

**BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
FINANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE
Wednesday, September 4, 2019 @10:00
Regents Boardroom, System Office, 61 Woodland Street, Hartford, CT 06105**

Minutes

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PARTICIPATING

Richard J. Balducci, Chairman
Del Cummings
David R. Jimenez
JoAnn Ryan (via teleconference)

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT

Felice Gray-Kemp

CSCU STAFF PARTICIPATING

Mark Ojakian, President
Ben Barnes, Chief Financial Officer
Keith Epstein, VP Facilities, Real Estate and Infrastructure Planning

CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present, Chairman Balducci called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 13, 2019 MEETING

On a motion by Regent JoAnn Ryan, seconded by Regent David Jimenez, the minutes of the June 13, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved as submitted.

INFORMATION ITEM(S)

Spending Plan Reduction Targets

CFO Barnes noted that the FY2020 Budget/Spending Plan for the colleges was approved at the last Board meeting. Technical issues were raised by the colleges and were addressed with adjustments being made. Regional meetings were held with campus leadership to discuss budget options in response to a provision provided by the Board to find reductions from the proposed plan in order to limit use of reserves.

Modifications were made and will continue to be monitored to ascertain if additional steps are necessary to reduce the budget. CFO Barnes reviewed the FY2020 spending plan reductions as outlined within the staff report in the meeting agenda packet (see Attachment A). The reductions

in the current fiscal year will reduce the FY2020 deficit. At the request of President Ojakian, he explained the impact of the budget that included a proportionate reduction at the system office.

There are additional risks that may impact our budget performance. The system office will continue to monitor these risks and evaluate them again in January when a mid-year projection is prepared for the Board.

2020 Capital Projects Update

VP Epstein provided an update on the 2020 Capital Projects. A number of projects are ongoing at Central Connecticut State University including the parking garage, Kaiser Annex, sports field, basketball court and the athletic room. The groundbreaking ceremony for the Engineering building is scheduled for September 12, 2019. The college did not receive the amount of money requested for the construction of the building. Construction is expected to last one and one-half years.

Introduction of New Controller

Melinda Cruanes, the newly hired Controller in the System Office Finance Department, was introduced to the committee. Her responsibilities will include overseeing the General Ledger and audit process. Chris Forster has transitioned into his new role as the Director of Shared Services and Change Management. His responsibilities will include payroll, purchasing and grant management.

Debt-Free College

CFO Barnes commented on a legislative proposal to provide Connecticut high school graduates a guaranteed tuition free education at the community colleges. The Debt-Free Community College program, modeled after similar initiatives across the country, will provide money to students after financial aid and federally funded Pell grants are applied, to cover their remaining institutional costs. The legislature passed the law during the last legislative session without providing funds for the program that is due to start in the fall 2020.

Items will be forthcoming before the Board over the next few months to address various components of the program that needs to be in place regarding regulations, marketing and outreach, to successfully launch the program. President Ojakian made it clear to the legislature that funding for the program should not come out of the System's existing budget. CFO Barnes provided an analysis of states who currently use the debt-free college model.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Regent Jimenez, seconded by Regent Ryan, the meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.