

**Minutes of the  
Gaston College  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Myers Center Auditorium, Section C  
March 25, 2024**

**Members Present:** Mr. John Dancoff, Chair  
Judge Jesse Caldwell  
Mr. Bill Carstarphen  
Mr. Alan Cloninger  
Mr. Jonathan Fletcher  
Dr. Shawnya Gore, Secretary  
Mr. Steve Hall  
Ms. Resa Hoyle  
Mr. Tom Keigher  
Ms. Janie Peak  
Ms. Julie Stroupe, Vice Chair  
Ms. Taylor Rose, SGA President

Dr. John Hauser, President

**Members Absent:** Ms. Iris Hopper, Mr. Steve Huffstetler, Mr. Tim Smith

**Others Present:** Ms. Shelly Alman, Ms. Ja-riel Bailey, Mr. Todd Baney, Dr. Jeff Booker, Ms. Jasmine Cox-Wade, Dr. Dewey Dellinger, Ms. Guyann Howe, Ms. LaShelle McClain, Ms. Meagan Lingerfelt, Ms. Terri Livingston, Ms. Andrea Lovelace, Mr. Rico McIlwain, Mr. Mack Millen, Dr. Jennifer Nichols, Ms. Julie Ostrowski, Mr. Jeff Pruett, Mr. Stephen Sharp, Dr. Audrey Sherrill, Mr. Greg Smith, Mr. Luke Upchurch, and Dr. Heather Woodson

**Chair Dancoff called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. A quorum was present for the meeting.**

- **Invocation – Dr. Gore**
- **Ethics Awareness and Conflict of Interest Reminder**

Chair Dancoff reminded Trustees of the ethics requirements of public servants and requested they identify any conflicts of interest or appearance of conflicts of interest present. No conflicts were identified.

**A. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**Chair Dancoff asked if there were any changes, additions, or corrections to the agenda. None were identified.**

**Mr. Keigher moved to approve the agenda; Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

**B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM:**

- 1) January 22, 2024, BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES**
- 2) February 9, 2024, CALLED BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES**
- 3) February 9, 2024 BOARD OF TRUSTEES RETREAT MINUTES**

**Chair Dancoff presented the Minutes of the January 22, 2024, Board of Trustees Minutes, February 9, 2024, Called Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes and the February 9, 2024, Retreat Board Minutes; he asked if there were any additions or corrections. None were identified.**

**Ms. Peak moved to approve collectively the Minutes of the January 22 and the February 9, 2024, Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meetings and Retreat; Ms. Hoyle seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

**C. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Dr. Hauser welcomed everyone to the meeting and recognized Mr. Jeffrey Pruett, Faculty Senate President, and Ms. Bailey Standridge, Staff Senate President.

**1. Introduction of New Board Member**

Dr. Hauser welcomed **Mr. Bill Carstarphen** to the Board of Trustees; Mr. Carstarphen was appointed to the Board by the Gaston County Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Carstarphen is a native of Gaston County and a McAdenville resident. He earned a BA in Economics from Wofford College in Spartanburg, South Carolina and is President and CEO of Pharr McAdenville Corporation. After selling its textile business four years ago, Pharr today engages in the hotel industry through its subsidiary Strand Hospitality, a hotel management company serving primarily Hilton and Marriott properties throughout the southeast, residential and commercial real estate development through its subsidiary Belmont Land and Investment Company and alternative investments through its subsidiary Greenleaves Capital.

Mr. Carstarphen currently serves as an Elder at First Presbyterian Church in Belmont, serves on the board of the Catawba Lands Conservancy, Vice-Chairman of the Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden board and Chair of the McAdenville Foundation board. He and his wife Carol have three grown sons, their two oldest sons are married, and they are proud grandparents of three grandchildren.

Mr. Carstarphen relayed that it was his honor to serve on the Board and gave a brief history of the relationship his family has had over the years with Gaston College.

## D. FACILITIES

In Mr. Smith's absence, Chair Dancoff presented the Facility Committee's items and stated the items had already been vetted during the Committee meeting.

### 1. College Avenue Land Purchase

During the January 23, 2023, regular meeting, the Trustees approved the College to transfer funds to the Gaston College Foundation to purchase 202 College View Drive, a residential property adjacent to the Dallas Campus. After reviewing state guidelines, it was decided that the Gaston College Foundation would initially purchase the property on behalf of the College with the approval of the Foundation's Board of Directors. The Foundation purchased the property in March 2023, using its available capital funds with the assurance the Trustees would purchase the property from the Foundation.

The College now seeks Trustee approval to purchase the property at 202 College View Drive, Dallas, North Carolina from the Gaston College Foundation for \$199,500 plus additional costs related to the transaction such as legal fees, taxes, required site assessment fees, and remediation costs. The total estimated purchase price including other costs is \$225,000. The College plans to use lost revenue recoveries to complete this purchase.

The property consists of one approximately 0.58-acre parcel identified in the Gaston County Tax Assessor's database by Parcel Number 171299 and is developed with one 1,316-square-foot residential building with a concrete driveway. The property is across the street from two other properties owned by the college. The property is zoned mixed residential and commercial.

The initial Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment completed by the Foundation discovered a buried heating oil tank that leaked into the surrounding soil. The soil was remediated by the Foundation and a second Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment was completed. This property is now listed as having soil contamination with the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality which prohibits the use of a residential water supply well.

The implication to the budget is the cost to purchase the residential property at 202 College View Drive is \$199,500 plus additional costs related to the transaction such as legal fees, taxes, required site assessment fees, and remediation costs, not to exceed \$225,000.

**Therefore be it resolved, the Facilities Committee recommends that the Gaston College Board of Trustees approve the purchase of residential property at 202 College View Drive, Dallas, North Carolina for \$199,500 plus additional costs related to the transaction such as legal fees, taxes, required site assessment fees, and remediation costs, not to exceed \$225,000.**

As the motion came from Committee, a second was not required. Chair Dancoff asked if there were any discussion.

Mr. Keigher asked why the Foundation made the purchase initially instead of the College. Dr. Booker explained that the transaction is more seamless through the Foundation.

**The motion passed.**

**2. Capital Reports**

**Fiber Innovation Center**

The project is currently 100% complete. The project documentation was approved by the State Construction Office on February 6, 2024. Shelco will be compiling all documents for transfer to Gaston College. The warranty period is now in effect. Utilities were transferred to Gaston College as of February 6, 2024.

**De-Escalation Center**

C Design is in the design phase. The City of Gastonia approved the zoning application. The vendor "Action Target" has presented a proposal for the structure and target systems. Dr. Booker and Luke Upchurch are working with the NC Purchasing & Contract Office on the RFP for the purchase of the structure, audio visual, and target systems.

**Health Science Education and Simulation Center**

The Board of Trustees approved to proceed with the Health Science Education and Simulation Center project on January 22, 2024. Dr. Booker is compiling information to proceed with an RFQ for architect services. The required Scope of Work has been submitted to the NC Office of State Budget and Management detailing how the budget is expected to be spent. Once the Scope of Work is approved, the 3-1 form establishing the project will be submitted to the State Construction Office.

**Steam Plant Renovation Project**

Gaston County evaluated five (5) engineering companies that responded to the RFQ for the project. Gaston County has provided a site assessment from AME Consulting Engineers with an estimated HVAC renovation cost for each building. Dr. Booker emphasized that the following are estimated costs per building:

<b>Building</b>	<b>Total Estimated Cost</b>
Beam Administration Building	\$523,500
Comer Engineering Technologies	\$895,000
Morris Library	\$400,500
Myers Center	\$1,661,500
Rauch Science and Fine Arts Building	\$460,000
Robinson Classroom Building	\$392,500
Pharr Trade and Industrial Center	\$742,000
Lena Sue Beam Early College	\$380,500
<b>Grand Total Estimated Cost</b>	<b>\$5,455,500</b>

### **Burn Prop**

The Regional Emergency Services Training Center staff is installing internal walls, stairwell components, and entry doors. The project is approximately 85% completed. The State Construction Office does not have oversight for the project since cost is less than \$500,000.

### **Cybersecurity Renovations**

Room renovations are 100% complete. The project is in the final steps of installing required equipment.

### **Sims Park Scoreboard**

Ultravison advised a possible component ship date from manufacturer will be April. We will be confirming the estimated ship date and possible install dates that are available.

### **Regional Emergency Services Training Center (RESTC)**

The 5 year structural inspection of the Burn Tower for the Regional Emergency Services Training Center (RESTC) is due this year. We are contracting with the engineering company Elliott, LeBoeuf, and McElwain to inspect the structure and do concrete core samples. They will submit an evaluation report for suggested repairs.

This item was presented for information purposes.

## **E. FINANCE**

In Mr. Huffstetler's absence, Ms. Stroupe presented the following Finance Committee items, stating the items had been vetted by the Committee.

### **1. FY 2024-25 Lincoln County Budget**

The Lincoln County Manager's Office requested the College submit its County budget request for FY2024-25 in January, 2024. Capital maintenance, housekeeping, and utilities for the Lincoln Campus are handled by the County and not included in the College's budget request. The budget approved for the College by Lincoln County for FY 2023-24 was \$279,499 for operating expenses and \$35,000 for capital. The College is requesting an operating budget of \$394,698 and a \$50,000 capital budget from Lincoln County for 2024-25. This represents \$45,141 in operating increases, \$20,057 in salary increases, and a \$15,000 increase in capital funding.

The FY 2024-25 operating budget includes the following budget requests:

- Funding 7% anticipated salary increases (\$14,811)
- Funding retirement and health insurance estimated increases (\$5,246)
- Funding for a digital road front sign (\$40,000)
- Funding for increase costs for insurance, telephones, and security uniforms (\$5,141)

The FY 2024-25 Lincoln County Operating Budget request reflects an increase of \$115,199 from the approved budget of \$279,499 for FY 2023-24 for a total budget request of \$394,698 and a capital budget request of \$50,000. An itemized categorical proposed budget was provided in the Board material.

Judge Caldwell asked for clarification on the uniform expense. Uniforms are for plant operations, i.e., campus security, maintenance, etc.

**Upon the recommendation of the Finance Committee, Ms. Stroupe moved that the Gaston College Board of Trustees approve the FY 2024-2025 Lincoln County Operating Budget.**

As the motion came from Committee, a second was not required. Chair Dancoff asked if there were any further discussions.

**The motion passed.**

## **2. FY 2024-25 Gaston County Budget**

The proposed FY 2024-25 Gaston County Operating Budget was submitted to Gaston County on January 26<sup>th</sup>. This year's county operating budget request totals \$7,057,331 and includes an increase of \$1,189,268 (20.27%) over the FY 2023-24 actual budget. The largest portions of the increase relate to increases in cost of utilities and maintenance due to the opening of the new Fiber Innovation Center, salary and benefit increases, and new positions.

Salary and Benefits – 3.0% salary increase with 3.2% benefits increase	\$191,547
New Position - Grounds	\$63,000
<b>New Positions – 2 Housekeeping New Building</b>	\$98,000
Utilities – Existing	\$99,254
<b>Utilities - New Building</b>	\$350,000
Operating Costs	\$311,536
Insurance Premium Increases	\$ 71,975
Antenna lease escalation	\$3,956
Total estimated increase	<b>\$1,189,268 20.27% increase</b>

### State Salary Increases

The North Carolina Legislature and Governor included a 7.0% salary increase in the 2024-2025 biennium budget spread over two years as 4.0% for FY 2023-24 and another 3.0% for FY 2024-25. It is projected the state retirement rates will decrease slightly from 25.02% in FY 2023-24 to 24.04% in FY 2024-25 but is subject to change. The cost for health insurance will increase 7.12% over FY 2024.

The table below for the accumulative effect of unfunded salary changes since FY 2020-21. Our review of salaries and benefits for FY 2024-25 does **not** attempt to make up ground for previous years when salary and benefits increases went unfunded. Instead, the FY 2024-25 request is based on current FY 2024 salary amounts with the expected 3% increase and benefit increases included.

**Accumulative Effect of Salary Changes:**

	FY 2025											
	Total	Estimated	Increase	Estimated	Increase	2023	Increase	2022	Increase	2021		
	Increase	2025 Rate*	from PY	2024 Rate	from PY	Rate	from PY	Rate	from PY	Rate		
Health insurance	25.62%	\$ 8,095	7.12%	\$ 7,557	2.16%	\$ 7,397	5.39%	\$ 7,019	10.95%	\$ 6,326		
Retirement	11.03%	24.04%	-3.92%	25.02%	2.12%	24.50%	1.66%	24.10%	11.16%	21.68%		
Pay increase	16.50%	3.00%		4.00%		3.50%		3.50%		2.50%		
FICA Rate	7.65%	change not expected										

\*-rates from North Carolina Session Law 2023-134, Sections 39.26 ( c ) and ( e )

**New Positions**

As Gaston College continues to grow, incorporating new structures, sports facilities, and programs, the demand for sufficient staffing to provide upkeep of buildings, grounds, and infrastructure grows proportionally. In fiscal year 2023-24, the College sought funding for five (5) new staff positions, but the request was not fulfilled. The current budget proposal for the ongoing year encompasses a request for three (3) additional positions, contributing to a total increase of \$161,000 in salary and benefits costs. Funding for these new positions is paramount to ensuring the continued growth and maintenance of facilities at Gaston College. The three (3) positions will provide two additional housekeepers and one grounds technician. The forthcoming opening of the Fiber Innovation Center on the Kimbrell Campus in March 2024, will necessitate additional housekeeping support. Additionally, recognizing the importance of maintaining our campus grounds, we also propose the addition of a horticulture specialist to augment our Grounds Team. This specialist will play a crucial role in sustaining and enhancing the aesthetic appeal of our campus environment.

**Other Budget Requests**

Additionally, we anticipate a 9.0% (\$99,254) increase in existing utility costs with another \$350,000 in added utility costs relating to our new Fiber Innovation Center on the Kimbrell Campus. Funding for the new Fiber Innovation Center is critical for the operations of that building. We expect increases in gasoline, custodial supplies, service contracts, and other costs due to inflation and economic conditions. General liability, property, cybersecurity, and other insurance premium rates for FY 2024-25 are expected to significantly increase an estimated \$71,975 over the prior year and the annual lease escalation for the radio tower will be \$3,956 (or 5%.)

**Overall Budget**

A review of Gaston County budget requested to budget awarded indicates a \$1,945,865 shortfall since FY2020-21.

Budget Shortfall Dollar Analysis	FY 2023-24		FY 2022-23		FY 2021-22		FY 2020-21		2020	Total
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	Shortfall
Budget Requested	\$6,808,900	7.99%	\$6,304,932	5.31%	\$5,987,257	3.67%	\$5,775,325	3.39%	\$5,585,769	
Budget Awarded	\$5,868,062	0.00%	\$5,868,062	4.45%	\$5,618,062	0.75%	\$5,576,363	-0.17%	\$5,585,769	
Shortfall	<u>\$ (940,838)</u>		<u>\$ (436,870)</u>		<u>\$ (369,195)</u>		<u>\$ (198,962)</u>		<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ (1,945,865)</u>

The FY 2024-25 requested budget reflects a \$1,189,268 increase over the FY 2023-24 approved budget. An itemized proposed budget and salary analysis was provided in the Board material.

**Upon the recommendation of the Finance Committee, Ms. Stroupe moved that the Gaston College Board of Trustees approve the proposed FY 2024-25 Gaston County operating budget request totaling \$7,057,331.**

As the motion came from Committee, a second was not required. Chair Dancoff asked if there were any further discussions.

**The motion passed.**

### **3. FY 2024-25 Gaston County Capital Priorities Budget**

A proposed FY 2024-25 Gaston County Capital Priorities along with additional five years of projections was provided in the Board material. The capital priorities for FY 2024-25 reflect needs totaling \$3,143,045. The priorities are subject to change due to unforeseen maintenance requirements that might arise.

Gaston College maintains 46 buildings and structures totaling 842,981 square feet and \$165.53 Million in insurance value in Gaston County. The capital priorities identified for FY 2024-25 include roof repairs or replacements, window replacements, burn building repairs, vehicles, and other maintenance for the Dallas campus and roof repairs and window replacements for Harney Hall on the Belmont Campus, along with a digital sign upgrade, classroom upgrades for the Textile Academy, HVAC and boiler upgrades and repairs. Our hope is that the County will at a minimum be able to continue to fund capital for the College at the historical level while also taking into consideration our identified capital needs totaling \$3,143,045 for FY 2024-25 in addition to the \$3,200,000 reserved for the special boiler replacement project explained below.

#### Special Project - Outdated Boilers

Gaston County has reserved \$3,200,000 for a study of the renovation and retrofitting of the aging steam boiler systems used to heat eight (8) buildings on Dallas campus. This is a County directed project in conjunction with Gaston College. The County is working with AME Consulting Engineers gathering information to design and estimate the cost to covert these two steam boiler systems to hot water boiler systems for each individual building. Upon completion of the study, remaining funds will be used to implement the design.



The buildings affected by the two steam boiler systems are Beam Administration, Comer Engineering Technology, Myers Center, Morris Library, Rauch Building, Robinson Classroom, Lena Sue Beam, and Pharr Industrial Trade.

The FY 2024-25 Gaston County Capital Priorities total \$3,143,045. Priorities will be refined to match county funds provided and a final listing will be presented to the Committee once the budget is approved by Gaston County.

**Upon the recommendation of the Finance Committee, Ms. Stroupe moved that the Gaston College Board of Trustees approve the proposed FY 2024-25 Gaston County Capital Priorities Budget.**

As the motion came from Committee, a second was not required. Chair Dancoff asked if there were any further discussions.

**The motion passed.**

#### **4. Financial Audit – Foundation**

McCannon Rogers Driscoll and Associates has completed the financial audit for the Gaston College Foundation for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

The net position of the Foundation increased \$233,812 or 1.94% during fiscal year 2022-23, primarily due to an increase in investments offset by a decrease in accounts receivable. Accounts receivable decreased significantly due to payments of \$666,667 on pledges for the Fiber Innovation Center received in the prior fiscal year. Investments increased by \$1,330,173 Million or 14.52% mostly due to net investment earnings reflecting the market gains during the year. In addition, the Foundation purchased real estate held for sale of \$200,114 during fiscal year 2023. Prepaid expenses increased by 9,351 or 196.57% due to more invoices paid in advance during the year. Total assets were reported at \$12.3 Million.

McCannon Rogers Driscoll and Associates issued an unmodified (or "clean") audit report for the Foundation. "The financial statements...present fairly...the financial position of the Foundation as of June 30, 2023, and the changes in net position and its cash flows for the year ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP)."

Regarding internal controls testing, McCannon Rogers Driscoll and Associate's report stated that "...the results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance that are required to be reported under GAGAS."

There were no material corrected misstatements of the financial statements.

The Governance Letter issued by the auditors to the Foundation Board of Directors is attached. Copies of the audited financial statements are available upon request.

This item was presented for information purposes; not action was needed.

**5. Supplemental Budget Allocation**

Supplemental State Budget Allocations received in December 2023 through February 2024. Detailed reported were provided in the Board material. The summary is listed below:

**GASTON COLLEGE**  
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2024  
Supplemental Budget Allocation

PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION	STATE
		CURRENT
361	Customized Training	\$ 189,951
Various	Recruitment and Retention	\$ 118,386
Various	High-cost Healthcare (voe 42)	\$ 430,860
457	Finish Line Grant	\$ (628)
557	Finish Line Grant	\$ (2,023)
558	Workforce Resilience	\$ (5,327)
357	Apprenticeship	\$ 6,750
369	BioNetwork	\$ 23,790
372	Apprenticeship	\$ 28,750
372	Apprenticeship	\$ 46,750
Various	Longevity	\$ 405,434
555	GEER	\$ (1,145)
357	Apprenticeship	\$ (8,000)
Various	High-cost Healthcare (voe 42)	\$ 400,000
220	Nursing Faculty Salary Adjustment	\$ 197,449
372	Apprenticeship	\$ (313,012)
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,517,985</b>

Judge Caldwell asked what determining factors were used for the Retention and Recruitment fund distribution. Dr. Dellinger and Mr. Baney explained that the funding restrictions are provided by the State and based on course tier stipulations, e.g., welding, certain healthcare programs, biology, etc. Dr. Hauser further explained that these funds have been paid as a stipend, but he is unsure if these funds will continue in future budgets.

Dr. Gore inquired about the funds not used for the Apprenticeship Expansion Program. Dr. Hauser reported that these funds are extremely restrictive, hence all of the negative

numbers listed. He is currently serving on the State Apprenticeship Advisory Committee and the Committee is proposing the regulations be changed so the funding can be used. Mr. Smith added that some of these restrictions are also tier-funded. He gave the example of CaroMont apprenticeship programs not qualifying due to the size of CaroMont and Lincoln County not qualifying due to the prosperity tier that are categorized in.

This item was presented for informational purposes; no action was needed.

## **6. Financial Reports**

Ms. Stroupe presented the summary of expenditures for month-end February 2024 for the State, Gaston, and Lincoln County operating budgets provided in the Board material.

She also reviewed the Proprietary Funds: The Rhino Shop, Textile Testing, Athletics, Campus Access, Fire Training and the Foundation.

Mr. Sharpe shared that the Textile Center has recently had a spike in purchase orders that are not reflected in this report.

This item was presented for informational purposes; no action was needed.

## **F. SGA REPORT**

Ms. Rose reported that the SGA planned and sponsored various events since the last Board of Trustees meeting. There was a total of 1,101 students who participated in all the events that were held.

### Valentines for Veterans

From January 22<sup>nd</sup> through February 7<sup>th</sup>, the SGA sponsored the Valentines for Veterans campaign to provide hand-written valentine cards with kind holiday wishes to local veteran organizations as a way to show appreciation for those who have served our country. A total of 75 cards were collected and sent to local veteran organizations to pass along these appreciations.

### \$5 Friday Events

On January 26<sup>th</sup>, ten Gaston College students and two advisors traveled to Greensboro, NC to visit North Carolina Agricultural and Technical (NC A&T) State University and the International Civil Rights Museum as a part of the SGA \$5 Friday event.

On March 15<sup>th</sup>, four Gaston College students and two advisors traveled to Belmont, NC to visit Belmont Abbey College and Gastonia, NC to the Monster Mini Golf attraction.

### Red Cross Blood Drive

On February 7<sup>th</sup>, the SGA sponsored a Red Cross Blood Drive on the Dallas Campus in the Myers Center Multipurpose Auditorium. Through these efforts, the Red Cross was able to

collect 40 units of blood during the event. We appreciate all of our campus community who participated through this drive.

#### Community Legislative Assembly and N4CSGA Spring Division Meeting

On February 17<sup>th</sup>, five Gaston College SGA students and one advisor participated in the state-wide Community Legislative Assembly event, hosted by the Youth Legislative Assembly (YLA) program and the North Carolina Comprehensive Community College Student Government Association (N4CSGA).

As a part of this travel, on February 16<sup>th</sup>, Gaston College student and SGA Vice President, Ja-riel Bailey, was provided the opportunity to address the North Carolina State Board during their February State Board meeting. Ms. Bailey serves as the N4CSGA Vice President and addressed the State Board of leaders to provide the N4CSGA President's Report in the president's absence.

#### SGA at Rhinos Basketball Home Game

On February 21<sup>st</sup>, the SGA attended the Rhinos Basketball team's 7pm home game at Ashbrook High School. As a way to encourage other students to attend the game, the SGA provided a student drawing for a prize from the Rhino Shop and hosted a sports trivia event with prizes during the half-time of the game to engage attending students.

#### Career Fair Prep Week Event Series

From March 6<sup>th</sup> – March 13<sup>th</sup>, the SGA partnered with the Work-Based Learning and Placement (WBL&P) department to host several career related events on campus as a way to prepare students for the March 20<sup>th</sup> Career Fair event.

### **G. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Dancoff shared the following:

- A second revision of the Board of Trustees was sent via email; he asked the Trustees to please read those and submit any final edits or suggestions to Ms. Howe by April 30, 2024. A final copy will be presented as an action item at the May Board meeting.
- Reminder to complete the Statement of Economic Interest by April 15, 2024, if you haven't already done so.
- The President's Evaluation Survey will come out in April. You will have two weeks to complete the survey. The results will be discussed at the May Executive Session during the Board meeting.
- Gaston College Graduation is currently planned for May 10, 2024, at 10 a.m. Ms. Howe will send you a notice about those activities to see if you are available to attend.

- The next Board meeting is May 20 at the Kimbrell Campus. During the May meeting, he will be announcing the Nominating Committee. If you are interested in participating on the nominating committee, or if you are interested in being considered for a position on the executive committee, please let him know before the May meeting.
- Also, the latest Community College Laws of North Carolina edition was provided for the Trustees to take home.
- Dates for upcoming sporting events were also provided in the Board material. Chair Dancoff encouraged the Trustees to come out and support the athletes.
- The Gaston and Lincoln Counties Relay for Life will be held on the Gaston College Dallas Campus on April 19, at 5:00 p.m.

## **H. PRESIDENT'S REPORT / REMARKS**

Dr. Hauser gave the following highlights and updates:

- In November 2023, the College was awarded over \$450,000 for personnel and equipment for the Surgical Technology program. In February 2024, the College received notification of an award of over \$400,000 to the Emergency Medical Science (EMS) program. An immersive training room will be added in EMS.
- Approval was received from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to offer cosmetology instruction at Hunter Huss High School beginning in Fall 2024.
- On February 13 and 14, 2024, over 800 Lincoln County 10<sup>th</sup> graders come to the Dallas Campus for a day of interactive exploration with our curriculum programs.
- On March 14-15, 2024, the College hosted the annual North Carolina Mathematics Association of Two-Year Colleges (NCMATYC) Conference on the Dallas Campus with over 200 participants from across the state.
- A new curriculum certificate in Agricultural Technology has been developed and will be offered for the first time in Fall 2024 in person at the Lincoln Campus. Classes include plant science, animal science, sustainable agriculture, and soil science.
- The next study abroad opportunity for students, faculty, and staff is scheduled for May 19-29, 2024 in Switzerland. Eighteen travelers, including three faculty leaders, will be taking part in this trip.
- In January and February, College Now team members participated and collaborated in several outreach opportunities such as First Tuesdays College Now Info Session, counselor meetings, FAFSA Night events, Gaston College campus field trips, career fairs, open house event and student meetings.
- As of March 11, 2024, the Financial Aid Office has received 7,441 duplicated FAFSA applications and 5,255 unduplicated FAFSA applications. Of the 5,255 FAFSA applications, 3,187 have registered.
- On February 15, 2024, SGA Vice President, Ja-Riel Bailey, attended the State Board Meeting and provided the report on behalf of N4CSGA. In February, five SGA student

leaders and one SGA advisor attended the NC Community Legislative Assembly and experienced how the Legislators operate during the session.

- The Emerging Technologies Open House was held in February with 347 people attending the event.
- Professional Development Day: scheduled for Wednesday, March 27, 2024, with over 30 breakout sessions focusing on emergency preparedness, health and wellness, and college community teamwork.
- Ms. Cathis Hall, WSGE Station Manager, Mr. Tim Greene, Asst. Program Director, and Ms. Barbara Gordon, Station Admin, are all retiring. Ms. Regan Brown, a 4-year WSGE veteran and Membership Coordinator/Public Affairs Producer, has graciously accepted the role of Interim Station Manager, and alongside the station's part-time employees and volunteers, is diligently working on an operations and staffing plan.
- Athletics: Softball, as of 3/11/24, overall record is 20-4 and 1-1 in Region 10; Baseball, as of 3/11/24, overall record is 25-2 and 4-0 in Region 10; Beach Volleyball, started conference play Wednesday, March 13.
- Apprenticeship 321 currently has 139 apprentices and 22 Pre-apprentices.
- BLET is hosting the National Honor Guard Academy March 24-29, 2024. 40 students are scheduled for the class.
- In Finance, the fiscal year 2024 EAGLE internal audit; working on tax reporting form 990 for Foundation; seeking experienced Purchasing Director.
- Tech Services is continuing to monitor network activity via Office365 EndPoint Management; implement Arctic Wolf; increased security of servers and switching equipment
- The Foundation has received \$2,866,507 through 2,612 gifts, with an average contribution of \$1,097.
- Gaston College will be sending 24 students to the Skills USA competition in Greensboro in April to compete. Students will participate in Broadcast Technology, Medical Assisting, and Emergency Medical Technology. Funding to support the students participating in Skills USA comes from the Gaston Community Foundation and the Bosch Community Fund.
- The most positive outcome of joining the Community Foundation is access to asset classes and specific funds with higher entry thresholds. The committee discussed the performance and looks forward to future reports. The portfolio saw a 2.5 percent return for the month on February 2024.
- The Foundation is planning a 60th-Anniversary Celebration, The Bowl-for-the-Goal, eTeam Sponsor; Online Auction and Raffle.
- Dr. Hauser reviewed the Grant Activity spreadsheet and recognized Mr. Luke Upchurch for a job well done.
- Under Marketing and Communications, A story aired about the new Fiber Innovation Center building on WCNC in February;
- The USAID Central American Textile Training pilot program trained 50 new hires at the Parkdale Honduras location on safety principles, fiber fundamentals, and yarn spinning fundamentals. This is the first of several ongoing trainings with the goal of training 1500 people.

- The U.S. National Science Foundation that the North Carolina Textile Innovation and Sustainability Engine is one of ten groups to win the inaugural NSF Regional Innovation Engines award. Gaston College is a member of the NCTISE leadership team.
- The Fiber Innovation Center is in the process of obtaining the Certificate of Occupancy to proceed with the installation of existing equipment; revenue for FIC and TTC testing and prototyping services showed an increase in February, reflecting a resurgence in industry investments and a rise in public funding for development projects; design of the polyester reactor is complete, and the fabrication of the machine is set to commence next month; are collaborating with industry partners to secure donations for additional operational equipment; the yarn production area is experiencing increased activity due to the closure of some regional yarn plants.
- NCACCP Winter Conference & Business Meeting – The North Carolina Association of Community College Presidents' (NCACCP) Winter Conference and Business Meeting took place in Durham from January 24 – 26. Some of the topics we discussed were the Golden Leaf Foundation Agriculture Strategic Plan update, Ensuring proper Basic Law Enforcement Training, Legislative Advocacy, and Developmental Education revisions.
- Board of Trustees Retreat – We had full Board attendance and participation at the annual Board of Trustees Retreat held on February 9 at Gaston Country Club. A proposal for Committee and Board of Trustee meeting restructuring along with the Bylaws was presented and discussed. Results from an annual self-evaluation survey were also reviewed.
- David Belk Cannon Scholarship Breakfast – On Tuesday, February 20, the Foundation Staff and Directors of the Board DBC Scholarship recipients met in the Myers Center for a breakfast and student testimonials.
- The State Compliance Office recently conducted the bi-annual FTE budget review for the 2022-2023 year. Career and College Readiness, Continuing Education, and Curriculum records were reviewed with no findings.
- Gaston College was recognized this month at the Bellwether Awards as a finalist and awarded the Showcase Award for Workforce Development. The Showcase Awards are presented to the college team in each category who provide the strongest and most comprehensive showcase session presentation explaining their respective program and its response to a critical issue. Teams are judged best in showcase for their comprehensive and succinct program overview, their thorough and compelling response to audience questions, and tabletop graphics addressing all scored criteria.

Members of the Gaston College team who worked on the required digital portfolio, oral presentation, and showcase presentation were Ms. Leslie Pressley, Associate Dean for Health and Human Services/Nursing Faculty; Ms. Marlina Thomas, Associate Dean for Allied Health Programs/Human Services Faculty; Ms. Ashley Long, Assistant Dean of Partnerships/Nursing Faculty; and Dr. Heather Woodson, Vice President for Academic Affairs. Dr. Janice Hill from CaroMont Health also participated in the oral and showcase presentations.

- The College was also a finalist for the Legacy Award, presented by the Community College Futures Assembly, for the SPARC program. The Legacy Award honors an innovative community college program that demonstrates five or more years of student success and replication. The SPARC (STEM Persistence and Retention through Curriculum, Cohort, Centralization, and Collaboration) initiative was developed in 2009 by Gaston College to promote success for students in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs through scholarships, centralized student supports, learning communities, and enhanced educational experiences such as undergraduate research and multiple forms of active learning strategies. Since that time, the program has seen tremendous growth in STEM Members of the Gaston College team who worked on the required digital portfolio and oral presentation were Dr. Melissa Armstrong, Chemistry Faculty; Dr. Patricia Williams, Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences/Biology Faculty; Ms. Susan Whittemore, Biology Faculty; Mr. Jesus Vina Moreno, SPARC Research Assistant; and Dr. Heather Woodson, Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- The College has received notification that Dr. Patricia Williams's course, BIO 275 (Microbiology) has been Quality Matters (QM) certified. This marks the 23rd QM-certified course for Gaston College!
- Over 150 participants and 30 local employers attended the Rhino Roadmap for CTE Careers on Tuesday, February 27. It was a very successful night showcasing our Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs.
- GC Athletics: Basketball qualified for Region 10 Conference Tournament; Softball's overall record is 20-4 and 1-1 in Region 10; Baseball's overall record is 25-2 and 4-0 in Region 10, ranked the #1 team in the nation by the NJCAA; Beach Volleyball's conference play began March 13.
- Legislative Breakfast – Representatives Hastings, Saine, Torbett, and Senators Alexander and Overcash were all present and very engaged in the annual Legislative Breakfast held on our Kimbrell Campus on February 29.
- NCACCT 2024 Law-Legislative Seminar – The NCACCT spring conference was held in Raleigh from March 13 – 15. Mr. Dancoff, Mr. Keigher, Judge Caldwell, Ms. Hoyle, Ms. Hopper, Ms. Stroupe and Dr. Hauser attended.

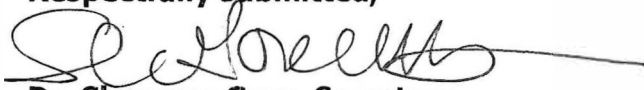
## I. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Dancoff asked if there was any further business to come before the Board. There being none.

**Mr. Keigher moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

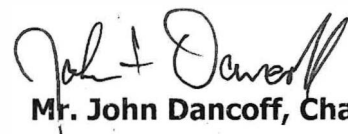
Chair Dancoff adjourned the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



**Dr. Shawnya Gore, Secretary**

*Guyann Howe*  
**Guyann Howe, Recording Secretary**



**Mr. John Dancoff, Chair**

**(College Seal)**