

**FLORENCE-DARLINGTON COUNTY COMMISSION  
FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

**March 25, 2025**

**4:30 p.m.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Ershela Sims  
Leroy Robinson  
Hood Temple  
Missy Jay  
Kevin Etheridge  
Clint Moore  
Paul Seward

**ABSENT:**

Meredith Taylor

**OTHERS ATTENDING:**

Jermaine Ford  
Travis Gleaton  
Debbie Cheek  
Luegina Mounfield  
Rhonda Johns  
Tyron Jones  
Terry Dingle  
Karen Lee  
Andrew Golden  
Kim Lutz  
Sheryl Love  
Veverlyn Watson-Smith  
Ms. Robin Poston, Harper,  
Poston, Moree, P.A.  
Mr. Reginald W. Belcher, Esq.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Florence-Darlington County Commission for Technical Education was called to order at 4:45 p.m., by Dr. Ershela Sims, Chairwoman, who stated the media had been notified. Chair Sims welcomed guests and newest Commissioner, Mr. Goz Segars, who was recently re-appointed to the Commission.

**II. INVOCATION**

Mr. Dingle delivered the Invocation.

### **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. Temple, seconded by Dr. Robinson that the minutes of the January 28, 2025, be approved. The motion carried.

### **IV. Independent Audit Report Fiscal Year 2024 – Ms. Robin Poston, Harper, Poston, & Moree, P.A.**

Chairwoman Sims recognized Ms. Poston, Harper, Poston, and Moree, P.A. to review the Fiscal Year 2024 Audit Report. Ms. Poston reviewed the audit report with the Finance Committee prior to this meeting. Ms. Poston stated that they issued an unmodified opinion with no exceptions to the audit report, which stands as a clean audit opinion. Ms. Poston stated that as of June 30, 2024, total assets were \$88.9M compared to \$82.3M of the prior year and total liabilities were \$66.2M compared to \$72.6M to the prior year. Your financial position improved to \$10.7M from a negative \$500,000.

### **V. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS/STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – Dr. Taylor**

#### **A. Action**

Chairwoman Sims noted that Dr. Meredith Taylor, Chair, Academic Affairs/Student Services Committee, was unable to be here today. Chair Sims stated that the Academic Affairs Committee met on March 3, 2025 via WebEx to review FDTC policies.

#### **1. Approval of Policies**

Chair Sims stated that the following policies were reviewed by the Academic Affairs Committee. In past years, the Florence Darlington Technical College Area Commission approved each of the policies included in the packet for today's meeting. For FDTC to comply with SACSCOC guidelines for policies and procedures, the College must review all policies and procedures regularly and continuously. Because the FDTC Area Commission approves FDTC Policies, the process we need to use to bring us into compliance is to request that the FDTC Area Commission review the FDTC policies and note the date of review and/or revision. The policies presented today represent policies that only need review. At future meetings, there may be policies that need revisions, including changes in red and a final draft, or new policies for your consideration for approval, disapproval, or further work by the staff. The outcome of the review of policies by the Academic Affairs Committee of the FDTC Area Commission will be presented to the full FDTC Area Commission by the Committee Chair or designee as a consent agenda item at the next meeting of the FDTC Area Commission.

Chair Sims stated that the Academic Affairs Committee approved the following policies and recommended that they be submitted to the entire Commission at today's meeting for approval.

A motion from the Academic Affairs Committee was made, that the Policies:

- 40-46 Continuing Education
- 40-48 Continuing Education Instructional Fees
- 40-49 Continuing Education
- 40-50 CEUs
- 40-51 Continuing Education Attendance
- 40-52 Continuing Education Certificates
- 40-54 Continuing Education Counseling
- 40-55 Continuing Education Refunds
- 60-61 College Publications
- 60-21 Copying, Publishing, and Mail Service
- 70-05 Receipt and Deposit of Funds
- 40-32 Academic Calendar Development

be approved as submitted.

Chairwoman Sims stated that a motion was made by the Academic Affairs/Student Services Committee that Policies: 40-46, 40-48, 40-49, 40-50, 40-51, 40-52, 40-54, 40-55, 60-61, 60-21, 70-05, 40-32, be approved. There being no discussion, Ms. Jay seconded the motion. The motion carried.

## **VI. FINANCE COMMITTEE – Dr. Robinson**

### **1. Financial Report as of February 28, 2025**

Chairwoman Sims recognized Finance Committee Chair, Dr. Robinson, who stated that the Finance Committee met prior to this meeting. The Finance Committee reviewed and accepted the Finance Reports as presented by Dr. Cheek and reviewed the 2024 Fiscal Year Audit Report that was presented by Ms. Poston. Dr. Robinson deferred to Dr. Cheek, Vice President of Finance and Administration for a financial update to the whole Commission.

Chairwoman Sims recognized Dr. Debbie Cheek, Vice President of Finance and Administration for the Finance Committee Report. Dr. Cheek referred the Commissioners to the financial statement. Dr. Cheek stated that the 2025 revenues were \$35,074,839 compared to the 2024 revenues of \$33,622,111. Dr. Cheek referred the Commissioners to the expense report and reported that 2025 expenses of \$24,508,188 compared to the 2024 expenses of \$23,706,504, with a \$10.5 Net at this time. As of February 28, 2025, our cash-operating account is \$15,670,374; LGIP Investment Account is \$19,452,878; Cash-Restricted Debt Service is \$12,512,978; with our Bond Payoff Amount of \$7,747,804. At this time there is 9.0 months of cash on hand.

## **VII. FDTC SACSCOC Accreditation – Dr. Watson-Smith**

Chairwoman Sims recognized Dr. Veverlyn Watson-Smith, Director of Accreditation and Assessment to give an update on FDTC's forthcoming SACSCOC 10 Year Decennial Visit. Dr. Watson-Smith shared with the Commission some key milestones, responsibilities, and institutional priorities to prepare for the reaffirmation visit. The onsite visit by the Peer Review Team will be October 6-9, 2025. Dr. Watson-Smith referred the Commission to SACSCOC Project Plan Timeline in their packets with key dates noted. Also, Dr. Watson-Smith reviewed the most cited principles in Decennial Reaffirmation Reviews (also in packet). Dr. Watson-Smith reviewed the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that is significant in the accreditation process and FDTC's focus. Dr. Watson-Smith noted that as part of the process the Commissioners will be interviewed by the onsite review team in October and during the Commission's upcoming board retreat in April, she will present and review questions that they may be asked. Please noted that a copy of the SACSCOC "The Principles of Accreditation" Book also, is in your packet to refresh your knowledge of the accreditation principles.

## **VIII. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### **A. Information**

Chairwoman Sims recognized Dr. Ford, President, for his update.

Dr. Ford stated that FDTC's enrollment is 10% up. This is our fourth year that we continue to go into the right direction. We are now in the Summer enrollment and are approximately 18% up from last year.

Dr. Ford noted that since the January meeting, he did attend the ACCT Legislative Summit in Washington, D.C. and was able to meet with Representative Fry, Representative James Clyburn, and Senator Lindsey Graham's Office. Topics of discussion included: FDTC's legislative priorities, the TRIO Program, and the recent White House memos.

Dr. Ford noted that he recently joined the Florence Monday Rotary Club, and the Florence Downtown Development Corporation.

Dr. Ford gave an update on the South Carolina House Bill: H.3767 that was replaced by the House Bill H.3952. A copy of the House Bill is included in your meeting packet for your review.

Dr. Ford stated that Mayor Lethonia Barnes and Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager, visited with the Leadership Team and discussed mutual initiatives for the city and college.

Dr. Ford invited the Commissioners' to "FDTCs Take Me Out to the Ballgame" on Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, with the Lady Stingers softball game at Noon and the Mens Stinger baseball game at 3:30 p.m. Lots of fun for all.

Dr. Ford stated that on February 26<sup>th</sup>, the State House Legislative Luncheon was held and FDTC highlighted our EMT Program.

Dr. Ford stated that FDTC has started a program, "Ask Me Anything" virtual meeting monthly. Dr. Ford stated that it has been well-attended by the College with approximately 100 participants each session. This led to FDTCs "No Negativity Challenge", a 90-Day Challenge.

On March 6, 2025, our FDTC College Awards Dinner was held and on March 7, 2025, the Think Big Caterpillar Open House was held.

## **B. Action**

1. Dr. Ford stated to be in compliance with the SACSCOC Standard 4.2.A, the FDTC Mission Statement must be reviewed by the Area Commission every three years. This statement was approved with the Strategic Master Plan by the Area Commission on June, 2022. The Mission Statement has not changed, but will need to be reviewed and approved by the Commission.

Chair Sims called for a motion to approve and a second to approve the FDTC Mission Statement. Upon no further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Jay, seconded by Dr. Robinson, to approve the FDTC Mission Statement. The motion carried.

2. Dr. Ford state that the Policy 30-27 Affirmative Action Statement was updated with the recommendations from the Commission and additional recommendations from the college's attorney. It is being brought back to the Commission for review and approval. Dr. Ford introduced Mr. Reginald W. Belcher, Esq., Employment & Labor Law at Turner, Padgett, Graham & Laney.

Chair Sims asked for any discussion before a vote. Commissioner Temple requested information from Mr. Belcher on this policy. Mr. Belcher reviewed the Affirmative Action Statement as it came into the federal law and what the law did cover. He reviewed the recent changes that have been made pertaining to the federal Affirmative Action Policy and he reviewed the South Carolina State Affirmative Action Policy that all state agencies must abide by. Mr. Belcher referred the Commissioners to the changes that have been made to FDTCs policy. Mr. Belcher stated that FDTCs policy fully complies with the South Carolina law that requires FDTC to maintain an Affirmative Action Plan and the language satisfies Title VII. After discussion of what needed to be addressed in the motion, it was determined to make additional changes of the language within the Affirmative Action Statement from the recommendations by the Commissioners and brought back to the Academic Affairs/Student Services Committee for review.

Dr. Ford stated that FDTC does not have a DE&I initiative. Mr. Belcher assisted in creating a statement for FDTC referencing DE&I. A copy of FDTCs DE&I Statement has been provided to you for information.

Dr. Ford stated that FDTC did not have any reference information for handling Immigration Raids (ICE) for the staff. A copy of tips for immigration raids has been compiled for the staff. This has been provided for you for information.

**IX. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

**A. Action**

1. None

**B. Information**

**1. Update**

Dr. Sims requested that the Commissioners please be reminded that March 25, 2025, will be the next Commission Meeting and the Area Commission Retreat is on April 24<sup>th</sup> and will be held in Lake City.

There being no further business, Dr. Sims requested a motion for adjournment.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, a motion was made by Dr. Robinson, seconded by Mr. Seward, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Secretary, Dr. Meredith Taylor

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Date Approved