Tri-County Technical College Commission Minutes

June 1, 2026 / Ruby Hicks Board Room, Pendleton Campus

Members Present: James Wanner, Chair, Helen Rosemond-Saunders, Tom Strange, Leon Harris, John Powell, Allard Young, Jim Kaplan, Hamid Mohsseni, Melanie McLane

Staff Present: Dr. Galen DeHay, President, Cara Hamilton, Dan Cooper, Karen Potter, Courtney White, Dr. Amanda Elmore, Dr. Darren Lipscomb, Rhonda Gibby, Sarah Shumpert, Hope Stacy

Absent: No absences.

Guests: Shelby Duffy, academic program strategist, Arts & Sciences Division

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Chairman Wanner called the meeting to order and welcomed Commissioners, staff, and guests. He stated that the appropriate notice had been sent to the media as required by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Commissioner Young gave the invocation.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Wanner presented the agenda and asked if there were any changes or additions. With no changes or additions, Commissioner Harris made a motion to approve the agenda as submitted. Commissioner Powell seconded the motion. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Wanner presented the April 6, 2026, minutes and asked if there were any changes or corrections. With no changes or corrections, Commissioner Harris made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Commissioner Kaplan seconded the motion. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

IV. CONSENT ITEMS

TCTC Institutional Policies:

- 3 – 2 – 1041 Confidentiality of Student Records Policy
- 7 – 3 – 1010 Travel and Subsistence Expenses Policy

Chairman Wanner referred to President DeHay for clarification on the policies to be approved. Policies are reviewed by the Commission every three years. Dr. DeHay reviewed the policies to be approved. Chairman Wanner asked if there were any questions. With no questions or further discussion, the Chairman called for a motion to approve the policies.

Commissioner Harris made a motion to approve the policies as submitted. Commissioner Young seconded the motion. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

V. BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Harris, chair of the Building Committee, reported that the committee did not meet in May, noting that updates were instead provided via email by Cara Hamilton, vice president of Business Affairs. He stated that construction of Pickens Hall, the Nexus central plaza, Front Drive improvements, and the Vietnam War Memorial are all progressing on schedule and within budget. Commission Harris noted the interior finishes at Pickens Hall are underway, with a certificate of occupancy anticipated in October. He stated demolition associated with the Nexus project is advancing well and is expected to be completed by July 1, and the Front Drive will be closed from July 1 through August 14 to allow for critical improvements ahead of the fall semester.

Commissioner Harris further reported that, at the Anderson Campus, construction of the mechatronics and automotive programs continues to advance as planned with no schedule or budget concerns. He stated HVAC projects across the campuses remain in the design phase with no significant updates, and planned work at the Oconee Campus is projected for completion in December 2026. Commissioner Harris noted that design and planning efforts are ongoing for several initiatives, including program relocation to the Workforce Training Center, expansions at the Easley Campus, and space studies for Ruby Hicks and Miller Hall.

Commissioner Harris reported that design work continues in partnership with AnMed for the TCTC/AnMed Nursing Expansion, with AnMed funding the project and moving forward with plans to construct a new facility. He also noted that feasibility studies and stakeholder engagement efforts are underway for the Pickens County Technical Career Pathways and Workforce Development facility, as well as for the Forestry Program and the Oconee County Economic Development facility, while planning continues for future phases of the central plaza.

He concluded by stating that numerous smaller capital and infrastructure projects are being actively managed, several have been completed since the last report, and no anticipated budgetary or completion concerns exist at this time.

VI. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Mohsseni, who chairs the Finance Committee, reported that the Committee met on May 26 to review year-to-date financial results and the proposed FY2026-2027 budget. Commissioners Hamid Mohsseni, John Powell, Tom Strange, Al Young, and James Wanner, ex-officio were present. In addition, Galen DeHay, Cara Hamilton, Karen Potter, and Emma James from college administration were present.

Commissioner Mohsseni reported that operating results through April are trending favorably compared to the current year budget, with revenues expected to exceed expenses by fiscal year-end due to unbudgeted recurring state appropriations, higher-than-expected interest income, and enrollment exceeding projections, along with continued cost containment and strong fiscal controls. He noted that all savings realized relative to the original budget will be transferred to the unrestricted fund balance and/or plant fund.

Commissioner Mohsseni further reported that the proposed FY2026–2027 budget reflects a $4.5 million increase in revenues year over year, driven primarily by increases in state appropriations, tuition and fees associated with enrollment and a 3.6% rate adjustment, as well as continuing education revenue, local appropriations, and auxiliary services revenue. He stated that the proposed budget also includes a corresponding $4.5 million increase in expenses, with the majority attributable to salaries and benefits, including legislated compensation increases, market adjustments, new positions, and other institutional salary actions, as well as increased costs for services, maintenance contracts, and operational support. He emphasized that the budget was developed through a collaborative, institution-wide process and reflects conservative assumptions and sound fiscal planning.

Commissioner Mohsseni stated the Finance Committee unanimously approved the FY26-27 operating budget. He advised Commission, the Finance Committee recommends approval of the FY26-27 operating budget as presented. Chairman Wanner asked if there were any questions or discussions. Hearing none, the Chairman called for a vote to approve the recommendation from the Finance Committee to approve the FY26-27 operating budget as presented. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Mohsseni reported that summer enrollment is slightly below the prior year in headcount but remains essentially flat in FTE, noting that students are taking more courses on average.

Commissioner Mohsseni stated that preparations for the SCWINS and external financial audits are underway, with no anticipated compliance concerns, and that interim audit work has been completed with no issues identified.

He further reported that updates to State P-Card procedures and compliance requirements are in progress and that the College expects to meet all deadlines. Additionally, he noted that recruitment for the vacant Controller position is ongoing, with the goal of filling the position by mid-June.

Commissioner Mohsseni concluded that the Finance Committee identified no concerns and expressed confidence in the College’s financial position, internal controls, and long-term fiscal sustainability.

VII. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A. Building Bridges: Gen Ed to Careers – Shelby Duffy, academic program strategist, Arts & Sciences Division, presented information on the Building Bridges initiative. Duffy highlighted the strategic effort to better connect general education coursework to students' career goals to improve engagement, persistence, and completion. She reported that student feedback indicates a lack of perceived relevance in general education courses and the initiative is designed to address this gap through curriculum redesign, expanded co-curricular programming, and enhanced advising resources, supported by a multi-year implementation plan. Duffy noted the goal is to make career connections more explicit, improve course pass rates, and strengthen workforce readiness.

B. Key Student Completion Indicator – Dr. DeHay presented an overview of the College's key student completion indicator, noting steady improvement in the IPEDS 150% graduation rate over time. He reported that the College has exceeded the national average in recent years and has met or surpassed its aspirational benchmark.

   Dr. DeHay recommended the adoption of the IPEDS 150% graduation rate as an additional Strategic Plan key performance indicator and proposed establishing an aspirational goal of maintaining a rate of five percentage points above the national average to include subpopulations. Comparative data reflecting TCTC, national, and aspirational benchmarks were reviewed. Dr. DeHay further reported that disaggregated data demonstrate similar gains across gender, race/ethnicity, and financial aid categories, with several subgroups showing increased completion rates and progress in closing achievement gaps. He noted that these trends reflect continued improvement in student success across the institution.

   Upon motion by Commissioner Mohsseni and second by Commissioner Rosemond-Saunders, the Commission approved the adoption of a target goal of maintaining the national average for two-year colleges and a stretch (aspirational) goal of maintaining five percentage points above the national average to include subpopulations.

C. Foundation Update – Courtney White, executive director of the TCTC Foundation, presented an update on Foundation activities and achievements. She reported a successful fundraising year, with approximately $1.5 million raised to date. White noted the Foundation received $672,000 in endowment donations this year and awarded $724,000 in scholarships benefiting 610 students.

White highlighted the success of the inaugural "100 Women, One Vision" Gala, which generated over $100,000, and stated the initiative will continue into the coming year.

White conveyed looking ahead to FY27, the Foundation plans to strengthen and refine its efforts to build on current momentum and ensure long-term sustainability. She shared this includes the addition of a planned giving officer. White emphasized that success is measured not only in dollars raised, but also in the positive impact on students' lives and the strengthening of institutional programs.

D. Legislative Update – Dan Cooper, executive director of external affairs, provided a legislative update and noted that there was substantial legislative activity during the final month of the session. He reported that the legislature passed House Bill 4756, the *South Carolina Student Physical Privacy Act*. (Act 152 of 2026)

   Cooper stated that the Senate included $7 million for the Anderson Campus in its version of the budget, while the House reverted to the $1 million of maintenance, repair, and renovation funding from their original draft, and in a best-case scenario, the institution could potentially receive both allocations, given that the Bureau of Economic Analysis recently recognized an additional $210 million in recurring funds and $364.9 million in non-recurring funds.

   In response to a question from Commissioner Strange regarding the timeline for redistricting, Cooper indicated that further information is forthcoming

E. Recent Highlights and Events – Dr. DeHay highlighted recent accomplishments and upcoming events, including the College being named a semifinalist for the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, the launch of the inaugural Dual Enrollment Academy cohort, the continued success of the BASF Apprenticeship program, and preparations for Summer Commencement.

F. 2025-2026 Board Goals – Dr. DeHay provided an update on progress of the Commission goals, reviewing each goal and the expected accomplishments. He noted strong enrollment performance exceeding targets for fall and spring terms, solid gains in student success metrics including persistence and licensure pass rates, and continued advancement of workforce development initiatives and external funding efforts. Dr. DeHay further reported ongoing work to strengthen community engagement, advocacy, and partnerships, as well as the College's continued focus on aligning resources, programs, and strategic priorities to support student success and regional workforce needs.

VIII. CHAIR'S REPORT

A. **South Carolina Association of Technical College Commissioners (SCATCC) Report** Commissioner Rosemond-Saunders presented an update on SCATCC activities. She noted that the New Trustees Orientation and Workshop was held April 21, with Commissioner McLane attending from the College, and that the next training is scheduled for September 9. She stated that the Board held its retreat May 17–18, during which the final year of the strategic plan, meeting dates for 2026–2027, and the fiscal budget and dues were approved. She further noted that Commissioner Hamid Mohsseni is the recipient of the 2026 Trustee Leadership Award and Dr. Stephen Irwin is the recipient of the Faculty Award. They will be recognized at the September 22 joint meeting in Columbia, which will also coincide with the next SCATCC Board meeting.

B. **Appointment of Bylaws Review Committee** - Chairman Wanner reminded Commission that the bylaws are reviewed biennially. He appointed Commissioners Tom Strange, John Powell, and Hamid Mohsseni, with Commissioner Strange serving as Chair. The Chairman reminded them to meet prior to the next meeting and to bring recommendations for revisions, if any, to the August 3 meeting.

C. **Upcoming Events:** Chairman Wanner announced the following events:

i. August 3, 2026 – Summer Commencement, Littlejohn Coliseum
ii. August 12, 2026 – Fall Convocation, Anderson Hall Event Center, Pendleton Campus
iii. September 11, 2026 - Fall Commission Retreat, Madren Conference Center
iv. October 16, 2026 – Annual Report Event, Pendleton Campus
v. October 21-24, 2026 - ACCT Leadership Congress, Chicago, IL
vi. November 19, 2026 – Pickens Hall Ribbon Cutting, Pendleton Campus

D. **Next Commission Meeting**: August 3, 2026, 12:30 p.m., Pendleton Campus.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION (if needed): No executive session was held.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Wanner entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Powell made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Mohsseni. The meeting was adjourned at 1:56 p.m.

Minutes Approved: _____ August 3, 2026
James Wanner, Commission Chair