright Public Safety Building, which would eliminate the need for a separate classroom building.

However, that space was in the footprint of the Fire Training Center and was being considered/held for another project. The Fire Facility was built in 1992, is approximately 20,000 square feet, and is one of the largest in the East. It was refurbished for \$500,000 a few years ago, and when that was done, a recommendation was made to have a secondary **Training Facility Burn Prop** unit (which is **Item 6** on the Capital Projects Worksheet) to take the stress off the main fire training facility. Mr. Smith directed the Trustees to another photo in the pack, which resembled a stack of storage containers-a Burn Prop used in Lincoln County. This facility would cost approximately \$100,000.

Therefore, the situation at hand is where then on Campus can the **De-Escalation Facility** be placed. Ideally, if there is land and space near the Brenard Dalton Driving Track that would be great. Currently, there is not a classroom or restroom facility at the Track and placing the De-Escalation Facility there would resolve that issue for the officers that sometimes spend all day/weekend conducting driver training. It has also been considered to bring Motorcycle Safety Training back to Campus and using the Driving Track for that, but that program runs into the same situation of not having proper facilities for students. The placement of the De-Escalation Facility in a location by the Track would be very advantageous. This type of facility, the way Charlotte/Mecklenburg has theirs set up, costs approximately \$2 Million by the time you put in all the electronic systems and fiber optics.

Dr. Hauser asked Sheriff Cloninger for his thoughts about the De-Escalation Facility and how this is different than what anyone else is currently providing. The Sheriff said trainings in these facilities provide law enforcement personnel with methods and ways to de-escalate a potentially deadly situation and not use a firearm. As Chairman of the North Carolina Sheriffs Training Standards Commission, one of the things they are addressing more is this type of scenario-based training rather than classroom training. Scenario-based training puts an officer right into a situation so it feels more realistic and teaches muscle memory responses that listening to a lecture can't. This facility could be used by the entire western portion of the state, which would translate into more FTEs. He further added how important it was to the law enforcement community to stay up to date with the most innovative and successful ways to properly train law enforcement personnel. This type of facility would make Gaston College's BLET program stellar.

Ms. Alman commented that she would check to see how much usable land there is next to the driving track, and Dr. Hauser will speak to an architect to see what can be done. Those questions would need to be answered to apply for grants for the project. Dr. Hauser

then asked the Trustees to be thinking about ranking these projects as they are discussed in accordance to the budget the College will have on hand with the SCIF funding.

Item 4 on the Capital Project Funding Worksheet is the **Workforce Development Center in Lincoln County**. It is a two-story, 28,000 square foot building, which will be built on the Lincoln Campus. The project involves the College, the Lincoln County public and charter schools, the Lincoln Economic Development Association, Lincoln County officials, and manufacturing and industry partners who have been meeting for the last eight-nine months. Having this facility on Gaston College's Lincoln Campus will help to strengthen the College's presence in the County. As a partner, the College wants to learn and deliver what Lincoln County's workforce needs, which seems to be programs that relate to construction, the health sciences, and advanced manufacturing.

The building planning group had reached the point of discussing funding with County Manager Kelly Atkins, who wanted to know where it would be built and what it would look like. Phillip Steele, with ADW Architects, provided a rendering of the project. However, the Lincoln County Schools' administrators came back with news they could apply for a grant as within the 15 county school districts there is \$381 Billion available, and Lincoln County has never received any of that funding. They are moving ahead with the application. News about the grant should come through in June or July. A small group of the Lincoln County school board will go in front of the Commissioners soon to determine who will have control of the build. At this point the College does not have any funding involved in the project other than to provide equipment needed for training in the facility. Chair Dancoff offered that this has been a very collaborative effort by county officials, educators, industry partners, community members, and manufacturing and industrial partners.

Item 5 on the Capital Projects list, **Beach Volleyball Courts and Facility**, was partially discussed earlier in the meeting. However, at some point the College will need ADA compliant changing and restroom facilities for its team and visiting teams and guests. That cost is estimated at \$375,000.

Item 6, the **Fire Training Facility Burn Prop**, was previously discussed.

Item 7 on the list was **Three Campuses Signage and Beautification**. The cost for signage, for all three campuses, would be approximately \$2.5 Million. This would include the app Dr. Hauser had mentioned earlier in the meeting. It would be available for free and as a student or guest passed a sign, the app could tell them where they were on Campus and what was in the building next to them.

Item 8 on the list was the **Firing Range Parking – Gastonia Partnership**, which included Bob and Pat Boyd Drive. City Manager Michael Peoples had pulled together some pictures of the road, which is in very poor shape. On the last page of the handout, there was a breakdown of expenses. The College's portion would be \$145,000, with the total project estimated at \$807,000. More conversations will be taking place about the project. With thoughts of the available \$9 Million in SCIF funds, Dr. Hauser wanted the Trustees to be aware of all the projects on the list so they could assist with some project management and let him know which projects they felt were the most important. Sheriff

Cloninger listed his preferences as Item 5, Beach Volleyball; Item 6, Fire Training Burn Prop; Item 2, De-Escalation Facility; and Item 7 Campus Signage. Ms. Hoyle also had her first preference as Item 5, Beach Volleyball. Chair Dancoff's first preference was Item 4, Workforce Center in Lincoln County. However, he also felt Item 3, a gym/community center was needed. Ms. Stroupe's first preference was Item 7, Campus Signage.

A question was asked as to where the basketball team currently practices and plays. They practice at a First United Methodist Church and play at Piedmont Charter High School, South Point High School, and Gaston Christian School. Other considerations as to where the team could practice were the Gastonia Armory and the Erwine Center.

Also, where would the College put a stand-alone gym? Studies would have to be done to determine that.

How many people currently come to games? Dr. Hauser replied sometimes 50, other times about 200.

The \$2.5 Million of signage seems like a lot; what does that include? Dr. Hauser had implemented an app at his previous college related to directional signage. A design team would come to Campus to review and map all the traffic patterns, whether by personal vehicle, emergency vehicle, foot, or bike for the entire Campus. The project would need to be bid, and the design for the fabrication of the signs determined. The material development of the signs is important as you want to make sure your signs are easy to switch out as things do change.

What does the term beautification of the Campus mean? It means campus wide beautification. A discussion had taken place about donors wanting to contribute, but not knowing what to contribute to. At other colleges, they sometimes have endowed flower gardens and beds, which would let folks contribute to campus beautification. Dr. Hauser feels first impressions mean a lot. Ideally, it would be great to have a horticulture program, with students that would contribute to campus beautification.

Dr. Hauser thanked the Trustees for their input related to the projects.

Conclusion

Chair Dancoff related a few notes to the Trustees:

- On February 17, the DBC Scholarship Luncheon will be held at noon, in the Myers Center.
- On February 28, Basketball Sophomore Night will take place at South Point High School in Belmont. The College will be honoring the basketball players who are moving on to a four-year college.
- On March 2, Lieutenant Governor Mark Robinson is coming to visit Gaston College! He is scheduled to arrive for lunch at noon.
- On March 12, the Foundation is hosting an Alumni Social Event at Sims Park, at 1 p.m.
- On March 21, the next Finance and Facilities Committee Meeting will be held in the Myers Center.

- On March 28, the next Board Meeting will be held in the Myers Center.
- March 30 to April 1, the NCACCT Law/Legislative Seminar will be held in Raleigh. Information about registering for the event has come out so please call if you'd like to attend.
- On April 15, your Statement of Economic Interest for the year is due.

Chair Dancoff asked if there was any further business to come before the Board. Judge Caldwell was recognized and said that Saturday, February 19, at 10:00 a.m., he would be co-hosting the Carolina Beach Party with Johnny B on WSGE 91.7 FM. Chair Dancoff also reminded the Trustees that College hats and visors, and the Sheriff's calendar, were available if they would like one. He concluded by thanking everyone for attending.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Dancoff adjourned the Retreat at 12:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheriff Alan Cloninger, Secretary

Mr. John Dancoff, Chair

Mary Ellen Dillon, Recording Secretary

(College Seal)