

**BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION  
CT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (CSCU)  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2020  
CONDUCTED VIA REMOTE PARTICIPATION**

<b>REGENTS - PARTICIPATING (Y = yes / N = no)</b>	
Matt Fleury, Chair	Y
Merle Harris, Vice Chair	Y
Richard J. Balducci	Y
Aviva D. Budd	Y
Naomi K. Cohen	Y
Felice Gray-Kemp	Y
Holly Howery	Y
David R. Jimenez	Y
Antonia Oglesby	Y
JoAnn Ryan	Y
Ari Santiago	Y
Elease E. Wright	Y
*David Blitz, FAC Chair	Y
*Colena Sesanker, FAC Vice Chair	Y
*Kurt Westby, Labor Commissioner	Y
*Deidra Gifford, Public Health Commissioner	N
*David Lehman, DECD Commissioner	N
*Miguel A. Cardona, Education Commissioner	N
<i>*ex-officio, non-voting member</i>	

**CSCU STAFF:**

Mark E. Ojikian, CSCU President  
Jane Gates, SVP & Provost, Academic & Student Affairs  
Alice Pritchard, Chief of Staff/Chief of Operations  
Andrew Kripp, VP Human Resources & Labor Relations  
Ben Barnes, Chief Financial Officer  
Ernestine Y. Weaver, Counsel  
Pam Heleen, Asst. Secretary of the Board of Regents (recorder)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Fleury called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and, following roll call, declared a quorum present.

Chair Fleury sent best regards to Commissioner Cardona as he is under active consideration for an appointment with the new Administration. Chair Fleury welcomed Student Regent Antonia Oglesby.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Chair Fleury called for a motion to adopt the meeting agenda as submitted; on a motion by Regent Harris, seconded by Regent Cohen, the Agenda was unanimously adopted as presented.

**OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE BOARD**

In addition to those requesting to speak during the Public Comment period, the Board has received two letters. In accordance with FOI guidelines as amended during the pandemic, the communications were posted on the CSCU website immediately prior to the meeting start time and distributed to the Board in advance of the meeting. They are included as Attachment A.

The following individuals addressed the Board:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dept./Group</u>
Sharod Blackwell	SCSU Student
Miles Goritski	SCSU Student
Andrea Tonnies	SCSU Student
Joshua Cam	SCSU Student
Francesca Palmer	CCSU Student
Sara Baker	SCSU Faculty
John O'Connor	CCSU Faculty
Christopher Doucot	CCSU Faculty
Robert Forbus	SCSU Faculty
Stephen Monroe Tomczak	SCSU Faculty
Maureen Chalmers	4 C's President
Robin Gustafson	WCSU Faculty

Technical difficulties were experienced by Tim Parrish, SCSU Faculty Member. His comments, as well as an additional letter were documented and are included as part of Attachment A (4 letters).

**FACULTY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Faculty Advisory Committee Chair David Blitz and Vice Chair Colena Sesanker offered remarks focusing on the FAC's report to the Board.

FAC Chair Blitz and FAC Vice-Chair Sesanker reported on FAC concerns on a number of issues, including the doubling of levels of management at the community college level, doubling of the System Office controlled budget, reduction of faculty role in curriculum and shared governance, micromanagement by the Board (budget amendment, college and career success course), and lack of review and revision of major policies by the Board (students first). Suggestions for improvement of the relations between the FAC and the Board were proposed (joint meetings and regular reports), and a set of 10 guiding principles for public higher education was presented.

Chair Fleury thanked FAC Chair Blitz and FAC Vice Chair Sesanker for the thoughtful report and noted some of the issues would be discussed and addressed in broad terms during the course of the meeting.

#### **BOR CHAIR MATT FLEURY'S REMARKS**

- Chair Fleury provided an update on the President search process:
  - Posting for candidates is up on the website.
  - Our search firm is busy identifying potential candidates with February 5th the date for best consideration.
  - Added 4 more students to the Search Advisory Committee totaling 40 individuals representing faculty, staff, administrators and students from our 3 constituent units and external stakeholders.

#### **CSCU PRESIDENT OJAKIAN'S REMARKS**

- President Ojakian acknowledged the efforts by the system office and each campus for a very successful semester under very trying circumstances. The State Universities did a tremendous job maintaining their residential presence. Only a 1% COVID positivity rate for the entire semester after extensive testing efforts was recorded. Similar results were seen in the community colleges. There were positive cases in faculty, students, and staff, but the numbers remained low.
- Plans are being developed for the Spring 2021 semester. There is an expectation that the majority of students will continue to learn remotely, particularly at the community colleges.
- CSCU, the State, and other private and public institutions of higher education are working with FEMA to support the State's post-pandemic recovery. Discussions are underway with the Administration to determine our role in vaccine distribution and education.
- In January, the Board will receive a full briefing on the status of the Connecticut State Community College. Close work continues with the new leadership at NECHE and accreditation is on track for 2023.
- Responses to Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC) Report:
  - The report asserts that the System Office, without explanation, increased by 27%. However, the consolidation of expenses for IT, HR, and Finance under the shared services model were fully disclosed, including a roster of staff. The change more clearly reflects the cost of providing the service to campuses and not an increase to System Office overhead.
  - The FAC report describes the leadership reorganization as "hardly a cost-saving measure." In actuality, the reduction in costs in Presidents and CEOs will save about \$50,000 per campus or \$600,000 once fully implemented. There are additional savings as a result of transitioning positions. There will be a full budget report moving forward. Identifiable savings have been achieved.
  - The Connecticut State Community College represents the values that are aspired to in public education. Since 2017, the Board has been very committed to this endeavor. There has been no other plan submitted that would achieve the stated goals.
  - All voting members can make an amendment to a resolution. In October, Regent Balducci made an amendment to further reduce the expenditure side of the budget. There was discussion about the amendment, and in the end, there was flexibility given to the institutions to find that level of savings and perhaps not in those targeted areas. The FAC report referred to the Board of Regents efforts to amend the CSU budgets as "interference." In Section 10A-88 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Board of Regents is the governing board for the Universities.

- The Board has the responsibility and authority to review and approve institutions' financial plans. Actions that fulfill its legal obligations cannot be considered interference.
- Comments concerning Collective Bargaining:
  - CSCU does not negotiate our contracts in the press or public. Good faith negotiations are conducted at the bargaining table, not in the court of public opinion. Bargaining in good faith requires putting forth proposals about what is needed in contracts to effectively serve students, communities, and the mission of our institution. Labor puts forward their proposals. At the bargaining table, common ground and a path forward from initial positions is found. With mutual respect for the process and outcome, a mutually-beneficial contract can be negotiated.
  - Even before the pandemic, years of declining state support and decreasing enrollment have collided with increasing fringe benefits and long-term debt costs which have created a structural deficit across the system. Even before COVID, CSCU's financial position was not sustainable.
  - Increasing costs of the system cannot continue to be put on the backs of our students and their families. Our contract proposals seek to find more flexibility from the faculty to meet our students where they are. We cannot hope to provide access to higher education and a pathway to social mobility for working families if we operate under our current system.
  - The work of the faculty is respected and valued; we must find common ground and common values, and continue to promote the mission of the Board of Regents for Higher Education.

### **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

On a motion by Regent Harris, seconded by Regent Cohen, the October 15, 2020 and November 19, 2020 meeting minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair Fleury noted that a change to the Refund & Course Withdrawal Policy Recommendation was received. This requires that the item be moved off the Consent Agenda and assigned as an item in the Academic & Student Affairs Committee report. Chair Fleury called for a motion on the Consent Agenda as amended. On a motion by Regent Cohen, seconded by Regent Harris, the Consent Agenda was unanimously adopted as amended.

#### **A. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

##### **Discontinuations**

Therapeutic Recreation - C2 Certificate - Northwestern CT Community College

Therapeutic Recreation - AS - Northwestern CT Community College

##### **Accreditation of a Licensed Program**

Health Care Administration - MS - Charter Oak State College

Biotechnology - BS - Southern CT State University

Public Utilities Management - AS - Gateway CC and BS in Business Administration - Southern CT State University

##### **Modifications**

Accounting - BS - Central CT State University [Addition of a Hybrid Instructional Modality]

- Finance - BS - Central CT State University [Addition of a Hybrid Instructional Modality]
- Management - BS - Central CT State University [Addition of a Hybrid Instructional Modality]
- Management Information Systems - BS - Central CT State University [Addition of a Hybrid Instructional Modality]
- Marketing - BS - Central CT State University [Addition of a Hybrid Instructional Modality]
- Gerontology - Official Certificate Program (OCP) - Central CT State University [Modification of Instructional Modality]
- Bilingual/Bicultural Education and TESOL - Residency Program - MS - Southern CT State University [Addition of a Hybrid Instructional Modality]

**New Programs**

- Health Care Administration - AS - Middlesex CC
- Human Nutrition - MS - Western CT State University

**Increase Authority to Use Community College System Reserves for PACT through Spring 2021**

**Tuition Benefit Renewal -- Bright Horizons/CCSU**

**DC-CAP Scholarship Program approval -- ECSU**

**NEBHE Rate Expansion to NY, NJ**

**Reallocation of Charter Oak State College to Care and Custody of 185 Main Street - floors 1 and 2, CCSU to COSC**

**Reallocation of the College Office to Care and Custody of 185 Main Street - floors 3 and 4 to CSCC**

**Change in Care and Custody of 55 Manafort Drive, COSC to CCSU**

**2021 Board of Regents Calendar of Meetings**

**RESOLUTIONS APPROVED ON CONSENT**

**Discontinuations**

Therapeutic Recreation - C2 Certificate - Northwestern CT Community College

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the discontinuation of a program in Therapeutic Recreation (CIP Code: 52.2309 / OHE# 002724) leading to a C2 Certificate at Northwestern Connecticut Community College, effective June 1, 2022.

Therapeutic Recreation - AS - Northwestern CT Community College

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the discontinuation of a program in Therapeutic Recreation (CIP Code: 52.2309 / OHE# 000436) leading to an Associate of Science at Northwestern Connecticut Community College, effective June 1, 2022.

**Accreditation of a Licensed Program**

Health Care Administration - MS - Charter Oak State College

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the accreditation of a licensed program - Health Care Administration (CIP Code: 51.0701 / OHE# 019349) - leading to a Master of Science at Charter Oak State College, for a period of seven semesters from initial accreditation.

Biotechnology - BS - Southern CT State University

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education grant accreditation of a licensed program in Biotechnology (CIP Code: 26.1201 OHE # 018540) leading to a Bachelor of Science at Southern Connecticut State University.

Public Utilities Management - AS - Gateway CC and BS in Business Administration - Southern CT State University

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education grant accreditation of a licensed program for a Public Utilities Management pathway provided by Gateway Community College and Southern Connecticut State University through fall 2022, at which time the institutions may return to apply for continued accreditation. The pathway includes an Associate of Science in Public Utilities Management (CIP code: 52.0205 OHE# 018284) at Gateway Community College and a Public Utilities Management specialization within the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (CIP code: 52.0205 OHE# 018283) at Southern Connecticut State University.

### Modifications

Accounting - BS - Central CT State University [Addition of a Hybrid Instructional Modality]

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a degree program - Accounting (CIP Code: 52.0301 / OHE# 00036), specifically the addition of hybrid modality to traditional program delivery - leading to a Bachelor of Science at Central Connecticut State University.

Finance - BS - Central CT State University [Addition of a Hybrid Instructional Modality]

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a degree program - Finance (CIP Code: 52.0801 / OHE# 02650), specifically the addition of hybrid modality to traditional program delivery - leading to a Bachelor of Science at Central Connecticut State University.

Management - BS - Central CT State University [Addition of a Hybrid Instructional Modality]

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a degree program - Management (CIP Code: 52.0201 / OHE# 00037), specifically the addition of hybrid modality to traditional program delivery - leading to a Bachelor of Science at Central Connecticut State University.

Management Information Systems - BS - Central CT State University [Addition of a Hybrid Instructional Modality]

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a degree program - Management Information Systems (CIP Code: 52.1201 / OHE# 02380), specifically the addition of hybrid modality to traditional program delivery - leading to a Bachelor of Science at Central Connecticut State University.

Marketing - BS - Central CT State University [Addition of a Hybrid Instructional Modality]

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a degree program - Marketing (CIP Code: 52.1401 / OHE# 00039), specifically the addition of hybrid modality to traditional program delivery - leading to a Bachelor of Science at Central Connecticut State University.

Gerontology - Official Certificate Program (OCP) - Central CT State University [Modification of Instructional Modality]

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a degree program - Gerontology (CIP Code: 19.0702 / OHE# 18714), specifically the addition of hybrid modality - leading to a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate at Central Connecticut State University.

Bilingual/Bicultural Education and TESOL - Residency Program - MS - Southern CT State University [Addition of a Hybrid Instructional Modality]

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a degree program - Bilingual / Bicultural Education and TESOL (CIP Code: 13.0201 / OHE# 000602), specifically the addition of hybrid modality to traditional program delivery - leading to a Master of Science at Southern Connecticut State University.

### New Programs

Health Care Administration - AS - Middlesex CC

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the licensure of a program in Health Care Administration (CIP Code: 51.0701 OHE# TBD) - leading to an Associate in Science at Middlesex Community College; and grant its accreditation for a period of seven semesters beginning with its initiation, such initiation to be determined in compliance with BOR guidelines for new programs approved on or after April 3, 2020.

Human Nutrition - MS - Western CT State University

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the licensure of a program in Human Nutrition (CIP Code: 19.0504 OHE# TBD) - leading to a Master of Science at Western Connecticut State University; and grant its accreditation for a period of seven semesters beginning with its initiation, such initiation to be determined in compliance with BOR guidelines for new programs approved on or after April 3, 2020.

### Increase Authority to Use Community College System Reserves for PACT through Spring 2021

WHEREAS, Public Act 19-117, sections 362-364, requires the Board of Regents to establish a debt-free community college program starting in the fall of 2020 under which awards will be made to qualifying students that will offset any cost of tuition and fees not covered by other sources of financial aid, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Regents implemented the PACT program in December 2019, with the first scholarships planned for Fall 2020; and

WHEREAS, in June, 2020, the Board of Regents authorized use of \$3 million of Community College System Office reserves to fund PACT scholarships for the fall because the Pandemic had prevented legislative action to fund the program; and

WHEREAS, on October 23 2020 CSCU received written assurances from leaders in the General Assembly that it would provide \$12 million to CSCU to pay for the scholarships to the current cohort of PACT recipients; and

WHEREAS, legislative leaders also encouraged the system to fund the scholarships for the spring until the General Assembly has an opportunity to make an appropriation for this purpose; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Regents does hereby amend its spending plan to include an additional \$3 million from Community College System Office reserves to support Pact scholarships in the spring, bringing the total amount available in FY 2021 for this purpose to \$6 million.

**Tuition Benefit Renewal -- Bright Horizons/CCSU**

WHEREAS, the Board pursuant to its statutory authority Section 10a-99 of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) and Public Act 11-48 "...shall fix fees for tuition and shall fix fees for such other purposes as the board deems necessary at the university..."

WHEREAS, the Board previously approved a two-year United Technology Corporation ("UTC") Pilot Program at the September 19, 2013, Board meeting and a five-year extension at the October 15, 2015, Board meeting which offered UTC a 5 percent discount on tuition and fees, or a total discount between 2 to 3 percent of tuition and fees. The current UTC agreement will expire on December 31, 2020.

WHEREAS, in 2019, UTC merged with Raytheon Technologies ("RTX"), and the merger required the spinoff of Carrier and Otis as separate entities; all three corporations have entered into client agreements with Bright Horizons Family Solutions LLC ("Bright Horizons") to manage the EdAssist Solutions tuition benefit program for their employees.

WHEREAS, the Board approval of the 5 percent tuition reduction will provide the Connecticut State Universities ("CSU") the opportunity to benefit from an agreement with Bright Horizons and to continue to be a preferred provider of higher education for RTX, Carrier and Otis employees, for whom the corporations pay all tuition costs in most cases.

WHEREAS, the tuition benefits are funded and coordinated through Bright Horizons, which significantly reduces the cost to CSU associated with billing and collection of student bad debt, thereby reducing the financial risk associated with these students.

WHEREAS, the CSU have experienced increased revenue as a result of the agreement with UTC and that a continuation of the tuition reduction program through Bright Horizons is in the interest of CSU, and

RESOLVED, that the Board approve the 5 percent tuition reduction and support the continuation of the established and successful employee tuition reduction program through Bright Horizons extend the pilot which encompasses RTX, Carrier and Otis companies, which were all formerly covered by the original United Technologies Pilot, for up to an additional six years through classes which commence prior to December 31, 2026.

**DC-CAP Scholarship Program approval - ECSU**

WHEREAS, Eastern Connecticut State University has been offered a unique opportunity to participate in a scholarship program sponsored by the District of Columbia College Access Program (DC-CAP); and

WHEREAS, DC-CAP, a privately funded nonprofit organization dedicated to encouraging DC public high school students to enroll in and graduate from college, would select 25 high school graduates each year who will receive a DC-CAP scholarship and Eastern institutional aid to attend Eastern as a DC-CAP/Eastern Scholar; and

WHEREAS, this program will provide benefits to Eastern, CSCU, and the state of Connecticut, including attracting students from the District of Columbia to Connecticut, where some will stay after graduation and join the workforce, increasing enrollment and the number of students in Eastern's residence halls, providing additional revenue and further increasing the diversity of Eastern's residential campus; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Regents does hereby approve a cohort rate so that the total cost to each student under this program would be \$25,000, which would include tuition, fees, room, and board.



**NEBHE Rate Expansion to NY, NJ**

WHEREAS, CSCU institutions currently are authorized as part of the New England Board of Higher Education's Tuition Break Program to offer reduced tuition and fees to students from other New England states; and  
WHEREAS, the discounts are described as the "NEBHE Rate" in the schedules of adopted tuition and fees enacted from time to time by the Board of Regents; and  
WHEREAS, New York and New Jersey are large nearby states with a combined number of new high school graduates each year exceeding 200,000; and  
WHEREAS, ECSU estimates that this tuition discount could produce additional revenue of \$745,000, offset by discounts to existing students of \$361,000 next school year; and  
WHEREAS, WCSU already offers in-state tuition to NY and NJ students under pilot authorization granted previously by the Board of Regents; now therefore be it  
RESOLVED, that the Board of Regents does hereby approve permitting any of the Universities to charge the "NEBHE Rate" for tuition and fees to students from New York or New Jersey, starting in the Fall of 2021, provided that the Universities identify at the time of tuition adoption whether they are each intending to charge this lower rate.

**Reallocation of Charter Oak State College to Care and Custody of 185 Main Street -floors 1 and 2, CCSU to COSC**

WHEREAS, in 1999 Charter Oak State College office moved to a new administrative office space of 14,570 assignable square feet at 55 Manafort Drive, New Britain; and  
WHEREAS, Charter Oak obtained an additional 10,280 assignable square feet in 2003 at 85 Alumni Rd, Newington, due to increased education and administrative services; and  
WHEREAS, Charter Oak conducting business operations from two locations is not most efficient and is costlier than completing all services from one location; and  
WHEREAS, Charter Oak has maintained long term plans to consolidate its' operations from two physical locations to one location; and  
WHEREAS, Charter Oak seeks approval to consolidate both of its locations into approximately 26,000 assignable square feet in unoccupied first and second floor space at the Central Connecticut State University ITBD Building located at, 185 Main St., New Britain; and  
WHEREAS, Care and Custody of 185 Main Street for the Board of Regents will be transferred to Charter Oak and the College Office (College Office pending Board approval as a separate request); and  
WHEREAS, Charter Oak's relocation to 185 Main St. is projected to reduce their annual facility operating expense from \$275,000 to \$188,000; and  
WHEREAS, project funding will be from existing available bond funds for both building improvements and equipment purchases; therefore, be it  
RESOLVED, Charter Oak State College will relocate to, funded from existing available bond funds, and share in the Care and Custody of 185 Main St., New Britain.

**Reallocation of the College Office to Care and Custody of 185 Main Street - floors 3 and 4 to CSCC**

WHEREAS, the Board of Regents Students First Plan merges the 12 separately accredited colleges into a single accredited college; and  
WHEREAS, a single accredited college projection achieves fiscal sustainability, in part, by providing back-office functions through an efficient, shared services model; and  
WHEREAS, The College Office is currently co-located with the CSCU System Office at 61 Woodland Street; and

WHEREAS, the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), Standards for Accreditation, require a clear division of responsibility in multi-campus systems organized under a single governing board; and

WHEREAS, to fulfill part of this requirement the College Office seeks approval to relocate into the third and fourth floor space at Central Connecticut State Universities ITBD Building located at, 185 Main St., New Britain; and

WHEREAS, College Office occupancy of 185 Main Street will occur in phases as funding allows; and

WHEREAS, Care and Custody of 185 Main Street for the Board of Regents will be transferred to the College Office and Charter Oak State College (Charter Oak pending Board approval as a separate request); and

WHEREAS, \$3M in new bond funds is requested in the FY2022 - FY2023 biennium for fourth floor renovation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, the College Office will relocate to (as funding allows) and share in the Care and Custody of 185 Main St., New Britain.

#### **Change in Care and Custody of 55 Manafort Drive, COSC to CCSU**

WHEREAS, in 1999 Charter Oak State College occupied a new building constructed at 55 Paul J. Manafort Drive, New Britain; and

WHEREAS, 55 Paul J. Manafort Drive is directly adjacent to Central Connecticut State University and is Central land used by Charter Oak under a Memo of Understanding; and

WHEREAS, pending a separate Board approval, Charter Oak will relocate to 185 Main St., New Britain, projected for late 2021; and

WHEREAS, Central's long term plans reinforce a need for a conveniently located Admissions and Welcoming Center in a prominent campus location; and

WHEREAS, 55 Paul J. Manafort Drive is a prominent location for Central to develop a new Admissions and Welcoming center; and

WHEREAS, renovations and modifications to 55 Paul J. Manafort Drive for Central's new Admissions and Welcoming Center will be funded from existing bond funds designated for Central; and

WHEREAS, the CSCU will work to modify Care and Custody of 55 Paul J. Manafort Drive from Charter Oak to Central; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, Care and Custody of 55 Paul J. Manafort Drive will be transitioned from Charter Oak State College to Central Connecticut State College after Charter Oak vacate the facility.

#### **2021 Board of Regents Calendar of Meetings – See Attachment B**

#### **ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Regent Harris brought forward the revised Refund and Course Withdrawal Policy and commented that the policy changes the timeline for withdrawing from courses for two reasons:

- It provides equity to all students whether they have financial aid or not, and
- It assures that students do not incur debt when they withdraw from a course and then have a problem when they try to register at a later time and do not have the money to pay back the debt.

The only change to the resolution that appears in the Board packet is that the implementation date in Summer 2021, not Spring 2021. This change is needed to ensure that the Banner system is up-to-date and can accommodate the changes outlined in the Staff Report.

Regent Harris made a motion to approve the revised resolution.

WHEREAS, the CSCU Community Colleges have operated under the Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education policy 3.4 (Tuition and Fee Refunds); and

WHEREAS, the current Tuition and Fee Refund policy does not align with the census date; and

WHEREAS, the Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education adopted a policy of Grading, Notations, and Academic Engagement (1.19) to more accurately depict student enrollment at the time of census, and

WHEREAS, it is critical to ensure consistency in approaching both the active engagement of a student in their registered coursework, as well as the student's ability to add/drop courses and/or withdraw from coursework; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education adopt a community college policy on Refunds and Course Withdrawals to provide a uniform framework for refunds and course withdrawals for all credit-bearing full-term and abbreviated terms; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this policy shall replace the Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education policy 3.4 for students of the twelve Connecticut State Community Colleges and the future Connecticut State Community College and be it further

RESOLVED, that this policy shall go into effect for the summer 2021 semester.

Chair Fleury seconded the motion which carried following a unanimous voice vote.

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

Regent Wright reported that the Audit Committee met on December 16th. Management discussed the fiscal year 2020 financial statement close process and were pleased by the improvements that were made since the last fiscal year close. This year, all three financial statements will be issued timely by our auditors early next week.

Grant Thornton presented the audit reports and required communications for the Connecticut Community Colleges, Connecticut State Universities, and Charter Oak State College for the year ended June 30, 2020. All three audit reports resulted in clean, unmodified opinions. The auditors noted there were a few technical adjustments made during their audits, but that none of the adjustments were qualitatively material to the financial statements. Grant Thornton emphasized that the internal control matter that was identified during the fiscal year 2019 audit for the Community Colleges has been remediated for fiscal year 2020. There were no internal control matters to report this year.

Management then gave an update on the RFP for Audit, Accounting, and Management Advisory Services for fiscal years 2021 through 2025. The RFP Committee's recommendation was Grant Thornton, who has been the System's current auditor for the last 5 years. The Audit Committee voted and approved the appointment of Grant Thornton.

Kudos to Ben Barnes, Melinda Cruanes and their teams for this year's financial statement close process. The team worked tirelessly to ensure that we had a successful close process that was timely and effective. Excellent work. No other matters were discussed.

## FINANCE & INFRASTRUTURE COMMITTEE

Regent Balducci reported that the Finance and Infrastructure Committee met on Wednesday, December 2. The agenda included one discussion item and 8 action items, of which all but one is on the Consent Agenda. A budget and finance update included the following highlights:

- CSCU has received an additional \$20 million commitment of state-controlled Coronavirus Relief Funds. This additional funding will help to reduce the current year deficit to \$42 million, subject to lower enrollment and other risks facing the system in the coming Spring.
- Continuing financial risks related to enrollment and the pandemic, which are significant and worsening as the pandemic surges here and around the country.
- Information related to the additional \$8 million in reductions to the university budgets that were enacted by this board in October, amounting to about 1% of their spending. The universities have been offered flexibility to achieve those savings in a way that minimizes any impact on students. Universities have reported that they are able to achieve some of the savings for graduate assistants through attrition, but that none have revoked assistantships or internships to continuing students. The universities have been given the ability to find savings in graduate assistants and also in part-time lecturers elsewhere if necessary, and we will have detailed reporting on the university budgets in February.
- The system completed its FY 2020 financial statements. Based on these audited numbers, projections for Unrestricted Net Position - Reserves - need to be adjusted. For the colleges, the position improved by about \$500,000 compared to earlier projections. For the Universities, however, reserve projections must be lowered by \$20 million. This is the result of a variety of accruals and non-operating items, significantly a drop-off in capital contributions from the state. Based on this, projected reserves at the end of FY21 for the universities will drop to \$99 million. The college projection will improve to \$19 million.

Action Item - Approval of Budget Submissions to the Office of Policy and Management for FY 2022 and FY 2023.

These items have been submitted to OPM on a preliminary basis to meet their deadlines, subject to BOR approval. They include a two-year baseline, or “current services” budget, a proposed Capital Budget, and budget options. The Baseline budget makes the following assumptions:

- Enrollment and Occupancy rates begin to improve from current levels at a rate that would return to pre-pandemic levels over three years, ending in FY 2024.
- Flat tuition and fees in FY 2022.
- No collective bargaining increases, and typical 5% increases in fringe benefits costs.
- Funding will be provided for the PACT program and Guided Pathways.

Based on these assumptions, the baseline budget shows deficits of \$47 million and \$62 million for the universities, and \$27 million and \$24 million for the colleges. These deficits are largely driven by revenue shortfalls stemming from enrollment and residence hall occupancy.

- Charter Oak’s baseline budget shows balanced operations during the coming two years.
- The Capital Budget request is an update of last year’s request. Recall that no action was taken on a bond package during the pandemic-shortened 2020 session.
- The budget option requested the state to increase block grants to cover projected deficits, by \$74 million and \$87 million, over the two years of the biennium.

Regent Balducci made a motion to adopt the CSCU FY22/FY23 Biennium Operating Fund Baseline and Capital Requests. The motion was seconded by Regent Cohen. The motion carried with 11 votes in favor and 1 abstention (Regent Oglesby).

Chair Fleury asked if there was any prospect for approval of our “ask” for coverage for revenue gaps or the role the Board should play in advocacy.

Regent Balducci commented that this resolution will show that we are making cuts and adjustments that are necessary while minimizing student impact. The Board of Regents as a group should be available to speak with the leadership of both the House and the Senate and the Chairs of the Appropriations Committee and the Higher Education Committee to advocate our position. Students, faculty, and staff should be treated in a fair way so that we can remain a top-flight public education institution. The next Legislative Session begins on January 6, 2021.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

Regent Cohen provided an update on the confidentiality of the CSCU System President search and addressed the issue that the search is not transparent.

- The CSCU President Search policy is the 4<sup>th</sup> iteration of a search process. There is commonality in all the policies - all envision a Board Search Committee and a broad-based Search Advisory Committee. Both committees see all resumes and will have representatives participate in semi-finalist and finalist interviews.
- The Search Advisory Committee is comprised of faculty, staff, students, administrators, and community representatives.
- Differences in this search include a more broad-based Search Advisory Committee for a System President (as opposed to a campus leader) and the pandemic has caused the entire process to be virtual.
- As the policy allows, we have selected a consultant who has advised that we keep the search confidential until a finalist is recommended. We told the consultant that one of the foundations of this search was to ensure that we had a diverse, expansive, and inclusive pool of applicants. The consultant said that the common national practice is to have the finalists' names protected. People are concerned about maintaining their current position and will not even apply because of all the uncertainty in the current environment. We have taken their advice for this search and have learned that UConn used this process to select their new president as well as other public systems.
- To make a more intimate and more fully engaged process, the Search Advisory Committee members will interview the finalists in smaller sessions with their respective constituent groups rather than a meeting with the entire Search Advisory Committee together.
- Looking forward to working with the Search Advisory Committee to recommend a new CSCU System President.

David Blitz indicated that the Faculty Advisory Committee believes that the benefits of a search process open to all CSCU employees, students and the residents of Connecticut outweigh the benefits of a confidential search process despite likelihood it will lead to a more diverse and expansive candidate pool.

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

No Report, No Exhibits

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION** - Regent Harris presented the following resolution of recognition:

THE CONNECTICUT BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION EXTENDS ITS DEEPEST APPRECIATION AND THANKS TO ITS PRESIDENT MARK E. OJAKIAN

WHEREAS, Mark Ojakian's retirement January 1, 2021, ends more than four decades of his public service to the people of Connecticut, and,

WHEREAS, over the past five years, President Ojakian has led the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities System with a passion for accessible, affordable and equitable educational opportunities, and,

WHEREAS, Mark's leadership was critical to the CSCU system of 17 institutions, a \$1.3 billion operating budget, 9,000 employees and more than 100,000 students, and,  
WHEREAS, President Ojakian has brought vision, stability and innovation to a system in transition amid a turbulent economic environment for higher education, and,  
WHEREAS, throughout his tenure, Mark has prioritized student retention and graduation, has valued the skilled faculty and staff who support student teaching and learning, and has partnered with business and government communities to assure that CSCU meets Connecticut's goals of an informed citizenry and an educated workforce that supports the state's economy, and,  
WHEREAS, President Ojakian is an outspoken, articulate champion of higher education, whose advocacy for lifelong learning has made a meaningful impact to the quality of life for all CSCU's students, faculty, and staff, and,  
WHEREAS Mark's presidency has been filled with long work days and nights, ongoing engagement with communities that support our campuses and institutions, countless media opportunities to publicize the advantages of a CSCU education, and close working relationships with public and private higher education leaders; now, therefore, be it  
RESOLVED, that Mark's presidency and dedication will be honored by a transfer scholarship in his name through the CT State Colleges and Universities Foundation; and, be it further  
RESOLVED, that the Board of Regents for Higher Education recognizes President Ojakian for his vital contributions to the CSCU system that have fostered student learning inside and outside the classroom, have contributed to the economic needs and opportunities of students and employers, and have been a proactive, loud and substantive voice for social justice; and, be it further  
RESOLVED that the Board of Regents for Higher Education extends its sincere appreciation to President Mark Ojakian for his leadership to the Connecticut System of Colleges and Universities, and extends its sincere, heartfelt wishes to him for a retirement overflowing with good health, personal fulfillment, and new adventures.

Chair Fleury called for a motion to adopt the resolution; *on a motion by Regent Cohen, seconded by Regent Wright, the resolution was unanimously adopted.*

Congratulatory and appreciative remarks were made by Chair Fleury, Regent Santiago, Regent Jimenez, Commissioner Westby, Regent Wright, Regent Howery, and Regent Gray-Kemp.

President Ojakian provided thoughts and reflections on his tenure at CSCU. He thanked the Board of Regents, the leaders on campus and the system office, and faculty and staff throughout the system. He noted with gratitude the chance to interact with students on a daily basis and outlined the tasks ahead.

A video message dedicated to President Ojakian's service was shown and will be made available of the CSCU YouTube Channel.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Chair Fleury declared the meeting adjourned at 1:02 p.m.**

Submitted,

Alice Pritchard  
Secretary of the CT Board of Regents for Higher Education