

**THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF SANDHILLS COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Clement Dining Room
October 7, 2025, 2:30 p.m.**

PRESENT: Trustees Larry Caddell, Chairman; Tim Carpenter, Vice Chairman; Gene Horne; Irish Pickett; Billy Carter; BethAnn Pratte; Stephen Woodward; David McLean; Mike Freidel, Bruce Hurst; Richard Maness; Nicholas Watts, SGA President

ABSENT: Dell Cook, Joe Clendenin

BOARD ATTORNEY: John May, Robbins, May & Rich

STAFF: Dr. Sandy Stewart; Dr. Julie Voigt; Dr. Rebecca Roush; Dr. D.J. Farmer; Dr. Germaine Elkins; Dr. Michelle Bauer; Mary Bridschge; Chad Williams; Lindsey Farmer; Teresa Sheets; Karen Walker; Tess Regan; Jennifer Pearce, Jessica Locklear, Carlos McCormick, Dave Daniels, Taylor Murphy, Jen Fields, Shenika Ward; Stephanie Miller, Taylor McCaskill, Jason Levister

GUESTS: Matt Lamb, The Pilot Newspaper; Tina Hlabse, Ramseur Maultsby LLP

Mr. Caddell called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. He read the statute regarding conflicts of interest to the Trustees and asked the Board if there were any potential conflicts with the agenda items to be discussed. Hearing none, Mr. Caddell proceeded to the next item of business.

Mr. Hurst offered a moment of prayer.

Mr. McLean made a motion to change the name of the Governance Committee Chairman to David McLean. Mr. Horne seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. McLean made a motion to add the special meeting of the Governance Committee held on October 7, 2025, to the Board of Trustees agenda. Mr. Horne seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Carpenter made a motion to add to the Buildings and Grounds Committee report an update to show the selection of a general contractor for the Caddell building, and to include under items for approval the selection of the general contractor. Mr. Horne seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Pratte made a motion to engage in a discussion during the Board of Trustees meeting regarding the inclusion of Trustee email addresses on the Sandhills Community College (SCC) website. Mr. Horne seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Horne made a motion to approve the minutes of August 5, 2025, Board of Trustees meeting.
Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Workforce Innovation and Strategic Plan

Lindsey Farmer, Dean of Workforce Innovation and Strategic Planning, shared that a new Center for Workforce Innovation & Strategic Planning has been created. This process is nine months in the making and there is no other model in the NC Community College system that compares. Using a new and different approach, the model is focused on expanding opportunities for our students and our communities. It is different in that two teams have merged to create the Center for Workforce Innovation and Strategic Planning. The teams include Workplace Development and Corporate Partnerships, Apprenticeships and Workplace Learning under the direction of Jason Levister, and Access to Achievement and Career Placement. The team also incorporates N.C. Edge/Customized Training, led by Director Dr. Carlos McCormick, and the Small Business Center. The entire team is led by Senior Director of Workforce and Corporate Partnerships, Taylor McCaskill. In 2024, eleven forums were held throughout Moore and Hoke Counties, and the outcomes of the forums were truly insightful. SCC leaders answered questions and heard needs and concerns of attendees. The Center for Workforce Innovation & Strategic Planning will address community needs to create opportunities through apprenticeships and partnerships with local businesses and agencies, creating stronger community relationships.

Student Government Report

Mr. Watts presented the Student Government Association (SGA) report. SGA leaders participated in a special 9/11 memorial event. Attendees included students from the SCC Fire Academy, EMS, and BLET programs. SGA held resource fairs to connect students with campus clubs, learning opportunities, and social engagements. Students were gifted booklets to inspire individuals to learn more about the U.S. Constitution and to develop a greater civic responsibility. Preparations are ongoing for the October 22, 2025, Wild West Fall Fest sponsored by the SGA. New student clubs include the American Sign Language, Frisbee, and Finance and Investment Society Clubs. The 2025-2026 goal for students through SGA participation is to empower, engage, and encourage students throughout their journey as an SCC student.

Governance Committee Report

Mr. McLean reported that the Governance Committee met on September 8, 2025. The committee reviewed policies for approval, as presented below by Dr. Voigt:

SCC Policy 4.6 – Student Grievance
Policy 1.14 – Accreditation
Policy 1.1 – Mission Statement
Policy 2.1 – Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination
Policy 2.17 – Commitment to Diversity
Policies 4.14 & 5.17 – Discrimination and Harassment

Mr. McLean made a motion to approve the policies as presented. Mr. Horne seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Items Requiring Approval – Policy Changes (First Reading)
Requested for Approval in December**

Policy 5.16 – Employee Pay

Policy 5.22 – Civility

Policy 10.4 – Campus Crime

Policy 5.3 – Contractual Relationships

Mr. McLean made a motion to approve the first reading of the policy changes. Mr. Horne seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Governance Committee held a special meeting on October 1, 2025. The committee reviewed the agenda for the BOT Retreat. Dr. Stewart presented a document entitled *Board of Trustees Responsibilities and Governance Framework*, to include Trustee expectations of the Board. The floor opened for discussion regarding governance matters and Board of Trustee bylaws, “Article 4, Section 1, Trustee Expectations of the Board.” During this portion of the meeting concerns were raised regarding the recent actions of Trustee Woodward on two separate occasions. The committee believes that both actions were contrary to Article 4, Section 1, of the bylaws. One action was a comment made during a public committee meeting, in front of SCC staff regarding disciplinary action of an SCC employee. The second action involved direct communication via email with a parent regarding another personnel issue. After review, it was determined that action such as this placed the college in a liability situation regarding taking personnel action. Mr. Woodward was present at the committee meeting, and these concerns were addressed directly with him. The meeting was concluded with a reminder that the President is responsible for the overall administration and management of the college and that any concerns a Trustee may have should be addressed to President Stewart and/or Chairman Caddell and not include staff members of Sandhills Community College.

Buildings and Grounds Committee Report

Mr. Carpenter reported that the Buildings and Grounds Committee met on October 6, 2025. Sanford Contractors was chosen to begin work on the Caddell Training Center additions. A total of thirteen companies submitted bids for the work. Sanford Contractors submitted a favorable set of construction documents. The work will be performed within budget. Construction is scheduled to begin in November 2025. Mr. Carpenter made a motion to award the Caddell classroom construction to Sanford Contractors for \$1,695,50.00 Mr. McLean seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Carpenter reported that SCC has officially entered into a contract with LS3P Architects to design the Moore Innovative High School (MIHS). The design contract is a \$25M project. Design fee of \$1,684,900.00, with a 9-to-12-month design period.

Dr. Farmer presented the following updates:

- Storm Impact and Pond Repairs - Sanford Contractors performed repair, building the site back to original specifications, with a more robust spillway. \$51,343.72. Funding for repairs came from the county budget.
- Dempsey Center Bookstore – Renovations have been made to the former bookstore to include dismantling the original infrastructure, adding three offices, new flooring, and paint. The area will become the new Student Life Department. The area will draw more student traffic and will eventually incorporate game-room activities. Expected occupancy is November 2025.

Finance Committee Report

Mr. Horne reported that the Finance Committee met on September 16, 2025. Mr. Horne then requested approval for the following items:

Reclassification of Uncollectable Student Accounts - Mr. Horne made a motion to reclassify uncollectable student debts in the amount of \$66,605.48. Mr. Hunt seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

ENGLISH 025 Course Materials Fee Justification - Mr. Horne made a motion to approve the new English 025 course fee of \$23.00. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Athletics Budget 2025-2026 - Mr. Horne made a motion to approve the Foundation-funded 2025-2026 Athletics Budget of \$293,460.00. Mr. Maness seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Farmer presented the following updates:

Budget Status - The College has not received the FY25 budget and is operating under a continuation budget. There will be an increased budget FY26.

County Budgets - Both Moore and Hoke counties are reported to be in good standing as of August 30, 2025.

County Bonds - As of August 2025, \$118,429.25 was spent towards the Caddell Training Center project.

OSBM Report (Moore Innovative High School/Workforce Trades) - As of October 2025, \$146,555.00 of the \$25M allocated funding has been spent.

The new County budget will be reviewed at the December Board of Trustees meeting.

Personnel Committee Report

Full-Time Faculty Appointments for Board Approval -

Mr. Horne made a motion to approve the hiring of Jessica Cross, Visual Arts Instructor, effective 8.18.25. Ms. Pickett seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Horne made a motion to approve the Holiday schedule for 2026/2027. Mr. Freidel seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Updates: New Hires, Separations, and Transfers -

Personnel Information Updates - Mr. Horne asked that the Board review the New Hires, Separations, and Transfers as submitted. No Board action required.

Discussion ensued regarding the aspects of Performance Contracting. Dr. Farmer responded to Mr. Woodward's request for information, offering specific details of the energy-saving plan to include guaranteed savings for the College.

Planning Committee Report

Dean Farmer presented the revised draft of the 2025 Annual Report of the College Strategic Plan (CSP). Mr. Horne made a motion to approve the 2025 CSP Annual Report as presented. Ms. Pratte seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Educational Programs and Student Affairs Committees

Mr. Carter reported that the Educational and Student Affairs Committee met on September 11, 2025. There were no actionable items.

Dr. Roush submitted the following updates:

Cooperative & Innovative High School -

Dr. Roush presented an update, noting the September 3, 2025, ribbon cutting of the Moore County Innovative (MIHS). State legislature has approved the funding for MIHS. Moore County will receive their allocation for the support of the new school. Bi-weekly meetings continue with Moore County Schools. MIHS Principal Ashley Ciccone reports that interim report cards show that all students are passing. Students are also engaging with programs on the SCC campus to include Culinary and Engineering and will participate in Funfest and Career Day.

Career & College Ready Pathway (Learn Updates) -

Plans are to implement a new Career and College Pathway. This will allow high school students who are below the 2.8 GPA to enroll in pre-curriculum classes. Meeting this week with Moore County Schools leadership to make decisions as to envision what this might look like for spring. Meeting with Hoke County Schools to discuss implementation on the Hoke Campus as well.

Workforce Continuing Education -

Last year the Board approved the move of Ophthalmic Medical Assisting from curriculum into the Workforce Continuing Education (WCE) program. There are currently nine students enrolled who will become certified technicians. SCC's partnership with Carolina Eye Associates continues to benefit from this program.

The State has approved a way for community colleges to offer WCE courses to students from private and homeschool locations. Prior to this approval, public school students only were offered these courses.

Student Services -

Mr. Williams reported that the System Office has published findings for the period 2024-2025 reporting year, which is summer 2024, fall 2024, and spring 2025. SCC shows a 2% increase as compared to last year with 11,049 unduplicated students. The dual enrollment numbers for the same reporting year are at 7.5% growth. Summer 2025 is up 18% over the previous summer. Registration for October classes continues. WCE classes are currently at 20% over last fall. A July 29, 2025, Veteran's compliance review, showed no discrepancies were found. Mr. Williams thanked Dave Daniels, Coordinator of Veteran's Services, for his commitment to excellence.

Student Government Association & Student Life -

Mr. Williams reported that during the Educational Committee meeting, the committee reviewed the list of anticipated Student Life/SGA activities as provided by the Director of Student Life, Ms. Dana Cuellar.

Workforce Innovation & Strategic Planning -

Dean Farmer presented an update regarding SCC's relationship with Pennsylvania Transformer Technology (PTT), located in Hoke County. SCC has entered a 3-year project with them through their customized training program, NC Edge. PTT requested a focus on leadership training with their employees. Through the SCC partnership, a lean manufacturing training course has been developed for its employees. Three apprenticeships are waiting for approval at the state level – electrician, production technologist, and welding.

Ms. Pratte asked that trustees add their email address to the SCC website. Ms. Pratte feels that the addition of contact information will demonstrate that the Board is open to hearing concerns while leaving management to college administration. Ms. Pratte made a motion to add Trustee's SCC email addresses to the SCC website. Mr. Woodward seconded the motion. After discussion discussion, the motion failed by a vote of 2-10.

Foundation Report

Dr. Elkins presented the Foundation Report, calling attention to the material included in the Board packet, the Foundation Report and SCCF Trustees Report Opportunity and Excellence. Giving last fiscal year was just over \$3.1M with 1,127 gifts. The fiscal year to date has now reached over \$1M, from 361 gifts. Dr. Elkins reported total assets of over \$60M, and detailed the

restricted, unrestricted, and scholarship funds. The August 2025 Coca Cola Classic Golf Tournament raised \$52,550.00, which marked the first time breaking \$1M in net proceeds throughout the history of the tournaments. The Health and Fitness Science programs held a 5k Run on September 27, 2025. The Foundation is engaging in new data management software and will convert to the new system within the next 2 months. Jennifer Dail has been working to mail scholarship reports to donors, which includes a profile about students that are being supported through their giving. Jennifer has also been active with NC Cord Group and has been elected as their representative to the NCCC Foundation Board. A scholarship dinner is planned for November 4th at the Carolina Hotel. Currently working on the next annual campaign mailing impact brochure. SCC won “Best of the Pines” in five categories. Everyone is invited to stroll through the Horticultural Gardens to enjoy the many scarecrows that have been fashioned by local garden clubs. The scarecrows will be on display until the end of October. The Hoke Campus is gearing up to host the annual “Trunk or Treat” event, to be held on October 25, 2025, beginning at 3:00 p.m. on the Hoke Campus. Tito Ward, SCC Athletic Director, will attend the December BOT meeting and will introduce new students. The SCC Women’s Volleyball Team is 26-2 overall. Dr. Elkins noted that included in the Board packet were special Foundation reports.

The President’s Report

Sandhills Community College continues to be recognized as a leader in workforce and economic development across North Carolina. At the September 2025 State Board Summit, Dr. Stewart was one of three college presidents selected to speak. At the most recent meeting of the NC Community College President’s Association, Dr. Stewart was also elected to a second term as legislative chair of the association.

At the State Board Summit, Legislative leaders Sen. Brad Overcash and Rep. David Willis reaffirmed the central role of community colleges in the state’s economic strategy, highlighting the new Propel NC business model, which will align course offerings with labor market needs, enhance credit mobility, and integrate with the upcoming Workforce Pell program.

A key highlight from the Summit was the presentation of Propel NC workforce sector data for North Carolina, underscoring the scale of opportunity for Sandhills and our region:

- Healthcare I: 14,633 annual openings; \$63,714 average earnings
- Engineering & Advanced Manufacturing: 2,998 openings; \$59,598 average earnings
- Trades & Transportation: 71,477 openings; \$53,428 average earnings
- Public Safety & First Responders: 7,755 openings; \$54,421 average earnings
- Information Technology: 5,377 openings; \$53,560 average earnings

Sandhills is positioning itself to leverage state funding and expand short-term, stackable credential programs, especially with the development of our Workforce Innovation Building and the Moore Innovative High School. Our alignment with legislative priorities strengthens our case for continued state and local investment.

The 2025 State Board Summit reinforced that North Carolina's community colleges are the backbone of workforce development and economic mobility. For Sandhills Community College, some key takeaways are:

- Stay aligned with Propel NC priorities and continue advancing dual enrollment and CTE pathways.
- Leverage SCC's next capital campaign to expand programs in high-demand sectors.
- Build on AI and cybersecurity innovation to position SCC at the forefront of emerging workforce needs.
- Continue strengthening partnerships with K-12, business, and government to deliver on the promise of "Learn, Engage, Belong."

Community College Trends – Insights from Dr. Laura Ulrich

Dr. Laura Ulrich, Senior Economist with Indeed and formerly with the Richmond Federal Reserve, has conducted extensive research on community colleges across the Southeast. At the State Board Summit, Dr. Ulrich reported that statewide community college enrollment is rising, particularly in health sciences, skilled trades, and dual enrollment. However, challenges remain, including declining international enrollment and shifting student preferences toward shorter-term stackable credentials.

She also noted the growing impact of artificial intelligence on program delivery and workforce training. Sandhills is well-positioned to respond, with ongoing investments in scalable, high-demand programs and a robust framework for stackable credentials.

Campus Events & Engagement Highlights

Sandhills Community College has remained active and visible across campus, the community, and the state, living out our mission of "Learn, Engage, Belong." The academic year launched with a reaffirmation of the One College model, featuring Dr. David Shockley, President of Surry Community College as the Opening Day speaker. This fully integrated approach to instruction and engagement supports student success in both employment and transfer.

Progress in the evolution of the One College model this fall included 40 office moves across seven buildings, new dean and department head hires, more than 200 community engagement events, increased apprenticeships and customized training agreements, SCC Gardens and Lifelong Learning expansions, student life initiatives, and continued improvements in HR/finance.

Recent events have brought the campus and community together. The 9/11 Day of Remembrance drew more than 250 participants for a solemn ceremony at the First Responders Memorial. Constitution Day and Spirit Day engaged students in civic learning and campus pride, while the Pink-Out Volleyball Game raised awareness for breast cancer and filled the stands with pink.

The Walk to End Alzheimer's, hosted on the Pinehurst campus, welcomed over 1,500 participants and surpassed the fundraising goal with more than \$200,000 raised to support North Carolinians affected by the disease. The Flyers 5K Fun run, Scarecrow Stroll, and the children's story time events further strengthened campus and community connections.

Academic support remains a priority, with the Tutoring Center providing 1,948 sessions since Fall 2024 - 1,568 in-person and 380 online - with an average session length of 57 minutes.

Students who used tutoring achieved an 87% pass rate, with highest demand in MAT-171, MAT-152, and ENG-111.

Looking ahead, MoHoCo Manufacturing Week will run October 20-24, highlighting local manufacturing and student engagement opportunities. Arts and culture will be celebrated with the SCC Jazz Band and Taylor Swift tribute performances in BPAC.

Workforce Pell Program

Congress recently expanded Pell Grant eligibility to short-term workforce training programs, with implementation anticipated in summer 2027. Workforce Pell will cover programs between 150 and 600 clock hours in high-demand fields like healthcare, IT, and skilled trades. Eligible programs must meet strict completion and job placement rates, be accredited, and align with state workforce priorities.

Federal rules for Workforce Pell are still under development, and a federal advisory committee will be appointed to write the program's regulations. North Carolina is working with our Congressional delegation to ensure at least one NC Community College president represents our state on the committee.

Sandhills will likely need to redesign some offerings and enhance outcome tracking to meet these new federal standards, positioning the college to further support local workforce needs.

Athletics Update

The Flyers women's volleyball team continues to excel, currently ranked #2 in the country in NJCAA Division III with just two losses on the season. On October 6, the Flyers notched a 3-1 victory at home against Richard Bland College in the annual Pink-Out Game for breast cancer awareness. This marked the program's first-ever win over Richard Bland, who entered the match ranked #15 in NJCAA Division II. The Flyers' success builds on a tradition of athletic excellence and community engagement.

Sandhills athletics remains an important recruitment and retention tool, with more than fifty student-athletes maintaining some of the highest GPAs on campus and contributing to campus life. In August, Joshua "Tito" Ward was appointed Athletic Director, succeeding longtime AD and championship-winning coach Mike Apple. Ward, a Fayetteville native and FSU Hall of Fame inductee, brings deep experience in athletics fundraising, community engagement, and student support. He has served as an assistant coach at Fayetteville State University and as director of student-athlete development, emphasizing character, community, and opportunity in SCC athletics.

Pond Repairs and Infrastructure Update

In September 2025, the upper pond spillway at the Sandhills Pinehurst Campus sustained major damage during Tropical Storm Chantal. Emergency repairs and additional maintenance were completed on both ponds to ensure long-term safety and resilience of the campus environment. These efforts reflect the college's commitment to preserving its natural resources and maintaining a safe and welcoming campus for students and the community.

Trustee Tim Carpenter, Executive Vice President, D.J. Farmer, and Facilities Director, Steven Garner, were commended for their leadership in restoring these vital resources. Their swift action and coordination helped minimize disruption and reinforced the college's proactive approach to facilities management.

SACSCOC Re-Affirmation Team

In late September, Dr. Stewart served on a SACSCOC on-site review team for South Georgia Technical College (SGTC). Which has its main campus in Americus, GA. This was a 10-year review, similar to what Sandhills had in 2023. Serving on the review team was a valuable experience from the perspective of seeing accreditation from the perspective of the accreditor as well as being able to observe in detail the operations and governance of a community college in another state. While this report does not allow a full recap, it is worth making two observations. First, SACSCOC as an accrediting body is evolving to provide robust, yet fair accrediting services for community colleges, especially those more focused on technical programs. Second, SGTC has an advanced model for corporate partnerships from which SCC can learn. Dr. Stewart will look deeper into these topics at the request of the Board of Trustees.

Ms. Pratte requested that the substitutes for committee members be reviewed in the future. Mr. Caddell agreed to the future discussion.

Mr. Carpenter made a motion pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11 to go into closed session to consult with legal council regarding matters subject to attorney-client privileges. Mr. McLean seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION

At 4:30 p.m. on October 7th, during the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees (“the Board”) of Sandhills Community College (“SCC”), held in the Clement Dining Room on the SCC campus, the Board voted to enter Closed Session to discuss personnel matters.

MOTION: Trustee Carpenter moved to enter Closed Session at 4:30 p.m. pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) to discuss personnel matters and to consult with the College's attorney. Trustee McLean seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Upon conclusion of the discussion, Chairman Caddell asked for a motion to return to Open Session. Trustee Freidel made the motion, seconded by Trustee McLean, and the motion carried unanimously.

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 5:07 p.m. No action was taken during Closed Session.



John M. May, Attorney for Sandhills Community College

With no further business, the Board of Trustees meeting was adjourned at 5:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Caddell, Chairman of the Board

Joseph Clendenin, Secretary of the Board