

Office of the President  
(609) 984-1105  
Fax: (609) 989-9321  
[gpruit@tesc.edu](mailto:gpruit@tesc.edu)

101 W. State St.  
Trenton, NJ 08608-1176  
[www.tesc.edu](http://www.tesc.edu)

## MINUTES

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

### THOMAS EDISON STATE COLLEGE

**September 11, 2009**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** George Pruitt; Marilyn Pearson, Chair; J. Stanley Justice, Vice-Chair; Fred Abbate; Richard Arndt; Nicholas Carnevale; George Fricke; Ida Hammond; Eric Lear; E. Harvey Myers; T. Christopher Golden, Student; and Barbara Hare, Student.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**ALSO PRESENT:** William Seaton, Vice President and Provost; Michael Scheiring, Vice President and Treasurer; Penelope Brouwer, Vice President for Planning and Research; John Thurber, Vice President for Public Affairs; Norma Blake, New Jersey State Librarian; Ann Marie Senior; Karen Briggs, Auditor; Esther H. Paist, Robin Walton, and Linda Vasbinder.

Ms. Pearson officially called the public meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

#### SWEARING IN OF STUDENT TRUSTEE

Ms. Pearson presented the following resolution:

**WHEREAS:** New Jersey state law and the Bylaws of Thomas Edison State College provide for student representation on the Board of Trustees; and

**WHEREAS:** Said Bylaws specify criteria for the selection of student trustees; and

**WHEREAS:** The President of the College has certified that T. Christopher Golden meets the criteria; and

**WHEREAS:** The President of the College does hereby nominate T. Christopher Golden as a student trustee alternate in accordance with the procedures of the Board; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Trustees of Thomas Edison State College does hereby elect T.

Christopher Golden as student trustee alternate effective September 11, 2009, for a term of one year, followed thereby as student trustee for a period of one year, which shall conclude at the annual meeting of the Board to be held in June 2011.

Mr. Abbate made, and Ms. Hammond seconded, a motion to accept the resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Golden read the oath of office and was congratulated and welcomed by the group.

#### **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the June 5, 2009, meeting were presented by Ms. Pearson for approval and adoption.

Mr. Arndt made, and Mr. Carnevale seconded, a motion to accept the resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Pruitt reported that New Jersey's budget situation continues to worsen and referred the Board to documents that compare the state appropriation for the College this year with that made in 1997. He also explained the situation regarding renegotiation of union contracts in order to impose furloughs but avoid layoffs. And he pointed out that College managers will not only not receive any salary increases, but that they would also participate in the furlough program to some extent.

In other remarks, Dr. Pruitt reported that in spite of the many budget cuts, we ended the year with a revenue surplus concomitant with a 5% increase in new undergraduate enrollment, an 11% increase in continuing enrollment, and a 55% increase in graduate enrollment. We achieved CCNE accreditation; we received an award for our UPS—Corporate Choice agreement; we will soon get TEAC accreditation; we have started Flash Track; we upgraded our Web page; we acquired the Kuser Mansion; and we refreshed our Kelsey Building.

Norma Blake described the State Library's accomplishments during the fiscal year. These include the tell-us-your-story campaign, which won several state and national awards; the campaign to provide marketing and advocacy for libraries to state legislators; work with law enforcement agencies to show how libraries can be safe havens for teens; the Get-Help Web site and fairs for people coping with tough times; training of librarians to help customers negotiate filing unemployment forms, etc; and snapshot day, demonstrating the vast number of people who are served by libraries. Dr. Pruitt commended Norma's state and national leadership in library matters and service, saying that she is effective in working with the library community and making advocacy for libraries.

Dr. Pruitt introduced Dr. Senior's presentation on year-end numbers, saying that we are not in business to make a profit or to be the biggest college; instead, we are in the business of changing people's lives.

#### **ETHICS COMMISSION AUDIT BRIEFING**

Esther H. Paist, in her capacity as the College's Ethics Liaison Officer, reported on the findings of an audit made on June 16, 2009, by Compliance Officer Jeffrey Stoolman of the State Ethics Commission. Mr. Stoolman's finding, as stated in a letter to Dr. Pruitt of July 24, 2009, was

that the College is in “substantial compliance with the reporting and documentation requirements of the New Jersey Conflicts of Interest Law, Executive Orders, and regulations.” However, as a result of an audit recommendation concerning trustee reporting, all trustees must complete an additional form regarding their outside activities. All trustees duly completed that form at the end of the meeting.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF FY 2009 AUDIT REPORT**

Dr. Pruitt pointed out that today’s report and action is preliminary in that the Administration and Finance committee will consider the audit in detail at its November meeting. He also pointed out that the audit report affirms the College’s excellent financial position. Auditor Karen Briggs then presented a report using the draft financial statement, and a brief PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Briggs explained the process used to determine that there were no errors in the College’s financial statements. There were no deficiencies found and no management letter is necessary, therefore.

Mr. Fricke presented the following resolution:

**WHEREAS:** It is the policy of the Board of Trustees to subject the College’s finances and relevant administrative practices, and the finances and relevant administrative practices of its affiliate, the New Jersey State Library, to an independent audit; and

**WHEREAS:** It is the practice of the Board of Trustees to have said audit reviewed by the Administration and Finance Committee of the Board, acting as an audit committee and reporting its findings and conclusions to the Board; and

**WHEREAS:** In the presence of representatives of the external accounting firm that conducted the audit, the President has certified to the Board of Trustees that said audit contains no significant adverse findings; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Trustees of Thomas Edison State College does hereby receive and accept the final audit report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, as presented and incorporated herein by reference, and to have said audit reviewed by the Administration and Finance Committee of the Board, acting as an audit committee, reporting its findings and conclusions to the Board.

Mr. Fricke made, and Ms. Hammond seconded, a motion to accept the audit. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF BID WAIVERS**

Norma Blake explained the bid waiver requests for the State Library, elaborating on how the Library intends to use the equipment and services in question.

Mr. Fricke presented the following resolution:

**WHEREAS:** The “State College Contracts Law,” Chapter 64 of Title 18A, of the New Jersey Statutes requires that any purchase exceeding \$28,300 must be publicly advertised for sealed bids in the local newspapers; and

**WHEREAS:** Section 5a of the additional article to Chapter 64 Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes states that the College may waive the bidding procedures by resolution of the Board of Trustees of the College; and

**WHEREAS:** The purchasing policies of Thomas Edison State College approved by the Board of Trustees on October 10, 1986, provide for the granting of categorical prior approval and post reporting to the Board of such purchases; and

**WHEREAS:** Background information on each bid waiver will always be provided in one attached document entitled "Bid Waiver Request"; and

**WHEREAS:** The College is requesting bid waivers to do the following:

- sponsor a public awareness campaign featuring role models from the sports, arts, entertainment, and literary fields as "library champions," at an approximate cost of \$75,000; and
- purchase an ESL database to support public library programs for teaching ESL, at an approximate cost of \$200,000

in accord with the explanation and description of each project as set out in the attached "Bid Waiver Request"; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Trustees does hereby authorize bid waivers for the College and its affiliate, the New Jersey State Library, to do the following: sponsor a public awareness campaign featuring role models from the sports, arts, entertainment, and literary fields as "library champions," at an approximate cost of \$75,000; and purchase an ESL database to support public library programs for teaching ESL, at an approximate cost of \$200,000.

Mr. Fricke made, and Ms. Pearson seconded, a motion to adopt the resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF INCREASE IN BIDDING THRESHOLD**

Mr. Scheiring reminded the Board of Trustees that the threshold is a "control level" and we ensure that the Board can duly consider and act on all bid waiver requests.

Mr. Fricke presented the following resolution:

**WHEREAS:** The "State College Contracts Law," Chapter 64 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes established the bidding threshold for open competitive bidding at \$7,500; and

**WHEREAS:** The Board of Trustees of Thomas Edison State College at its October 10, 1986, meeting adopted a Purchasing Policy establishing \$7,500 as the bidding threshold; and

**WHEREAS:** The threshold for competitive bidding has been raised by the "State College Contract Law" to \$30,100, effective July 1, 2009; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Trustees of Thomas Edison State College, upon the recommendation of the President, does hereby amend the Purchasing Policy by increasing the public bidding threshold from \$28,300 to \$30,100, above which all covered purchases and contracts must be handled through open, competitive bidding.

Mr. Fricke made, and Mr. Abbate seconded, a motion to adopt the resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL APPOINTMENT**

Mr. Abbate presented the following resolution:

**The Board of Trustees of Thomas Edison State College does hereby appoint Mary Price, Nurse Executive Program, Teacher's College, Columbia University, to a three-year term on the Academic Council. The action herein taken is pursuant to a recommendation by the President of the College.**

Mr. Abbate made, and Revered Justice seconded, a motion to adopt the resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF CANDIDATES FOR DEGREE**

Mr. Seaton elaborated on our success with graduation rates and pointed out that there were more than 2500 graduates for the year 2009. Among them are Linda Vassbinder and Student Trustee T. Christopher Golden. Dr. Pruitt also reported on the fact that we have rescinded the degree awarded Paul Guarev due to our discovery of his academic dishonesty. This has been vetted through the Deputy Attorney General's office.

Mr. Abbate presented the following resolution:

**The Board of Trustees of Thomas Edison State College does hereby approve the awarding of the appropriate degrees to those September 11, 2009, candidates cited on the lists provided and incorporated herein by reference.**

**The action herein taken is pursuant to a certification by the President that the aforementioned candidates have satisfied all relevant degree requirements as recommended by the Academic Council and as established by the Board of Trustees.**

Mr. Abbate made, and Mr. Arndt seconded, a motion to adopt the resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF PERSONNEL ACTIONS**

In introducing this resolution, Dr. Pruitt pointed out that, upon adoption, three staff members will receive new titles and/or promotions. They are Linda Soltis, Misty Isak, and Linda Vassbinder.

Dr. Pruitt presented the following resolution:

**The Board of Trustees of Thomas Edison State College does hereby approve all appointments as indicated on the lists provided and incorporated herein by reference.**

**The action herein taken is pursuant to a recommendation by the President of the College.**

Mr. Carnevale made, and Ms. Hammond seconded, a motion to adopt the resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

**REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Mr. Abbate, Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, reported on the nomination of Reverend Justice as Board of Trustees Chairperson and Eric Lear as Board of Trustees Vice-Chairperson. After counting the ballots, Dr. Pruitt reported that they were unanimously elected.

**CONSIDERATION OF HONORARY DEGREES FOR MR. CARNEVALE AND MR. FRICKE**

In presenting these two resolutions, Dr. Pruitt pointed out that Mr. Carnevale had made known his intentions to retire from the Board now that his term has expired. Mr. Fricke has also indicated his intention to retire from the Board. Dr. Pruitt celebrated the accomplishments and service of both gentlemen to the Board of Trustees. He also said that he has asked Mr. Fricke to stay on until a replacement is identified, and Mr. Fricke has agreed to do that.

Dr. Pruitt presented the following resolutions, one concerning Mr. Carnevale and the other concerning Mr. Fricke, and the Board voted on each, in turn.

**WHEREAS:** Nicholas L. Carnevale has served with distinction on the Thomas Edison State College Board of Trustees since 1995; and

**WHEREAS:** He has announced his intention to step down from the Board of Trustees now that his most recent term has ended; and

**WHEREAS:** He has been a most dedicated member of the Board of Trustees, serving as its Chairperson from 2003 to 2005; and

**WHEREAS:** He has also served as a most dedicated member of the Thomas Edison State College Foundation Board of Directors since 1986, and as its Chairperson from 1993 to 1998, and as liaison from the Foundation Board to the Board of Trustees during his tenure on both boards; and

**WHEREAS:** His countless civic activities have earned him awards ranging from the Princeton Chamber of Commerce's "Citizen of the Year" to the Rotary Club International's rare and respected "Service above Self" award to the College's own "Spirit of Edison" award; and

**WHEREAS:** His many years of conscientious work and wise counsel on behalf of the Board of Trustees are worthy of the highest recognition Thomas Edison State College can bestow now,

therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Trustees of Thomas Edison State College, upon the recommendation of the President, does hereby award Nicholas L. Carnevale the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** That said degree be conferred upon him at the College's Commencement Ceremony, to be held on October 10, 2009.

Mr. Abbate made, and Ms. Hammond seconded, a motion to adopt the resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Carnevale expressed his heartfelt thanks.

Dr. Pruitt then presented the following resolution:

**WHEREAS:** George L. Fricke has served with distinction on the Thomas Edison State College Board of Trustees since 1989; and

**WHEREAS:** He has announced his intention to step down from the Board of Trustees after long and distinguished service; and

**WHEREAS:** He has been a most dedicated member of the Board of Trustees, serving as its Chairperson from 1995 to 1997 and as the Chairperson of the Administration and Finance Committee for many years, as well; and

**WHEREAS:** He has represented the College faithfully and well on the Board of the New Jersey Association of Colleges and Universities and has been a tireless advocate for higher education for adults throughout the State of New Jersey both professionally and as a volunteer; and

**WHEREAS:** His many years of conscientious work and wise counsel on behalf of the Board of Trustees are worthy of the highest recognition Thomas Edison State College can bestow now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That the Board of Trustees of Thomas Edison State College, upon the recommendation of the President, does hereby award George L. Fricke the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** That said degree be conferred upon him at the College's Commencement Ceremony, to be held on October 10, 2009.

Mr. Arndt made, and Ms. Hammond seconded, a motion to adopt the resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Fricke stated that the College has been his "family" and that he will always remain connected to it.

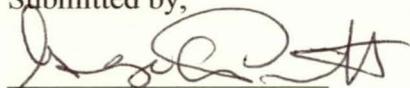
## **NEW BUSINESS**

In recognition of the completion of her two years of service as Chairperson, Dr. Pruitt presented Ms. Pearson with a ceremonial gavel. She graciously accepted it, along with thanks and congratulations from her fellow Trustees.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

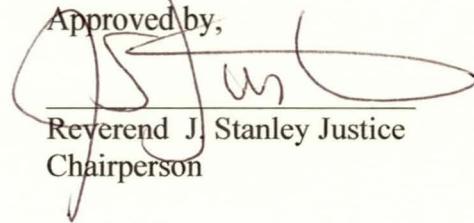
There being no further business, Mr. Fricke made, and Ms. Hammond seconded, a motion to adopt a resolution to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Submitted by,



George A. Pruitt  
Secretary of the Board

Approved by,



Reverend J. Stanley Justice  
Chairperson