

NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Garden City, New York

BOARD OF TRUSTEES' MINUTES

Summary of Public Comment - December 13, 2016

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Weiss at 6:15 p.m. followed by a salute to the flag.

Present: Kathy Weiss, Vice Chair
Donna M. Tuman, Secretary Pro Tem
Linda H. Green, Michael Hilt, Student Trustee.

Absent: Jorge L. Gardyn, Anthony W. Cornachio, John A. DeGrace, Wanda H. Jackson, Edward W. Powers

Also in attendance: President Keen

Vice Chair Weiss announced that the meeting could not occur due to the absence of a quorum, however, the Board members present invited any member of the public in attendance to speak.

Speakers

Evelyn Deluty, Chair of Academic Senate, noted her displeasure in learning on Friday, December 9 about a series of swastikas and anti-Semitic slurs that vandalized the campus dating back to October 15 from radio and TV news and FaceBook and not from the College. The Clery Act, a federal statute signed in 1990 which regulates how hate crimes are to be addressed on campuses, requires colleges to publicize instances of crime in a timely fashion in order to facilitate their prevention. The Board is reviewing two new communication policies for passage in February: 3100 – Media Relations; and 3200 – Marketing, Advertising and Promotional Materials. The Clery Act by contrast is not subject to vote, as it is a legal mandate. Adherence to the Clery Act and timely communication are essential to the commitment to rebuilding an inclusive NCC community that does not tolerate hate crimes. She wished all happy holidays.

Frank Frisenda, NCCFT President, in the new spirit of open communication he requested that the screen display during the Board committee meetings be restored. He wished all happy holidays.

Sally Drucker, ENG Professor, speaking as a teacher on literature of the Holocaust and as someone who had 50 relatives killed during that period, does not perceive swastika graffiti as ordinary vandalism. To her knowledge students had not been alerted through campus email, but had found out about the incidents through faculty, media and other students. She believes that there is an appropriate and immediate need to inform students directly, particularly as they are likely to be on the front lines with cellphones for reporting such acts.

Paul Rosa, 2nd Vice Chair, Academic Senate, referred to Dr. Keen's speech at the general faculty meeting on November 15 at which the President, in sharing his vision for the College, discussed the pressure capitalism is applying on students and the institution alike to focus on degrees and programs that will assist the acquisition of employment. He also stated that he appreciates the need for students to be employable; however, part of the duty of higher education professionals is also to provide the less concrete non-technical "soft skills" that any student will need to ensure a fulfilling, meaningful life that is a not simple series of jobs. Dr. Rosa feels that merely meeting the demands of the pressures of capitalism to fulfill the short term goal tempts the neglect of this important role in the College's greater mission and performs a disservice to our students.

David Stern, 1st Vice Chair, Academic Senate, wished all a happy and healthy holiday season. He had hoped to comment on the three policy documents revealed this past Friday to be under Board consideration: 3100 – Media Relations; 3200 – Marketing, Advertising and Promotional Materials; and 5600 – Protection of Minors on Campus but these policies will not be available for review until the day after this Board meeting, so the next opportunity for public remarks would be after the Board has already taken its vote. He suggested that the Board should consider modifying its procedure in order to allow for meaningful public commentary before Executive session discussion.

Vice Chair Weiss clarified that since there had not been a Board meeting earlier in the evening, next month (January) the Board will discuss the three Policies, but not vote on them, per Policy 1300 adopted at the November 15, 2016 meeting. There will be opportunity during the Speakers session to raise concerns on these Policies that will not be voted upon by the Board until its February meeting. The Board has established a process whereby, barring emergency, the Board will not vote on and pass a policy before discussion.

Vice Chair Weiss and Prof. David Stern had a discussion relating to the process of making policies available beforehand to the public in order for the faculty to comment before the policies are adopted. Vice Chair Weiss reiterated the process the Board has established regarding the adoption of Board Policies whereby policies are discussed at Committee and not voted upon by the Board until the following meeting, giving faculty the opportunity to raise their concerns before adoption by the entire Board.

Prof. David Stern inquired whether the Board would provide minutes of Executive session. Vice Chair Weiss stated that minutes are not provided for Executive session: the Board follows the law and is not under obligation to report Executive session discussion.

Vice Chair Weiss wished all a joyous holiday season and a happy and healthy 2017.

Vice Chair Weiss announced the next Capital and Finance BOT Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 10, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. followed by the Full Board meeting. The Board will open the public session between 6:15 and 6:30 p.m. and resume the public session approximately 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna M. Tuman
Secretary Pro Tem