



**Council on Postsecondary Education Meeting
Wednesday, June 17, 2020, 5:30 p.m.
560 Jefferson Blvd., Warwick, RI 02886**

**PURSUANT TO GOVERNOR RAIMONDO'S EXECUTIVE ORDER
20-46, THIS MEETING WAS HELD REMOTELY.**

MINUTES

Chair Timothy DelGiudice called this remote meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. and acknowledged that a quorum was present via the Zoom webinar platform. He thanked everyone for their patience and flexibility during such an unexpected time.

Chair DelGiudice recognized all attendees participating remotely:

Council on Postsecondary Education members:

Timothy DelGiudice, Chair, Council on Postsecondary Education
Dennis Duffy
Rachelle Green
Thomas Izzo
Michael Mello
Jeffery Williams

Council members absent:

Barbara Cottam, Chair, Board of Education
Marianne Monte

Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (RIOPC) staff:

Ronald Cavallaro, Esq., Acting Commissioner, General Counsel
Susan Mansolillo, Chief Financial Officer
Dr. Tammy Warner, Assistant Commissioner, Academic and Student Affairs
Amy Grzybowski, Executive Director, Westerly Education Center
Beth Bailey, Marketing Director, Westerly Education Center
Jhanay Davis, Public Information and Communications Specialist
Lynn Owens, Assistant to the Commissioner
Rob Stolzman, Esq., Legal Counsel to RIOPC

Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) participants:

Dr. Meghan Hughes, President
Dr. Rosemary Costigan, Vice President, Academic Affairs
Sara Enright, Vice President, Student Affairs/Chief Outcomes Officer
Kristen Albritton, Vice President, Finance and Strategy
Alix Ogden, Associate Vice President, Administration
Amy Kempe, Director, Marketing and Communications

Rhode Island College (RIC) participants:

Dr. Frank Sánchez, President
Clark Greene, Executive Director for Strategic Initiatives, Chief of Staff
Stephen Nedder, Vice President, Administration and Finance
Anna Cano Morales, Associate Vice President, Community Equity and Diversity
Robert Eaton, Director of Budget
Dr. Sue Pearlmutter, Interim Provost/Vice President, Academic Affairs
Dr. Helen Tate, Provost/Vice President, Academic Affairs (eff. 7/1/20)

Chair DelGiudice noted that public access was provided to attendees of this Zoom webinar in compliance with the Open Meetings Act and the provisions of the Executive Order. He also noted that prior to the Council entering Executive Session, attendees would be placed on hold for what may be an extended period and that the meeting would be locked. The Chair went on to share that at the conclusion of the Executive Session, the Council would return to Open Session and resume public access. He then mentioned that videos of the Open Sessions will be posted on the RIOPC Facebook page following the meeting.

1. Acceptance of the Agenda

Chair DelGiudice called for a motion that the Council on Postsecondary Education accept the agenda for the meeting of June 17, 2020.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Williams and seconded by Mr. Duffy, it was

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education accepts the agenda for the meeting of June 17, 2020.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Michael Mello, and Jeffery Williams.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

2. Approval of the Minutes

A. Minutes of the April 29, 2020 meeting.

Chair DelGiudice called for a motion that the Council on Postsecondary Education approve the minutes of the meeting that took place on April 29, 2020, as presented.

On a motion duly made by Ms. Green and seconded by Mr. Izzo, it was

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education approves the minutes of the meeting that took place on April 29, 2020, as presented.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Michael Mello, and Jeffery Williams.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

B. Minutes of the May 6, 2020 meeting.

Chair DelGiudice called for a motion that the Council on Postsecondary Education approve the minutes of the meeting that took place on May 6, 2020, as presented.

On a motion duly made by Ms. Green and seconded by Mr. Izzo, it was

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education approves the minutes of the meeting that took place on May 6, 2020, as presented.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Michael Mello, and Jeffery Williams.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

C. Minutes of the June 12, 2020 meeting.

Chair DelGiudice called for a motion that the Council on Postsecondary Education approve the minutes of the meeting that took place on June 12, 2020, as presented.

On a motion duly made by Ms. Green and seconded by Mr. Izzo, it was

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education approves the minutes of the meeting that took place on June 12, 2020, as presented.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Michael Mello, and Jeffery Williams.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

3. Reports from the Chairs

- A. Council on Postsecondary Education – Updates and issues affecting local and national higher education.

No report.

- B. Board of Education – Updates and issues affecting local and national PK-20 education.

No report.

4. Report from the Commissioner

- A. Updates and issues affecting local and national higher education.

No report.

- B. Acting Commissioner Cavallaro read into the record the following notices of programmatic changes that were submitted by Rhode Island College and reviewed by RIOPC. He confirmed that the changes are within the role and scope of the programs and that Council approval is not required.

- I. From Rhode Island College:
 - a. Establishment of a Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree with a Specialization in Nurse Anesthesia Practice,
 - b. Establishment of a Certificate of Graduate Study in Transition for Youth with Exceptionalities,
 - c. Establishment of a Certificate of Graduate Study in Co-occurring Mental Health & Substance Use Disorders,
 - d. Establishment of an undergraduate degree in Data Science,
 - e. Establishment of a Certificate in Undergraduate Studies in Birth to Three, and the
 - f. Establishment of a minor in Community and Public Health

5. Reports from the Presidents

- A. Rhode Island College- Updates and issues affecting local and national higher education.

President Sánchez shared with the Council his President's Report and the 2019 Annual Legislative Report on Diversity. He stated that Rhode Island College has completed the first year of the Lifespan School of Medical Imaging housed at RIC (full undergraduate program); students received 100% pass rate on the national licensure exams.

President Sánchez noted that RIC piloted a behavioral health specialist training program, fully funded by RealJobs RI, specifically designed to meet the needs of Lifespan and Bradley Hospital. All the students who completed the program are working at Bradley Hospital providing mental health and behavioral support needs to the staff. Three additional medical program opportunities are being developed at RIC.

The President stated that RIC will once again host the PrepareRI boot camp starting on July 6th and running through August 21st. Five hundred high school students from Rhode Island will be provided with internships focused on activities and thinking around how to respond to COVID-19 as part of their work. Students will receive four college credits from RIC.

President Sánchez expressed concern over the General Assembly's current revisions to the FY2020 budget, including eliminating the remainder of RIC's CARES Act funding. This revised budget takes out the remainder of the funds (\$4 million) which was planned for mitigation to open up the campus this fall. Reopening plans were submitted to the Rhode Island Department of Health this past Monday, laying out RIC's mitigation plans. President Sánchez stated that the college is appealing to the Governor and has been in contact with General Assembly leadership to try to get

some relief. He noted that without relief, RIC's proposed plans to reopen this fall are on pause until the school can resolve this significant financial decrease in its budget.

The President reviewed highlights of RIC's 2019 Diversity plan. The report indicates that about 35% of all new hires in faculty and staff were individuals of color. Thirty percent of all new faculty staff were professionals of color; about 17% percent overall are professionals of color. He noted that while the school has made great progress on its performance measures, there is still quite a bit of work to do.

In terms of student enrollment, President Sánchez reported that RIC has seen a dramatic increase in very talented, diverse students coming to the college. Over the last five years, it has gone from about 30% of its undergraduate population being students of color, to now 40%. Within the graduate student population, RIC has seen dramatic increases in students of color, from 13% to nearly 35%. President Sánchez noted that, in support of our students and the entire community, RIC is continually looking at the campus climate, engaging national leaders on campus climate surveys to continue to build a sense of connection and belonging, recognizing diversity as a very real strength for the institution.

Council members noted that the CARES Act funding, meant to assist students and higher education institutions with the impacts of COVID-19, is still available to the schools. However, the General Assembly reduced the general revenue to the schools by a nearly equivalent amount.

Responding to a question from the Council about the fall forecast for enrollment, tuition, and student recruitment, President Sánchez noted that until RIC has a better sense of the budget, it is planning for a 10-20% decline in funding and enrollment. A student recruitment commercial will be launched in the coming weeks.

B. Community College of Rhode Island - Updates and issues affecting local and national higher education.

President Hughes submitted a written report to the Council, including CCRI's 2019 Legislative Report on Diversity and its 2020 Campus Inclusion Plan. She spoke of the events that have been happening in the country and in Rhode Island over the last two weeks.

The President noted that in response to the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor, and the protests and rallies across the country, CCRI held two college town halls last week. She thanked Bishop Williams for facilitating the conversations and his ongoing leadership and commitment to CCRI. The town halls focused on racism both inside and outside of CCRI and were an opportunity for CCRI's communities of color to tell their stories of racist experiences inside and outside the college. President Hughes said it was a moment for white members of the community to listen, to ask how they can serve as compassionate and effective allies and to prioritize what they can do as a college to make CCRI more inclusive and anti-racist.

President Hughes remarked that what she heard from CCRI's students, faculty and staff was sobering, and it is clear that while they have been working to build a college that is truly diverse, equitable, and inclusive, much work remains.

The President shared her vision for CCRI becoming an anti-racist college, standing together to create a college that makes students and colleagues of color feel welcome, seen, and valued. She confirmed that the college will know they are making progress when students of color graduate at the same rate as their white peers, when more faculty of color is in the classroom, more staff of color at the college, and more leaders of color at the table. The vision requires leadership, resources, and action by the entire college community.

President Hughes committed to using her positionality, title, authority, and values to help this work succeed. Her approach includes listening and looking to CCRI's community of color for guidance in setting the college's priorities. She noted that the work that lies ahead must be done by the entire college community; its success depends upon everyone.

The President remarked that over the past four years, CCRI has created an Institutional Equity Office lead by its Director of Human Resources. CCRI has fundamentally redesigned its Human Resources team to attract, hire, and retain a diverse faculty, staff, and administration. Through that hiring and through intensive professional development of current employees, CCRI is building a more equitable and inclusive college. President Hughes noted that the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion employee group was formed and created CCRI's campus inclusion plan that outlines the work ahead for all at the college. She meets monthly with the group to advance the collective work.

President Hughes provided a summary of the 2019 Diversity Report and the 2020 Campus Inclusion Plan. She celebrated the Class of 2020 and referred Council members to the virtual commencement link in her report.

Sara Enright, Vice President of Student Affairs/Chief Outcomes Officer, spoke about the recent decline in enrollment, and noted possible drivers being student uncertainty about what the fall will look like, and tensions within students' lives (job loss, food and housing insecurities, etc.).

Council members congratulated CCRI for its sensitivity to these issues. President Hughes offered to share the Town Hall videos with Council members.

6. Discussion Items

A. RI Reconnect

Dr. Tammy Warner provided a brief overview of the RI Reconnect Project, set to launch the week of June 29th. She expressed her gratitude to RIOPC staff members Omar Reyes, Jhanay Davis, and Christina Costa for their work on the project.

RI Reconnect is funded by the Lumina Foundation and is designed to reconnect adults with learning opportunities that lead to a degree, certificate, or credential. The Program supports Rhode Island's 70% attainment goal with an intentional focus on bridging racial and ethnic equity gaps. One-on-one coaching with a navigator will meet Rhode Islanders where they are and where they left off.

Dr. Warner noted that RI Reconnect will assist the State with COVID-19 recovery efforts, including promoting programs that can lead to jobs for Rhode Islanders and pathways to credentials and/or degrees, prioritizing development of credit-bearing pathways skill-to-credit. RI Reconnect is partnering with United Way 211 services for referrals to wrap-around supports, focusing on whole-person needs and readiness. The Program will provide support and outreach to those most affected by the COVID-19 crisis, specifically Black and Latino communities, through partnerships with local agencies within the most impacted communities.

Dr. Warner provided a screenshot of the website rireconnect.org and offered contact information: navigator@rireconnect.org

Chair DelGiudice celebrated the outstanding work of the team.

7. Action Items

A. Approval of the Awarding of Faculty Tenure at Rhode Island College.

Chair DelGiudice called for a motion that the Council on Postsecondary Education approve the awarding of faculty tenure at Rhode Island College, effective July 1, 2020, as presented.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Duffy and seconded by Mr. Mello, it was

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education approves the awarding of faculty tenure at Rhode Island College, effective July 1, 2020, as presented.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Michael Mello, and Jeffery Williams.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

- B. Approval of the Awarding of Faculty Tenure at the Community College of Rhode Island.

Chair DelGiudice called for a motion that the Council on Postsecondary Education approve the awarding of faculty tenure at the Community College of Rhode Island, effective July 1, 2020, as presented.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Williams and seconded by Ms. Green, it was

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education approves the awarding of faculty tenure at the Community College of Rhode Island, effective July 1, 2020, as presented.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Michael Mello, and Jeffery Williams.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

8. Executive Session

Chair DelGiudice advised attendees that they would be placed on hold for the duration of tonight's Executive Session; the hold will be released once the Council is back in Open Session.

Chair DelGiudice called for a motion that the Council on Postsecondary Education enter Executive Session for the following items:

- A. Discussion regarding potential litigation, pursuant to R.I.G.L. §42-46-5 (a)(2).
- B. Discussion regarding acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, pursuant to R.I.G.L. §42-46-5 (a)(5).

On a motion duly made by Ms. Green and seconded by Mr. Williams, it was

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education enter into Executive Session for the following items:

- A. Discussion regarding potential litigation, pursuant to R.I.G.L. §42-46-5 (a) (2).

B. Discussion regarding acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, pursuant to R.I.G.L. §42-46-5 (a)(5).

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Michael Mello, and Jeffery Williams.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

The Council entered Executive Session at 6:27 p.m. Virtual public access was paused.

The Council reconvened in Open Session at 7:04 p.m. Virtual public access resumed.

Chair DelGiudice thanked attendees for their patience while on hold during the Council's Executive Session. He confirmed that the Council is now back in Open Session.

Chair DelGiudice called for a motion that the Council on Postsecondary Education seal the minutes of the Executive Session held on June 17, 2020.

On a motion duly made by Ms. Green and seconded by Mr. Williams, it was

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education seal the minutes of the Executive Session held on June 17, 2020.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Michael Mello, and Jeffery Williams.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

9. Additional Action Item

A. Approval of and authorization of the Chair regarding the lease of real property at 95 Main Street, Woonsocket, Rhode Island, for the Higher Education Center of Northern Rhode Island.

Chair DelGiudice called for a motion that the Council on Postsecondary Education approve of and authorize the Chair to take all necessary action regarding the lease of

real property at 95 Main Street, Woonsocket, Rhode Island, for the Higher Education Center of Northern Rhode Island, in substantially the same form as presented and within the parameters discussed in Executive Session.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Mello and seconded by Ms. Green, it was

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education approves of and authorizes the Chair to take all necessary action regarding the lease of real property at 95 Main Street, Woonsocket, Rhode Island, for the Higher Education Center of Northern Rhode Island, in substantially the same form as presented and within the parameters discussed in Executive Session.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Michael Mello, and Jeffery Williams.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

10. Upoming Meetings

- A. The next meeting of the Council on Postsecondary Education is scheduled for August 5, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.
- B. The next meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for August 5, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

Chair DelGiudice noted that details on whether these meetings will be held virtually and how to join would be shared soon. He thanked all for joining tonight in continued support of the Council's work.

11. Adjourn

Chair DelGiudice called for a motion to adjourn tonight's meeting.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Williams and seconded by Ms. Green, it was

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education adjourn the meeting of June 17, 2020.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

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YEAS: Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Thomas Izzo,
Rachelle Green, Michael Mello, and Jeffery Williams.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

The meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.