

Athens Technical College
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Athens, Georgia
September 22, 2015
10:30 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Rusty Adams
Ms. Barbara Cabaniss
Mr. Terry Chandler
Ms. Rebecca Dally
Ms. Polly Fievet
Mr. Scott Hardigree
Mr. Todd Henry
Judge Robert Motley
Dr. Mixon Robinson
Mr. Lawton Stephens

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Steve Hollis
Mr. Jimmy Parker

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Dr. Mixon Robinson called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. welcoming everyone to the September board meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Robinson called for approval of the August minutes. Scott Hardigree made a motion to approve the minutes and Rebecca Dally seconded the motion with the remainder of the board in agreement. The minutes were approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADULT EDUCATION

Ms. Stephanie Benson gave the board an update on Adult Education. We are going to receive \$195,000 from the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission for our Bridge to Success Program. We are also going to receive an additional \$100,000 in incentives. She has been working to promote the program and get the word out to students.

We had sixteen students last month complete their Georgia Best certification.

She has started hosting roundtable breakfasts and will be holding one in each county. Last week they held one in Greene County and as a result of it, there were twelve students who came to orientation.

The Shepherd staff in Loganville has offered to let us use one of their locations in Monroe. The location is rent free and we will be able to have approximately fifty students. Our current location in the O'Kelly Library is being renovated.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Mr. Tommy Lyon from the Elbert County Campus presented an Economic Development Services update. Dr. Andrea Daniel is in Germany this week visiting with students who are participating in the Haring training program. The Governor is also visiting with the students.

Last quarter they provided customized training for sixty-six companies for a total of 13,881 training hours.

Last week Dr. Daniel made a presentation to the Southeast Employment Training Association in Savannah regarding our Workplace Fundamentals Program. The program is six weeks long and all graduates are offered interviews by area companies.

Greene County currently has a Workplace Fundamentals Program and is getting ready to start its third class. They are working on starting a class in Elbert County.

Dr. Thaxton toured the Elbert County Campus recently and met with some community members. She also toured Mr. Rusty Adams' company, Star Granite.

Elberton just signed an agreement for a CSX rail southeastern connection. The Governor provided a \$2.5 million grant for the project. Elberton will hold the mortgage on the short line track for twenty years and then it reverts back to the owner. The short line track will run from Elberton to Toccoa and is supposed to be completed in December. After this track is completed they will begin working on the westbound track. Caterpillar helped to push the agreement so they could load closer to us and have the choice between two major rail lines.

Mr. Lyon announced that the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has asked him to continue service on their Industrial Building Authority committee for another three year term and he has agreed to do so.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Ms. Kathryn Thomas presented the Financial Report as August 31, 2015.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Gail Thaxton passed out a handout from TCSG showing total credit enrollment for AY 2015. The report compares total enrollment, credit hours, and full time Equivalent (FTE) at all the technical colleges which is a good way to look at how all the colleges are doing. Credit hours and FTE are two of the three main components that drive funding for the colleges. The other component is square footage of leased or owned buildings.

She passed out a fast facts sheet about the college for AY 2015. The sheet gives a brief rundown about students, enrollment, graduates, etc.

Dr. Thaxton presented a PowerPoint presentation on Tracking Student Success at Athens Technical College. There are indicators of student success that we look at which include producing more graduates, higher retention rates, high graduation rates, and fewer withdrawals.

We have drivers that help promote student success and they include Complete College Georgia, Complete College America, Achieving the Dream, performance funding, base funding formulate for TCSG, and a passion for our students.

Total enrollment for the college is down this year along with other technical colleges. Retention rate is up from 2014 which is important because it shows that we are retaining more students. FTE is down from the previous academic year which is partially due to the difficulty of a non-traditional student not being able to take fifteen credit hours each semester. There is a big increase in high school enrollment which is up 55% from last year. Part of this is due to the Move on When Ready initiative. The number of graduates increased in 2014 and 2015 which shows that our retention efforts are helping students to complete their programs of study.

Economic Development Services had a 59% increase in the number of companies trained from 2014 to 2015. There was a 79% increase in the number of trainee contact hours.

Dr. Thaxton asked Dr. Dan Smith to make some comments. One of the things we are doing to help students get finished sooner is eliminating duplication. We are using opportunities for students to demonstrate that they have acquired the skills and knowledge needed in a program. This is being done through a series of demonstration exams. We are recognizing skills and knowledge that students gain in the workforce. There is no need for a student to set through a class that will prepare them for a specific certification if they already have that certification.

We are setting up transfer agreements so students who graduate will be able to transfer in. We have found in our data that we are losing about 40% of our students after they transfer to a four year college. They are transferring after obtaining 20-25 credit hours.

We are working on preparing six different pathways in each program that students can pick from to better work with their schedules and help them graduate on time.

Work is being done to restructure courses and programs. He is meeting with all of the program chairs and assessing each program.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Robinson mentioned to the board that a date needs to be set for the next board meeting. The TCSG Leadership Conference will be taking place during our regular scheduled meeting in October. An email will be sent out to board members with dates to choose from for the next meeting.

The TCSG Leadership Conference is scheduled for October 26th – 28th. Please let Becky Allen know if you plan to attend so she can make hotel reservations and register you for the conference.

BOARD ACTIVITIES

Chair Robinson asked board members to share activities they have been involved in lately or any upcoming activities. Mrs. Barbara Cabaniss thanked the college for their helpful staff. She received a call from a parent who was upset because her daughter was having some problems. Mrs. Cabaniss made some phone calls and the problems were worked out and the daughter is doing very well now.

Mr. Terry Chandler thanked the college and Caterpillar for the internships they offer through the Broad River College and Career Academy in Madison County. Hunter Anderson, who is a senior at Madison County High School and a participant in the internship program at the career academy, is being used as a “poster child” for Lieutenant Governor Casey Cagle’s push for career academies in Georgia.

Chair Robinson commented about the search for the next president at the college. He is serving on the search committee and so far they have received seventy-five applications. They are hoping to have three recommendations to the Commissioner by December.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, Chair Robinson adjourned the meeting with appropriate motion and second at 12:00 p.m.

Dr. Gail Thaxton, Interim President
Rebecca Allen
Executive Assistant
September 22, 2015

Next scheduled Board Meeting: November 10, 2015.

** Denotes action items that require a vote for approval by the local board.*