

**Minutes
District Board of Trustees
Tallahassee Community College
Student Union Ballroom
444 Appleyard Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32304
Tuesday, November 14, 2023
Special Board Meeting – 2:30 PM**

On November 14, 2023, the Tallahassee Community College District Board of Trustees meeting was called to order by Chair Jonathan Kilpatrick at 2:30 p.m.

Members Present: Chair Jonathan Kilpatrick, Vice Chair Karen Moore, Trustees Eugene Lamb, Frank Messersmith, Charlie Ward, and Monte Stevens.

Others Present: President Jim Murdaugh, Candice Grause, Craig Knox, Bertie Culbreath, Calandra Stringer, Lei Wang, Wesley S. Hardin, Amanda Clements, Janet Hartman, Bill Spiers, Pam Johnston, Moseline Augustin, Jennifer Carr, Suzi Baugh, Taylor Pratt, Dustin Frost, Shelly Bell, Christen Givens, Logan Lane, Alissandra Enriquez, Janay Masses, Amy Bradbury, Jarred Stewart, Nyla Davis, Barbara Wills, Tammy Kinsey, Heather Mitchell, Josh Willoughby, Sila Lott, Caitlin Bradbury, Isabella Rios, Tricia Rizza, Alison Fleischmann, Glenn Alston, Bret Ingerman, Calvin Cheung, and Ken Brown.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kilpatrick asked everyone to stand for a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMENTS

- i. Chair Kilpatrick welcomed everyone to the Special Board meeting on rebranding. He shared that Chief Wesley Hardin was leaving to take a new job and he wished him well and said his work and personality would be missed.
- ii. Board Members: Trustee Stevens shared that the President's Leadership Institute in Crawfordville last week was great, thanked Bob, Angela, and the team responsible for putting it on, and mentioned that it reinforces what we already know that we have the best staff, faculty, administration of any college in the country. Vice Chair Moore acknowledged that Aspen Institute has once again recognized our institution, and we deserve to be number one.

- iii. President Murdaugh thanked the Trustees for attending the President Leadership Institute in Crawfordville at the Wakulla Environmental Institute. He asked VP Grause to share the news of our national ranking for transfer rates. VP Grause shared that the U.S. Department of Education has prioritized transfer success rates and TCC was recognized as a top two-year institution for our transfer rates, and we are also the top institution along with Florida State University for our transfer relationship. President Murdaugh asked VP Rowland to share how Student Affairs is helping our students celebrate Thanksgiving next week. VP Rowland shared that the Hope Center at Temple University says three out of five college students deal with food or homeless insecurity. TCC has Talon's Market and a social worker to help our students manage their needs internally and externally with Second Harvest of Big Bend. This Fall, 689 students have been served in October alone through Talon's Market and their events. VP Rowland thanked the team, Dr. Jennifer Carr, Deirdre Green, and Kayla Dover. For Thanksgiving, this Friday, forty students will go home with a Thanksgiving bag that includes a \$30.00 gift card, stuffing, cranberries, and desserts. She invited everyone to attend the Harvest Lunch where four hundred students will receive a hot Thanksgiving meal. Of those students, one hundred and fifty will also be given a Thanksgiving bag to take home and be able to help feed their families or roommates. President Murdaugh asked VP Grause to lead the Workshop for the Rebranding and introduce the Pace Company team.

WORKSHOP

REBRANDING PROJECT - VP Grause

VP Grause: Back in June, TCC convened a task force at the request of the President to review and assess the need for a change in the college's name to reflect better our evolving institutional status and broadening impact in the state. This came about in the spring after announcing our three new bachelor's degrees for this fall. The task force was comprised of faculty, staff, administrators, and the entire Executive Team, as well as a strong core of alumni, community members, and the Student Government Association. The College put out a Request for Proposals for consulting services and ended up getting twenty-four proposals. But we were impressed from the beginning with Pace. VP Grause introduced the Pace team, Diana Riser, Principal at Pace, Octavio De Guzman, Creative Director, and Merri Starr, Account Manager. They first came to campus right after Labor Day and were here every week into October. Their research efforts touched every stakeholder group, culminating in our Town Hall series that we did in each of our service district counties. What you will see today is the product of all that research. We are excited with the product that they came up with.

PowerPoint presented by Pace.

Diana Riser: This has been a fantastic process and a collaborative one. We will present it in three parts. We will start with the rationale, perimeters, and processes. Then go over the overall results in feedback and tell you about our recommended names for the rebrand. We are taking the college into the future, with the new bachelor's degree and the opportunity to add future bachelor's degrees, and this allows us to tell the college's story.

Per our findings, students don't want a bachelor's degree from a community college. In considering a name change, we have two options. One is a complete diversion, to go a very different direction, and the other is a subtle evolution, and we had to ponder which direction we should take. Going with a different name is for if there is something to fix. It was overwhelming the case that there was really nothing to fix, not a poor brand reputation, quite the opposite, and that was loud and clear. Then we looked toward a subtle evolution, and the case for that. There is a lot here to support brand continuity. The brand is strong, the brand is successful, and there is a strong reputation in the community, and nationally.

In our main parameters, the one thing that stood out is that Tallahassee is extremely important as a sense of place, and the current brand colors must stay.

Merri Starr: We surveyed over two thousand people, had town halls, and spoke with as many stakeholders as we possibly could to make sure we had well-rounded answers and well-rounded findings to help make the decision. Overwhelmingly, from the students, guidance counselors, President's Circle, and alumni, everyone was very positive about this change. Their only major concern was that we not lose sight of the mission. The mission will not change. We are going to help with the rollout plan and make sure that if you choose to change the name, the change is smooth and efficient.

Octavio De Guzman: We will present the three recommended names and logos.

Chair Kilpatrick: We're not voting on logos, correct?

VP Grause: Yes, correct.

Trustee Messersmith: Are we going to be given one name, or several names to look at?

President Murdaugh: They are going to propose three names, and any of the three names are strong, but I feel obliged to make a recommendation and to tell you why.

Names and logos are shown:

Tallahassee College

Tallahassee State College

The State College of Tallahassee

Chair Kilpatrick: Trustees, do you have questions for Pace?

Vice Chair Moore: Thank you for the incredible research that you have done on this. We take this as a Board very seriously, and for you all to talk to two thousand-plus individuals shows commitment. I wanted to acknowledge that and thank you for that effort.

Trustee Stevens: There is no doubt that the community at large, the Board, and the administration have been well served by Pace and the team you put together to go through this rebranding effort. Well-done everybody. Is the budget the same for all the three choices? Compared to other colleges that have changed their names and we are competing with, if we divided them into buckets, which stands out?

VP Grause: There is no difference in cost.

President Murdaugh: I divided the colleges into buckets. If you count the colleges that completely changed their whole name, there are eight. If you used the format of "College of" there are five. If you use "State College", there are thirteen.

Chair Kilpatrick: The process has been deliberate. It is very much appreciated. My biggest concern with the name change is that the folks in Jefferson County will get it, as well as the folks in South Florida and North Georgia. In all of the choices, I see that you have taken that into consideration. Thank you for that.

President Murdaugh: You may recall in previous meetings, that sixty percent of our student body come from outside of our service district, so I think their focus on continuing to use "Tallahassee" in the name is well placed.

Trustee Lamb: Did we include any regular citizens in this process?

VP Grause: We hosted Town Halls in each of our service districts' counties and invited the entire community, including elected officials. We did have moderate participation in those. What we learned through this process is that people trust us and believe that we are going to do a good job because they know us, and that speaks about the reputation of our College.

Trustee Lamb: I want to thank you for allowing everyone to have input. And I want to congratulate the firm for doing a good job.

Trustee Stevens: Have students or alumni tested these names? Any feedback from that?

VP Grause: I will have Diana answer those questions in more detail. We strongly emphasized to all our stakeholders that ultimately this decision is yours.

Diana Riser: A lot of the focus groups, the surveying, the conversations, that we had asked a lot of questions about where were heading with our recommendations. Overall, the goal was to roll out the plan, so people understand it is transparent and clear and people understand who we are.

Trustee Stevens: Your evaluation of the research shows that the community at large trusts the administration at the College and this Board to make the right decision. Is that right?

Diana Riser: Yes.

Vice Chair Moore: What we are really looking at today is the name, so do not make the assumption that the logo is final. As trustees, we need to focus on is we want to honor our past and move us into the future. That is what the name has to do.

Trustee Ward: I am a big proponent of the work of the College. I am big on processes, going through processes correctly and with the right spirit. I think the outcome is digestible. As long as our mission isn't drifting in a different direction, then we are good. As you know, ladies, when you get married you change your name, but it does not change who you are. I think it is important that we all understand that when there is a name change, it shouldn't change our focus.

Trustee Messersmith: I want to thank all the faculty, staff, and Pace for working together. I agree there is a lot of work that has been done. It would be interesting to go through it all. There was one of these I liked more than the others.

Chair Kilpatrick: Can you walk us through the timeline?

VP Grause: If you decide to move forward with the name change, then it does have to be approved by the Florida Legislature and that would be no earlier than March 2024. The earliest we can begin to look at beginning an implementation if approved, would be late March or early April 2024. We asked the students would they like to be the first class with the new name or the last class with the old name. A lot of students wanted the new name. From this point today, about a year and a half out.

Trustee Stevens: Would the first diplomas be next Spring?

VP Grause: We do want to capitalize on the momentum. I would not want to go any later than that.

Chair Kilpatrick: For the legislative process, when does the request need to be submitted?

VP Grause: The timelines are tight, but our delegates are aware of the process, and have draft legislation ready to go. Both Senator Corey Simon and Representative Jason Shoaf are very excited.

President Murdaugh: It was difficult to set up town halls, as we wanted to make sure we complied with the Sunshine Law. Trustee Stevens suggested that we do this workshop, to give you all the opportunity to talk it through amongst yourselves in public. The announcement for this workshop was published to give you the ability to vote if you so choose instead of having to wait two weeks.

Chair Kilpatrick: Do you see changes in donations in other colleges that have changed their name?

VP Grause: No institution was willing to point directly to a percentile-point increase in enrollment or donations. But anecdotally, most colleges that do this see a growth in their brand recognition and, by extension, an increase in enrollment and donations.

President Murdaugh: We can say with some degree of confidence that one of the reasons colleges started changing their names a few years ago, was because of the introductions of baccalaureate degrees at colleges across the state. That drove significant enrollment increases at those institutions. If we intend to add additional baccalaureate degrees, I think it is in our best interest to change our name. I do not have any concerns in the quality of our fundraising efforts with the Foundation or our Communications team with marketing us around the country to make sure people know who we are.

Chair Kilpatrick: I completely understand, it is having to explain a bachelor's degree from a community college.

Trustee Messersmith: I was thinking that the community part is what we needed to change, for the impression of the degree name.

President Murdaugh: This is not a decision that I am recommending easily. I have been at Tallahassee Community College for twenty-four years and am proud to be the president of this community college for thirteen years. There is an emotional commitment a lot of people in this room have to this institution. This is about the future.

Trustee Lamb: At the town hall in Gadsden County, there were no objections to it. They felt like since we are offering new baccalaureate degrees now, we can offer more in the future, and they all went along, as long as they felt like the new name would be the right one for the college.

Trustee Ward: Yes, we are ready to vote, I think we are at a point where the process has been done well, and the explanations have been shared, and so I just think as a matter of us saying what your recommendation is then allowing us to vote upon.

President Murdaugh: My recommendation is that we rename the college to Tallahassee State College.

I like the idea that we were TJC, now we are TCC, and we could be TSC. I think it rolls off the tongue easily. I think it continues to sell the Tallahassee brand no matter where you are. It is a subtle difference. That is the recommendation I would make.

Trustee Lamb Chair Kilpatrick: Is there any public comment?

President Murdaugh: No public comment.

MOTION: Trustee Lamb: I would like to enter a motion to accept the recommendation from our President that we rename our college TSC, Tallahassee State College.

SECOND: Vice Chair Moore

Motion passed unanimously.

President Murdaugh: The next meeting date will be at the Center for Innovation on November 27. I look forward to seeing you all there and hope you have a great Thanksgiving. If you can make it on Monday, please do. And before we leave, I want to thank our friends from Pace, they bring the heart along with the game. We have had great deep conversations about how important this is to me, you, and everybody who is affected by the decision. Thank you so much.

Chair Kilpatrick: We are adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT: 3:35 p.m.

NEXT MEETING DATE

November 27, 2023 – Center for Innovation