

Minutes of the One Hundred and Seventy-First Meeting of the College Council  
Formed on November 14, 2002

Date: Thursday, April 24, 2025, 3:30pm – 4:25pm  
Location: 1P-119 & Zoom Meeting

**CC Members in Attendance**

Jane Alexander, Neo Antoniadis, John Arena, Comfort Asanbe, Banu Aslanertik, Maria Bellamy, Warrick Bell, Alan Benimoff, Vandana Chaudhry, David Curcio, Debbie DeSimone, Gene Fellner, Chiarra Ferrari, Valerie Forrestal, Kenneth Gold, Hernan Green, Patti Gross, Orit Gruber, Roshen Hendrickson, Michel Hodge, Susan Holak, Yumei Huo, Eric Ivison, Emma Johnson, Burnett Joiner, Wilma Jones, Patricia Kahn, Catherine Lavender, Alfred Levine, Sharon Loverde, Timothy Lynch, Lisa Manne, Tara Mastroilli, Lee Papa, Ralf Peetz, Jonathan Peters, Greg Philips, Tobias Schaefer, Alex Scott, Suzy Shepardson, Susan Smith-Peter, Carles Solà Belda, Michael Steiper, Sarolta Takács, Barbara Teater, Muhammed Tekanyi, John Verzani, Robert Wallace, Simone Wegge, Rhoda Wilson, Siona Wilson, Mark Zdziarski.

**CC Members Via Zoom**

Thomas Chen, Rosane Gertner

**CC Members Absent:**

Zaghloul Ahmed, Probal Banerjee, Kevin Do, Clarisse Domingo, Ismael Garcia-Colón, Joseph Frusci, David Kritt, Anatoly Kuklov, Philippe Marius, Regina Minaya, Vincent Mirabella, Mark Aaron Polger, Angelina Raio, Adrian Rosales, Randelle Sasa, Carlos Serrano, Muhammed Tekanyi, Thomas Tellefsen, Allen Tesdall, Mark White, Cindy Wong, Kelly Zyko.

**Guests In-Person**

Michael Anderson, Kevin Ascolese, Michael Batson, Jason Bishop, Veronica DiMeglio, Aleks Dudek, Jennifer Durando, Emmanuel Esperance, Stephen Ferst, Mark Lewental, Carey Manifold, Susan Massara, Christine McEvilly, Gerry Milligan, Laxmi Ramasubramanian, James Saccardo, Terri Sangiorgio, Ruth Silverberg, Jessica Stein.

**Guests via Zoom**

Barbara Cohen, Celeste del Maestro, Danielle Dimitrov, Catherine Ferrara, Stephanie Gonzalez-Allen, James Hamilton, Doriann Hyland, Linda John, Jane Kisto, Koby Kohulan, Lynne Lacomis, Thomas Lauria, Jane Marcus-Delgado, Mary Murphy, Leonardo Pignataro, Keith Pisons, Carly Racioppi, Janine Scotto, Amy Stempler, Brenda Valentin

- I. **Approval of the proposed agenda** – approved with an amendment to move the President's report to the top.
- II. **Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting** – approved with no changes
- III. **President's Report – Timothy Lynch**

President Lynch gave a brief report with updates on enrollment, facilities, student accolades, and upcoming events. He noted that CSI was experiencing strong enrollment growth and was expected to exceed enrollment targets for the Fall. The budget was largely determined by enrollment, and improvements in enrollment were projected to lead to fiscal stability within a year. Regarding facilities,

he noted that significant projects, that included the athletic field renovations, science lab upgrades, and the Center for the Arts upgrades, were on track. Capital infusion of \$3 million from Congressperson Malliotakis would fund the science lab renovations and additional funding from the City Council and the Borough President were slated to renovate the Center for the Arts. He was confident that these improved facilities would provide additional revenue through rentals. In recent news, President Lynch was proud to announce that our students were once again recipients of the Jeanette K. Watson fellow and the Jonas Salk scholarship.

President Lynch then mentioned the following upcoming events:

- The Spring-into-Giving Gala which was to take place this evening (April 24, 2025). It was expected to be a significant fundraising event, with Alan Benimoff, a long-time faculty member, as one of the honorees.
- The admitted student conference which was scheduled for April 26, 2025. He thanked all of those who were giving up a Sunday morning or a Sunday afternoon to come and promote our programs to prospective students.
- The Undergraduate Research Conference was scheduled for May 1, 2025. He thanked all who had contributed to providing applied learning experiences and opportunities to our students.
- The 50th anniversary of the Consent Decree was scheduled to be celebrated on May 2, 2025. The event will be hosted along the Willowbrook Mile, and several politicians are expected to attend.
- The inaugural 5K Run/Walk in memory of Jodi Merindino was scheduled for May 4, 2025, and he encouraged everyone who knew her to attend.

In closing, President Lynch stated that he had an upcoming trip to Washington, DC, for the CUNY Day on the Hill to advocate for increased funding and lobby with legislators. He was also going to participate in a two-day event on Constructive Dialogs in June, sponsored by CUNY Central Office. And as the semester winds down, he urged faculty and staff to take time for themselves and to be gracious towards students who may need additional support as the semester ends.

### **Q&A**

The first speaker questioned the process by which the CSI Foundation had chosen to honor Amazon, a company to which many on Staten Island were opposed. President Lynch responded by stating that Amazon had been a good community partner, paying tuition for over 100 students who are employees at the Staten Island facility. In addition, the recipient of the award was a senior worker at the facility (not Jeff Besos) who was also a CSI alumnus.

The second speaker inquired about the detention or revocation of student visas at CUNY and CSI. President Lynch responded by stating that there had been no incidents of student visas being revoked at CSI.

The third speaker asked whether there had been any impact of travel restrictions on foreign-born faculty members at CUNY and CSI, to which President Lynch responded that he had no knowledge of this happening to any faculty at CSI, neither for any staff at CSI.

### **Approval of the Strategic Plan**

President Lynch, in his capacity as Chair of the Institutional Planning Committee (IPC), invited members of College Council to vote on the 2025 Strategic Plan. He emphasized the collaborative and consultative

process of creating the strategic plan, which was aligned with CUNY's strategic roadmap. The College Council voted to endorse the strategic plan, with a motion made, seconded, and the motion carried without opposition. President Lynch expressed his thanks again to all the members of the faculty and staff who participated in the creation of the strategic plan.

#### **IV. Executive Committee Report – Kenneth Gold**

Good afternoon. As Susan noted, Chancellor Matos Rodriguez and President Lynch signed the AACU statement on universities as places for open inquiry, a most welcome development in my view. We also broached the possibility of the council of presidents making a statement on the detention of university students that was deemed highly unlikely. I do hope that the Chancellor's recent message addressing a host of issues will encourage campus presidents to be more vocal as well.

The Executive Committee met with President Lynch, Provost Steiper, and Chief of Staff Collura on April 8th for its monthly consultation. We discussed better promotion of the College's transportation survey—as of two weeks ago there were only 174 responses so please complete it if you've not yet done so. We learned of continued efforts to have more MTA bus lines make stops on campus.

We sought to clarify the role of the Council's budget committee in the preparation of the College's budget for the next fiscal year, specifically looking for a moment in the process that the committee can review the allocations being proposed. We did not resolve this issue so the conversation will continue in May as it remains timely: The College had yet to receive its FY 26 budget memo from the chancellery. The president assured us that budget consultation with student government takes place.

We heard updates on the status of ongoing administrative searches, which range from reviewing applications to interviewing finalists to making job offers. As some CUNY Trustees are rightfully unhappy with over reliance on interim appointments, we were pleased to learn of plans to launch a search this Fall for a Dean of the School of Education and Social Work.

We also spoke at length about academic tutoring on campus. There are multiple tutoring centers with different orientations and numerous faculty and staff heavily committed to their success. The Provost is interested in efficient and effective tutoring and indicated that at this moment he is gathering information. We urged that he embark on a public and inclusive process for this work.

Earlier today, members of the Faculty Senate voted on a resolution on the dissolution of the School of Health Science and the creation of the School of Education and Social Work. I am bringing this resolution forward to the College Council to weigh in ask for your support of it. I commend college's leadership for adhering to governance, which speaks volumes to the importance of collegial dialogue and good faith decisions. The resolution for the dissolution of the School of Health Sciences and the Creation of the School of Education and Social Work was endorsed with one abstention.

#### **Q&A**

A question was raised about committee size changes and the need to amend bylaws post-approval for the reorganization of the elected seats on the various committees. Provost Steiper responded that there were outlined steps noted in the resolution document, (in anticipation of the resolution passing) which indicated that the resolution will be sent to the CUNY Board of Trustees for their approval and then

work quickly to amend the bylaws. Chair Gold added that we conduct elections based on expected changes, even though the bylaws have not yet been ratified by the CUNY Board of Trustees.

## **V. Professional Staff Congress (PSC) Report – Jason Bishop**

Jason Bishop gave a brief report that highlighted the following:

- Discussions about the implementation of the economic part of a contract continues with:
  - A town hall was scheduled for April 28th at 6:30 PM on Zoom to address contract details
  - the PSC's strategy for federal government actions re executive orders, and
  - the immigrant solidarity working group's efforts, including a petition against federal law enforcement on campus.
- The following faculty and staff were recognized as Jason Bishop expressed gratitude and honor for their contributions:
  - Terry Mares for his long-term PSC membership and informal mediation activities;
  - Donna Oliva for her contributions to sponsored programs;
  - Dan McCloskey for his high-profile research and leadership in the faculty Senate's research committee; and
  - Michael Batson for his steadfast participation in the PSC negotiations with CUNY for the new contract.

## **VI. Report from the Administration – Kevin Ascolese, Budget Director**

Kevin Ascolese, the Budget Director at CSI, provided an update on the college's financial health, highlighting improvements and projections. He referenced CFO Serrano's November presentation, noting the college's progress in reducing its financial deficit, with projected year-end surpluses by FY27. He detailed the impact of stimulus funds in FY23, which artificially helped reduce a \$14 million structural deficit to a \$3.2 million actual deficit.

Kevin Ascolese reported that in FY24, without stimulus, the college faced a \$8.1 million deficit. Unexpected bonuses and pay increases increased the FY25 projected deficit from \$4.1 million to \$5.4 million, which was later adjusted to \$3.8 million with a financing plan. In FY24, enrollment and collections increased by \$5.3 million (8.3%). Operational efficiencies reduced campus-based spending by 1%. He concluded by reiterating the college's progress towards solving its financial deficit and the expected year-end surpluses in FY 27.

## **VII. Reports of the committees of the College Council**

### **a. Committee on Organization – Warrick Bell**

Warrick Bell, Chair of the Committee on Organization, stated that nomination forms for various committees with vacancies will be distributed as soon as members of the committee on organization and the executive committee had had a chance to discuss changes, based on the recent reorganization of the schools. He mentioned that there were numerous committees with vacancies that need to be filled, and he urged for people to step up and fill these vacant seats.

Chair Gold added an emphasis of the the importance of shared governance and its impact on the college's civic life. He suggested that colleagues, and especially department chairs, should be encouraged to get additional faculty involved in service roles.

**b. By-Laws Committee – Kenneth Gold**

Kenneth Gold, Chair of the By-Laws committee, mentioned that the committee met and continued to share ideas for new language for the bylaws in needed areas. The proposal approved last year was still with CUNY and has now been scheduled for the April 28 meeting of the Board's Committee on Educational Policy. When approved there, it will go before the Board of Trustees.

**c. Administrative Review and Evaluation Committee – No report**

**d. Institutional Planning Committee – Kenneth Gold**

On behalf of President Lynch, Kenneth Gold reported that IPC met on Friday April 4 and considered (but did not adopt) changes to the strategic plan as introduced by college council members. The IPC also discussed (and approved) the academic reorganization and entertained a proposal (approved subject to additional clarifying information) from the Physical Therapy department to offer a PhD in Physical Therapy.

**e. Budget Committee – Kenneth Gold**

Budget Committee met with the President, Provost, and AVP Serrano earlier this month. Carlos answered a host of questions about the FY 25 mid-year report and the process for preparing the FY 26 budget that we had sent him in advance.

**f. Facilities Committee – No report**

**VIII. Student Government Report – Rhoda Wilson**

The Student Government report was delivered by Rhoda Wilson, on behalf of the President of Student Government, Adrian Rosales. Highlights of the report included:

- The results of the student election: 826 votes were cast in this year's election, the highest in the last 10 years. Credit was given to the students for going out and campaigning effectively and Student Government's work this year for getting its brand out there.
- April 28th-May 2nd is Spirit Week: The theme is "United We Celebrate." A list of curated events will be available all week for students to enjoy the weather, food, games spirit, and more. Examples include a Pep Rally, International Food Festival, Food Truck Festival, Silent Headphone Disco, etc.
- Talks have begun on working on base budget for next year, as well as transition documents for our incoming Student Government.

## **IX. HEO Steering Committee – Suzy Shepardson**

Co-Chair of the HEO Steering Committee, Suzy Shepardson, gave the following report:

The HEOSC met with President Lynch and members of his cabinet on April 1 and received progress updates on the various infrastructure projects and administrative searches. We also delivered a preliminary report on the results of our HEO questionnaire and discussed both the interest in and the need to continue supporting professional development opportunities: as a result, the HEOSC will begin working with Carlos Serrano and his team to explore ways that the College can possibly provide financial support (instead of funds needing to come from individual office budgets).

We encourage everyone to attend the upcoming Technology Day being held on April 30th at the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development—it is free, fun, and highly informative!

Elections for various College Council committees will be coming up, so if you are a HEO interested in participating in governance, please make sure to complete and submit your nomination form by the indicated deadline.

To end on good news, I would like to take a moment to recognize two HEOs who are winners of 2025 Dolphin Awards: for Outstanding Service and Contribution to the College by a Member of the Non-Teaching Instructional Staff in the HEO Title, Jennifer Durando, Director of the Center for Advising and Academic Success, and as Agent of Change toward Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity, and Social Justice by Members of the College Community, my friend Emmanuel Esperance, Jr., Director of Recruitment & Admissions. It is truly an honor and privilege to work with colleagues who are committed to admitting our students, retaining them, and seeing them down the path to Commencement, and to collaborating across the entire campus to make their CSI experience a success.

## **X. Auxiliary Services Corporation Report – No Report**

XI. Old Business - None

XII. New Business - None

Meeting was adjourned at 4:25pm

Respectfully submitted by Wilma Jones  
Secretary, Executive Committee of the College Council