

**College Council Meeting**

**Monday, December 7, 2020**

**5:00 pm Council Meeting**

**TEAMS**

**Present:** Chair Patricia Fogarty, Mr. Michael Colomaio, Ms. Eva Benedict, Mr. George Welch Sr., Mr. Charles Craig, Mr. Fredrick Sinclair, Ms. Baylee Durantini, Mr. Jack Benjamin, Mr. Al Mosher, and Mr. Ron Nasca

**Also Present:** President Dr. Skip Sullivan, Provost Dr. Kristin Poppo, Vice Presidents Dr. Craig Clark, Ms. Betsy Penrose and Dr. Gregory Sammons, Chief of Staff Ms. Wendy Dresser-Recktenwald, Chief Financial Officer Mr. Joseph Greenthal, Faculty Senate Chair Mr. Earl Packard and Executive Assistant to the President Ms. Trish Haggerty.

**Absent:** Mr. Joseph Pelych and Mr. Alan Mosher

1. **Call Meeting to Order-Chair Fogarty**
2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting-Chair Fogarty**

Mr. Fred Sinclair made a motion to approve, Mr. George Welch seconded. The minutes from October 19, 2020 were approved as presented.

1. **College Council Chair’s Report-Chair Fogarty**

* Chair Fogarty opened the meeting by sharing condolences with Mr. George Welch and his family on the loss of their son. She stated that she would like to make a donation on behalf of the Council in their son’s memory. She asked that Mr. Welch to provide the appropriate information to Secretary Haggerty to ensure that donation is made.
* Presidential Search Update

Chair Fogarty shared that there is a committee to review the RFP’s for a search firm being assembled now. Chair Fogarty asked Mr. Colomaio to ask Joe Petrick, UUP president to recommend a member to this committee. After that we will look at putting together a full search. President Sullivan shared with the council that this RFP review committee is an administrative piece and is directly related to the procurement of a service. Chair Fogarty would like representation outside of administration regardless. Provost Poppo is concerned about faculty not being willing to work during non-obligation, and this will hold up the process considerably. Mr. Colomaio said that Mr. Petrick might be able to recommend someone who is a 12- month employee and would be working through the winter recess.

1. **President’s Updates/Institutional Advancement Report-President Sullivan**

President Sullivan thanked everyone for being here tonight. He shared that this is the last week of the semester and it has been an interesting fall semester, but he shared that February 1, 2021 will be the first day of face to face classes back on campus and we are excited and working to get ready for that. He also shared that there is a real concern about retention between Fall and Spring. Fall semester was not a positive experience for many of our students. College has looked very different with no sports, no activities, minimal social events and the applications for fall are drastically down at this point and there is serious concern about the impact of that decrease. Currently the widespread fear is that many high schoolers have been lost in the online learning shift especially those who were already high risk.

Alfred State has submitted our re-opening plan and there are detailed testing mandates from SUNY about the return of students to campus. We as a college have also held off on faculty and employee accommodation decisions until January to see where we fall in terms of vaccines and additional SUNY guidelines. President Sullivan shared that SUNY, in its entirety is experiencing enrollment decline, and that is a concern. The current financial outlook is also bleak. With the added COVID costs just over $600k; the loss of fees such as athletic, gym and other recreational fees; combined with the fact that we have received no state appropriations this year we will soon be delving into reserves to cover operational expenses. Many projects are on hold and we are seeing that money we set aside in state funds to finish these already approved projects being taken and used by the state in other places. This has forced us to be resourceful and change many plans.

President Sullivan commends faculty, staff, and students for keeping us on campus all semester and staying safe. He commends the leadership here on this call for helping keep us above water. President Sullivan also shared that we had a successful day of giving raising $218,000 and he expressed his gratitude to everyone who gave. He said that our Major Gift Campaign continues to go well, and even in these uncertain times we are nearing $7 Million of our $8 million goal. We are hoping to exceed that goal and close the campaign in the fall of next year. He did say there are still two seven figure gifts for potential naming opportunities that are with SUNY for approval.

1. **Action Items - None**
2. **Senior Staff Updates**

-Human Resources/CCET **(Chief of Staff Dresser-Recktenwald)**

Chief of Staff Dresser-Recktenwald said that they are learning in HR to work very differently and they have also had to work remotely a lot. The accommodation requests have been difficult to deal with. There have been a lot of interpersonal conflicts, because of tension and anger. Stress has caused a lot of mental health needs. She also shared that the Police Academy is looking good for the next session. Upcoming Winter session numbers look good as well and that begins December 21st. Currently our enrollment numbers for that session are ahead of last year.

-Student Affairs **(Vice President Sammons)**

VP Sammons thanked the faculty and staff, he said we had 93% occupancy which has been unrivaled by any other COT and other SUNY schools in general. We administered over 10,000 tests throughout the semester and 2700 were in the last week. We finished with a .5% positivity rate at the end of the semester. He feels this shows our plan worked to keep the campus safe and succeed the best we could. He also shared that we had 243 coach led activities in place of athletics. We were very close to the same number of overall activities. The Career fair still went on virtually and there are a ton of jobs out there that are still being posted and available to our alumni and graduates. We navigated the election, and we had a strong voter registration. Through campus promotions we had 121 students register to vote for the first time. We have the food pantry that has served about 100 students, and the Pioneer exchange which has also served over 200 students this fall. Our health and mental health services visits were lower than usual. We conducted most appointments via telehealth which was helpful since so many of the health professional were the ones on the frontline testing, contact tracing, and moving students into quarantine. Student misconduct was up. There were 669 student misconduct cases, 57% were COVID specific. 80% of those were one-time cases, and most of those were mask violations. We had a handful of sanctions and expulsions because of conduct but not many. As we move into the spring the big change will be the doubling of our isolation space and tripling our quarantine space. We are doing this to be better prepared as we found that we often had to quarantine whole classrooms due to a single exposure. One positive thing that came out of the Fall semester is that SUNY has learned there have been zero classroom infections, so classrooms are safe. There are potentially some positive changes that could help us coming from the Health Dept. and SUNY moving forward. We have submitted our plan to SUNY for spring re-opening. We will have to test all students within 3 days of return or see proof of a negative test. We are looking at possibly setting up mass testing in our gymnasium, or potentially using the empty Steuben Trust building as another location option. We are also in the final stages of trying to ensure our fitness centers are open and our athletic teams can compete on some level. Ms. Benedict asked what kind of testing we are doing. VP Sammons answered that pool testing is weekly with the 32 students that remain on campus. Wastewater testing has stopped while students are gone for break. If someone reports symptoms, they will receive a rapid test, and if there is any concern of a false reading than a PCR test is completed. Ms. Benedict asked if we can accept rapid tests as a return test in the spring. VP Sammons answered that according to what we have been told by SUNY the answer is yes. He feels we will probably be testing most students when they return because it will probably not be easy to find and get tested in their own communities, especially if they are asymptomatic. He also shared that we collected room keys to ensure people had to go to the testing site and show proof of a negative test or receive a test from us to get their room key back. He also shared that the labs at upstate have gotten better with turnaround time. Chair Fogarty asked what is reflex testing? VP Sammons explained that if a pool comes back positive, they can take the data and the saliva from the original pool to break those results into individual tests to figure out who the positive case is specifically. Chair Fogarty asked VP Sammons to extend the council’s appreciation to his staff. VP Sammons shared that we got a nice compliment from the village regarding our efforts to keep the community safe, pointing out there were just 100 cases over the entire semester.

-Economic Development **(Vice President Clark)**

Vice President Clark said that the Dresser-Rand facility will be opening as the Wellsville business center. Publicly this will be announced next week. He shared that Clean energy projects are moving forward. The Solar project in Rushford has moved forward. He said they are working hard with the Rochester Construction Group to get access to 800 potential students. He also said that the Micro enterprise grant has one current applicant that will probably be getting approved for funding. Startup Allegany group hosted the Tri College Think Tank and hopes that will help encourage students from out of the area to stay in the area after graduation. Mr. Sinclair asked about the Smart project and the $1.6 million sidewalk project that hasn’t started. VP Clark shared that last he heard those projects would be moving forward. He also asked about a seeker process. VP Clark said yes there will be a seeker process.

-Enrollment Management **(Vice President Penrose)**

Vice President Penrose said that spring enrollment is running about 10% down. It is generally continuing students and we are down about 113 students overall. She shared that another big concern is the fall to spring retention. There has been a lot of activity around advisement, with counselors reaching out and helping students to register. Deans are also working to get faculty to reach out to students to get them registered for spring. The other piece they are working on is trying to help students overcome financial hardships and barriers. VP Penrose said we are using some of the work study payroll that was not used, $100k so far has been put into a grant and awarded to Pell eligible students who have outstanding balances that were keeping them from registering for spring. For incoming students, we can award this grant for the gap in financial aid packages. They hope to spend all this $100k on low income students to help them pay off their bills so they are able to register and help pay for their spring bill. VP Penrose said that new student applications for spring are up slightly but most of that increase is students who took a leave last semester or deferred their admission. Chair Fogarty asked about pandemic funds and where they are coming from? VP Penrose said from the SOS Fund. There is also some additional funding from the CARES ACT. VP Penrose share that Northland looks good for spring.

Chair Fogarty asked what the impact from NYC was? VP Penrose said that our applications for fall from the city are down over 50%. But this isn’t just us, this is for much of SUNY. She shared that 70% of our decrease are directly related to low income and EOP students from NYC. One of the counselors for NYC heard that schools are encouraging students to wait to apply after they take their SATS. She does not know if this is true. VP Penrose said that not meeting with the city applicants is worrisome. They are doing a lot of virtual meetings and presentations and open houses’, but it is just not the same. We have been conducting on campus visits and those numbers are the same as they were last year, surprisingly. Enrollment management did an analysis of the students who applied and were accepted and then didn’t attend. It turns out that 1500 of those students didn’t go to college anywhere. We are doing specific outreach to these students. The question remains if students are just scared to go to college or if that many students have been lost at the high school level because of the remote learning alternative not engaging and keeping them in high school. Chair Fogarty thanked VP Penrose and her staff for their hard work.

-Academic Affairs **(Provost Poppo)**

Provost Poppo wanted to add to the previous conversation that we are waiving the appeal for students who were academically dismissed to reapply to help try to increase retention. By waiving the dismissal process, we can immediately reach out to those students instead of waiting for the appeal process. Usually only 50 % of students appeal so this at least gives us a larger starting number. Provost Poppo said it was a challenging semester for faculty to shift from in person to remote and back. She also shared on a positive note, SUNY online has agreed to move four additional programs forward. One of those programs is in CCET, one is individual studies, Construction management, and a new program- emergent media and technical communications. Provost Poppo said that we have made a huge effort in the last couple years to hire some amazing people into the student online learning center that are well respected by SUNY and she thinks that helps. She also shared, an additional $150k from Garmin in grant money has been awarded. This money will be focused on the senior lab that is upstairs in the new Workforce Development Center. We started a second section in HVAC and hope to continue growing. Chair Fogarty asked for a little more detail as it pertained to the difficulty with faculty to HR. Chief of Staff Dresser-Recktenwald answered that it has been fighting amongst each other. Interpersonal conflict inside specific departments that are having struggles with each other and there has been a lot of mental health referrals for counseling. Many of the issues have been exacerbated by COVID. Chair Fogarty thanked her and her staff.

-Business Affairs **(Chief Financial Officer Greenthal)**

CFO Greenthal shared that we are down 113 students for fall. That equates to $1 million in lost revenue. When we look at the financial situation and try to determine where we are going to be down is difficult to determine until we know what the state support is going to be. He said we could end up being down $6 million if we only get 80 % from State funds. We combat that with reduction in spending. We are currently about 6% behind expenditures for payroll, which is about a $1.1 million savings. This comes from leaving vacancies, filling with temps, or using adjuncts instead of full time which is more cost effective. The other piece is we are down 26% or $2.5 Million in expenditures which helps. We know this is realized savings from a cash standpoint. This represents a $3.7 Million in savings this year so far. He said we continue to tighten the belt to save and try to combat what we have lost. CFO Greenthal also shared that we had $800k put away for spending on the MacKenzie renovation and now we have to ask to use our own money that we saved specifically for that project because it has all been put into one big pot with the need of SUNY approval for bonding projects. He said that the revenue for all of SUNY is down 41% in the dorms which means SUNY is trying to manage cash across all settings. CFO Greenthal said we will be able to buy our case goods for inside the rooms, but no furniture in the lounges at this time. We are taking furniture from other areas and cleaning it up in the event we need to use it and are not allowed to purchase new. CFO Greenthal also shared that reductions in areas have been trying to offset COVID expenses. They have saved over $500k in spending so far and the plan for this winter is to avoid overtime, no plowing outside of regular hours, and shuttering buildings to save money over the winter. We are doing everything we can to cut spending. He shared that to date we have only allocated 25% of budgets to departments for spending. We are on hold until spring to see if we will be able to release up to 50% allocations. He said unfortunately, the constraints put on the institutions by NY we are putting on our employees. NYS has lost 1.9 million jobs, and every loss for NYS is a loss for us. Sales tax loss in the state is less support that SUNY will see for next year. New York State is holding their release of payments and not sharing what the state budget looks like, so until we see their budget in April the variables are just too unknown to forecast what 2021 will look like in terms of state support.

CFO Greenthal next gave a capital update. We are still finishing up projects that were in the works prior to COVID. The Library project is almost complete, they are just finishing up site work. The roof projects at SDC and Orvis are almost done and the new flooring in Orvis has been laid. The infrastructure project for fall is moving forward. The Ag Science building project was sent off to scoping and has returned with an estimated dollar amount so now we can work on a committee to get the design component together. CFO Greenthal was happy to share that we were one of only four projects that were pushed through in all of SUNY for design work. The Phase 2 renovations in MacKenzie are almost done. Now we are working on phase 3 plans. He reported facilities is trying to reset classrooms and community areas for spring. There were areas we reassessed and believe we can be more efficient. We want spring to be better for students and show them we are trying to improve their experiences. Other good news CFO Greenthal shared was that the college farm received funds from the Wilson foundation. That grant money was used for a new milking robot. A new room was built to house the robot and the old robot will go to be used as a training piece. The floor is done for the milking room, so now the robot can be installed. Chair Fogarty thanked expressed her gratitude to CFO Greenthal and his division for their continued hard work.

**8. Constituency Reports**

-Alumni Representative **(Mr. Jack Benjamin)-**Mr. Benjamin had technical difficulties and was unable to share an update.

-Faculty Representative **(Mr. Michael Colomaio)**

-Student Representative **(Baylee Durantini)**

Ms. Durantini noted that student senate **j**ust had their last meeting right before they left for Thanksgiving break. They will not be meeting again until January. Some students did come to them throughout the semester with complaints, but generally once information was passed along, and situations were explained the issues were resolved or at least understood.

**-**ACT Update **(Mr. Ronald Nasca)**

Chair Fogarty congratulated Mr. Nasca on his reappointment to the ACT. Mr. Nasca shared that they just had their 50th annual conference virtually and attendance was extremely high. They may look at a hybrid approach for the future with part of it in person and part of it available remotely. Board of trustees and Chancellor Malatras were both in attendance. Mr. Nasca is still trying to get the minutes from the conference to share with the group. He said there were Strategic Planning committee and bylaws committee presentations and then open forums. He said they discussed the climate of things in general throughout SUNY. Mr. Nasca said that he made it abundantly clear how well Alfred state did it was dually noted. Chair Fogarty asked if there was any discussion about other presidential searches throughout SUNY. Mr. Nasca said there are several other colleges going through the process currently and he will share any updates that become available.

**9. Unfinished Business**

**10. New Business**

Mr. Sinclair has notified us that he will not be staying on after 2020. He will be done at the end of this month. Chair Fogarty thanked Mr. Sinclair for all of his work and dedication to the council. Mr. Sinclair thanked Chair Fogarty for nominating him and President Sullivan for asking him serve. He said it is like a city and he has been proud to be a part of it for the last 5 years and his focus now that he is 70 just needs to be different. President Sullivan thanked Mr. Sinclair for his service over the years. President Sullivan also shared his apologies for not having a Christmas party, and that Ms. Haggerty would be knocking on everyone’s doors to drop off a gift to show appreciation. Chair Fogarty thanked everyone in the administration for all they have done over the last semester. Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Sinclair, seconded by Mr. Welch. Meeting adjourned at 6:29pm.

**Meeting Minutes Recorded by:**

Ms. Trish Haggerty

Secretary to the College Council