



## **Meeting of the Council on Postsecondary Education**

**Wednesday, August 3, 2022, 4:00 PM**  
**Community College of Rhode Island**  
**400 East Avenue**  
**Warwick, RI 02886**

### **Meeting Minutes**

Chair David Caprio called this meeting to order at 4:07 PM and acknowledged that a quorum was present.

Council on Postsecondary Education members present:  
David Caprio, Chair, Council on Postsecondary Education  
Barbara Cottam, Chair, Board of Education  
Dennis Duffy  
Rachelle Green (arrived at 4:14 PM)  
Thomas Izzo  
Lawrence Purtill  
Ana Duarte Spencer (arrived at 4:25 PM)

Council on Postsecondary Education members absent:  
Michael Mello  
Marcy Reyes  
Jeffery Williams

Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (RIOPC) staff present:  
Shannon Gilkey, Ed.D., Commissioner  
Anne Marie Coleman, Director of Labor Relations  
Ronald Cavallaro, Esq., General Counsel  
Amy Grzybowski, Assistant Commissioner  
Tammy Vargas Warner, Assistant Commissioner  
Zachary Saul, Chief Financial Officer  
Jill Olson-Crowley, Assistant to the Commissioner

Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) participant: Meghan Hughes, President

Rhode Island College (RIC) participants: Jack Warner, President, and Steven Nedder, Vice President, Administration and Finance

**1. Acceptance of the Agenda**

Chair Caprio called for a motion that the Council on Postsecondary Education accept the agenda for the meeting of August 3, 2022.

On a motion made by Dennis Duffy and seconded by Barbara Cottam it was:

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education accept the agenda for the meeting of August 3, 2022.

VOTE: 5 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: David Caprio, Barbara Cottam, Dennis Duffy, Thomas Izzo, and Lawrence Purtill.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

**2. Approval of the Minutes**

Chair Caprio called for a motion that the Council on Postsecondary Education approve the minutes of the meeting that took place on June 22, 2022.

On a motion duly made by Dennis Duffy and seconded by Barbara Cottam, it was:

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education approve the minutes of the meeting that took place on June 22, 2022, as presented.

VOTE: 4 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: David Caprio, Barbara Cottam, Dennis Duffy, and Thomas Izzo.

ABSTAINS: 1 Lawrence Purtill was not present for the meeting.

### **3. Report from the Chair of the Council on Postsecondary Education**

Chair Caprio thanked each Council member for their dedication and thanked President Hughes for hosting the Council meeting. He read a citation that was issued by Governor McKee for Marianne Monte's service to the Council on Postsecondary Education. Chair Caprio stated that linked materials were sent to Council members in advance and that the Commissioner's and President's reports would not be presented at the meeting, but the topics would be open for discussion.

### **4. Report from the Commissioner**

Chair Caprio asked if there were questions or comments on Commissioner Gilkey's report. There was no discussion on the topic.

### **5. Report from the Committee Chairs**

#### **A. Finance and Facilities Committee**

Finance and Facilities Committee Chair, Dennis Duffy, shared that there have been no meetings since his last report to the Council, and there was nothing to report.

#### **B. Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee**

Assistant Commissioner Tammy Vargas Warner reported on behalf of Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee Chair, Michael Mello. Assistant Commissioner Vargas Warner shared that the Committee (AASSC) approved a recommendation that the Council approve Jane Addams Resource Corporation (JARC) to operate as a proprietary school in Rhode Island. Dr. Warner stated that the committee also discussed the Rhode Island School of Progressive Education (RISPE). RISPE launched its first cohort of the Alternative Teacher Certification (ATC) program for Elementary Education this summer. They intend to launch their first degree program (MAT) in 2024, followed by the MEd in 2025. The Committee received the following notices of changes from Rhode Island College:

#### **Certificate of Undergraduate Studies in Workplace Diversity**

This is a certificate program within the Bachelor of Professional Studies program and serves as a stepping stone by offering a stackable credential on the path to degree attainment.

#### **Education Doctoral Program**

This program, shared with URI, underwent a shifting of courses and slight changes in prerequisites based on assessments. No additional credits were added.

These program changes, according to Assistant Commissioner Vargas Warner, are within the role and scope of the institution, and Council approval is not required.

Rhode Island College and the Community College of Rhode Island shared their processes for program review and decision-making in the context of the Council's policy on reporting low completion programs. Program

review is a data-informed process at both institutions with full participation from the academic departments and the faculty. Both schools take a holistic approach to program review, taking costs and impact on students into careful consideration.

As Rhode Island College transitions to new leadership, program review is also transitioning to a broadened process informed by multi-year data and trend analysis. After each program is reviewed by the department, recommendations will be made by the provost and the information will be used to inform decisions on resources. The college expects to complete its review this fall and will return to share its final report.

The Community College of Rhode Island has completed its review with recommendations and action steps already in progress.

**C. Personnel Committee**

No report was presented.

**D. Joint Alternate Retirement Plan Committee**

Zachary Saul, Chair of the Joint Alternate Retirement Plan Committee, reported that over the past several months CAPTRUST, the Council’s investment advisor, has provided fiduciary training, multiple presentations, and informational materials covering various topics that were useful in guiding the committee on numerous decision factors.

The Committee last met on July 28, 2022. At this meeting the committee approved the following items:

Use of employer-controlled annuity contracts (TIAA Retirement Choice/TIAA Retirement Choice Plus) for the new investment menu and future contributions, as recommended by CAPTRUST; An Investment Policy Statement; A fee methodology – record keeper will be paid using a per capita calculation and collect fees from participants using a pro-rata methodology, as recommended by CAPTRUST; An institutional line-up share class policy, as recommended by CAPTRUST; A new investment menu and mapping strategy, as recommended by CAPTRUST

In future meetings, the Joint Alternate Retirement Plan Committee and CAPTRUST will provide the Council with additional updates as well as the timeline for implementation of the new plan administration with TIAA.

**6. Reports from the Presidents**

**A. Rhode Island College**

Chair Caprio stated that a report was submitted to Council members that included the following topics: Enrollment update; A summary of capital projects taking place in FY 22-23 Fiscal Year; Fundraising Updates; Workforce Program Updates. There was no discussion on the report.

**B. Community College of Rhode Island**

Chair Caprio stated that a report was submitted to Council members that included the following topics: Enrollment update; A summary of capital projects taking place in FY 22-23 Fiscal Year; Fundraising Updates; Workforce Program Updates. There was no discussion on the report.

**7. Discussion Items**

- A. Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner - Discussion of the Proposed Capital Improvement Plan (FY2024-2028).**

Chair Caprio introduced RIOPC CFO, Zackary Saul, to present this discussion item. Zachary Saul shared that the process for presenting the plan has deviated from previous years and normally, this would have first gone to the Finance and Facilities Committee. Due to timing and committee structure, it is being presented to the Council for review and adoption at this meeting.

He shared that Council members will receive full detailed CIP binders for review before the budget is approved and all questions will be addressed before the final adoption of the budget in September. Council member Dennis Duffy asked if the expectation was to approve the plan at this meeting. Zachary Saul responded that Council will be asked to approve the proposed plans at this meeting, however, Council members have an opportunity to ask additional questions or may request changes or amendments before the final adoption of the budget.

The new project requests include: The Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner data center upgrade – \$240,000; Westerly Education Center information technology equipment upgrade - \$53,000, furniture and fixtures for \$30,000, and an expansion to annex site - \$1,000,000; Woonsocket Education Center expansion of the Main Street site - \$1,000,000.

Zachary Saul stated that there will be an opportunity to go through more detail at the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting.

**B. The Community College of Rhode Island - Discussion of the Proposed Capital Improvement Plan (FY2024-2028).**

Chair Caprio introduced President Meghan Hughes to present the discussion item. President Hughes shared that CCRI's Capital Improvement Plan represents CCRI's long-term vision to create a college with student centered physical spaces, where students can learn successfully and experience personal growth and wellbeing. The CIP advances the three goals of CCRI's strategic plan, and it includes \$268.29 million from all sources of funds. This includes \$165 million in new General Obligation bond referenda for voter approval over 3 election cycles in 2024, 2026, and 2028, and \$103.29 million from 2021 GO Bond and traditional RICAP funds for previously approved and ongoing projects.

The eight main categories these funds will support are: Asset protection, Accessibility improvements, Lincoln Campus renewal, Phase I Modernization, Phase II-IV Modernization, Data Cabling and Power Infrastructure, Warwick Campus Renewal, and Warwick Science Lab Renovations. President Hughes provided detail for each project and shared that all of the projects are in various stages: some are just getting underway while others are near completion, and some are projected for FY 26 and beyond and assume approval on all funding requests.

Council member Barbara Cottam asked for clarification regarding the student services area renovation in Warwick. President Hughes explained where the area was and how it ties directly into CCRI's first strategic goal and will allow access for all students.

**C. Rhode Island College - Discussion of the Proposed Capital Improvement Plan (FY2024-2028).**

Chair Caprio introduced Steven Nedder, Vice President of Administration and Finance to present the discussion item. President Jack Warner requested to provide introductory remarks for the item.

President Warner shared that the General Obligation bond requests reflect an investment in the bio-life sciences and physical sciences. The Clark Science building renovation that is scheduled to be undertaken this year reflects the physical science priority and will be a significant renovation. 38 million was received from the bond and an additional 15 million has been received. Fogarty Life Sciences is the next priority and will be projected for the fiscal year 2024. He shared that RIC is going to invest 1.2 million in converting some older science labs into biotech-capable laboratories.

President Warner shared that the other two major projects that will follow are Whipple Hall which houses RIC's communications program, and Adams Library which will be converted into a Student Learning and Success Center. Other priority investments will include 2.5 million in classroom technology upgrades.

Vice President Steven Nedder presented Rhode Island College's FY 24 -28 Capital Improvement Plan. He recapped the General Obligation bond requests: Fogarty Life Sciences Building Modernization November - 2024 \$70,000,000; Whipple Hall & Steam Plant Modernization November - 2026 \$38,000,000; Adams Library/Student Learning & Success Center November - 2028 \$80,000,000; which total \$118,000,000. The Vice President also shared RICAP Asset Protection and RICAP Infrastructure Modernization projects for which the college is requesting an additional \$11.95 million in RICAP funding to support both asset protection and infrastructure modernization needs through FY 2028.

He noted that many projects were delayed with the reduction of RICAP funding in FY 2020. RIC is requesting 11.95 million and the projects include: Roof Replacement; Parking Lot Renovations; Drainage and Sewer upgrades; G.O. Bond Feasibility Studies; Classroom IT Equipment upgrades and Infrastructure support; Full Perimeter Coverage of Cameras; and Improved Pedestrian Pathways and Vehicular Circulation.

Council member Rachele Green asked for clarification on the dates listed for projects. Vice President Nedder clarified the project date should reflect spring 2023, not Spring 2022. Council member Barbara Cottam asked for clarification on league standards for athletic events, and the Vice President clarified that these are specific to the Little East Conference requirements.

Council member Thomas Izzo asked for insight into a broader understanding of how expectations are conceptualized regarding enrollment. He also inquired about the bonds that are being requested and if conversations are being had amongst the schools regarding the amounts being requested.

President Hughes shared that an investment must be made in student services to impact enrollment and retention. She stated that it is critically important to have state-of-the-art healthcare facilities and science labs to positively impact the workforce and to have conversations of significance with Higher Ed partners.

President Warner stated that both RIC and CCRI serve first-generation students and more in-person support is required. He stated that both capital plans have a combination of physical infrastructure, and data infrastructure, that can improve the capacity to deliver.

Commissioner Gilkey shared that when he arrived as Commissioner, he looked for both an asset plan for the state as well as an efficiency study that matched the state investment (5%) in higher education. He shared that he will continue to seek information on this topic.

Council member Dennis Duffy asked for clarification on the Woonsocket Education Center and asked how this works in partnership with CCRI. He then asked about the timeline for delivering budgets to OMB. Zachary Saul responded that draft proposals for the CIP will go to OMB on August 5<sup>th</sup>. The CIP will be rolled into the state's operating FY 24 budget which comes out on October 1<sup>st</sup>. He shared that the Finance and Facilities Committee will review this and then Council will approve it at a future meeting

**8. Action Item**

- A.** Approval of a lease agreement among the Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education, the Community College of Rhode Island, and the Rhode Island Department of Public Safety for the use by the Municipal Police Training Academy of certain space and facilities at the Community College of Rhode Island's Lincoln (Flanagan) Campus.

Chair Caprio called upon General Counsel Ronald Cavallaro who provided the Council with the background of the lease with the Department of Public Safety and the operation of the Rhode Island Municipal Police Training Academy at CCRI. He shared that the last least that the Council approved ran from July of 2019 to June 30, 2022, and that the new lease has an initial term of three years, beginning July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2025. If the lease is approved, it will be on the State Properties Committee meeting agenda on August 16, 2022, for approval.

On a motion duly made by Dennis Duffy and seconded by Rachelle Green it was:

VOTED:	THAT	The Council on Postsecondary Education approve a lease agreement among the Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education, the Community College of Rhode Island, and the Rhode Island Department of Public Safety for the use by the Municipal Police Training Academy of certain space and facilities at the Community College of Rhode Island's Lincoln (Flanagan) Campus.
VOTE:		6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.
YEAS:		David Caprio, Barbara Cottam, Dennis Duffy, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, and Lawrence Purtill.
NAYS:		0

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ABSTAINS: 0

- B. Approval of the Postsecondary (OPC, CCRI, and RIC) Capital Improvement Plans for FY 2024- 2028 and recommendation to the Board of Education.

Chair Caprio called for a motion that the Council on Postsecondary Education approve the Postsecondary (OPC, CCRI, and RIC) Capital Improvement Plans for FY 2024- 2028 and recommendation to the Board of Education.

Dennis Duffy commented that more detail was needed and suggested that the motion be amended to reflect that approval was preliminary, and of draft plans.

Chair Caprio asked for a motion to amend the motion to: That the Council on Postsecondary Education grants preliminary approval of the draft Postsecondary (OPC, CCRI, and RIC) Capital Improvement Plans for FY 2024- 2028 and recommendation to the Board of Education.

On a motion duly made by Dennis Duffy and seconded by Barbara Cottam it was:

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education amend the motion to: the Council on Postsecondary Education preliminarily approves the draft Postsecondary (OPC, CCRI, and RIC) Capital Improvement Plans for FY 2024- 2028 and recommendation to the Board of Education.

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

YEAS: David Caprio, Dennis Duffy, Barbara Cottam, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, and Lawrence Purtill.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Chair Caprio then asked for a motion to approve the motion, as amended.

On a motion duly made by Dennis Duffy and seconded by Rachelle Green it was:

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education preliminarily approves the draft Postsecondary (OPC, CCRI, and RIC) Capital Improvement Plans for FY 2024- 2028 and recommendation to the Board of Education.

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

YEAS: David Caprio, Barbara Cottam, Dennis Duffy, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, and Lawrence Purtill.



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NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

- C. Approval of the recommendation from the Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee to approve the application of Jane Addams Resource Corporation to operate as a proprietary school in Rhode Island.

Chair Caprio called upon Assistant Commissioner Tammy Vargas Warner who shared background information on proprietary schools. She indicated that the Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee reviewed the application and recommends that Council approve the application of the Jane Addams Resource Corporation to operate as a proprietary school in Rhode Island.

On a motion duly made by Dennis Duffy and seconded by Rachelle Green it was:

VOTED: THAT The Council on Postsecondary Education approve the recommendation from the Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee to approve the application of Jane Addams Resource Corporation to operate as a proprietary school in Rhode Island.

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

YEAS: David Caprio, Barbara Cottam, Dennis Duffy, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, and Lawrence Purtill.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

**9. Executive Session**

Chair Caprio stated that there would not be an executive session.

**10. Next Meeting**

Chair Caprio stated that the next meeting of the Council on Postsecondary Education will be on September 14, 2022, at RINEC at 5:30 PM.

**11. Adjourn**

Chair Caprio called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

On a motion duly made by Rachelle Green and seconded by Thomas Izzo, it was:

