

**Minutes of the  
Gaston College CALLED Board of Trustees  
Teleconference Meeting  
February 24, 2021**

**Members Present on the Teleconference:**

Sheriff Alan Cloninger, Secretary  
Mr. John Dancoff, Chair  
Ms. Jennifer Davis, Vice Chair  
Mr. Steve Hall  
Ms. Iris Hopper  
Ms. Resa Hoyle  
Mr. Steve Huffstetler  
Ms. Janie Peak  
Ms. Suzanne Riley  
Ms. Julie Stroupe  
Mr. Randy Vinson  
Ms. Najira Davis, SGA President

Dr. John Hauser, President

**Members Absent:**

Mr. Tom Keigher  
Mr. Tim Smith  
Ms. Natalie Tindol

**Others Present:**

Ms. Shelly Alman, Mr. Stan Anthony, Mr. Todd Baney, Mr. Rick Brown, Mr. Rob Buckanavage, Ms. Chanel Carter-Harris, Dr. Dewey Dellinger, Ms. Mary Ellen Dillon, Mr. Paul Garafola, Ms. Sandy Hamilton, Mr. Alan Hunter, Ms. Lori Hupp, Ms. Renita Johnson, Ms. Beth Matthews, Ms. Savonne McNeill, Ms. Stephanie Michael-Pickett, Mr. Michael Newton, Ms. Jennifer Phillips, Mr. Jim Powell, Dr. Audrey Sherrill, Mr. Greg Smith, Mr. Russell Smyre, Mr. Philip Steele, Mr. Darren Stewart, Mr. Luke Upchurch, Ms. Brittany Wilson; and Mr. Carl Stewart, College Attorney. The public was invited to listen via livestreaming to the meeting as per Open Meetings Law.

**Chair Dancoff called the teleconference meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.**

As this was a teleconference meeting, Chair Dancoff relayed to the Trustees some helpful information and protocols of which they would need to be aware:

- The public has access to view and hear this meeting via a streaming link available on the meeting agenda, which is posted to [www.gaston.edu](http://www.gaston.edu), under the "About Us" tab, then "Governance." Trustees and special guests will use the Zoom link, which was sent to them.

- Trustees must identify themselves prior to making a motion, commenting on a deliberation, or voting. All votes during the meeting will be conducted by roll call, which the Board Executive Administrative Assistant will conduct.
- Chats, instant messages, texts, or other written communications among members of the Board regarding transaction of public business while the meeting is in order are part of the public record.
- Per Open Meetings Law, all Trustees' microphones will remain un-muted for the entirety of the meeting, as will Executive Council members' and Mr. Stewart's microphones.
- Trustees should please be vigilant regarding excess noise as that would be a distraction to the other meeting attendees. The public is invited to listen to the meeting.

**Chair Dancoff asked Ms. Dillon to conduct the roll call. The following trustees were noted as present:**

Chair John Dancoff, Sheriff Alan Cloninger, Ms. Jennifer Davis, Mr. Steve Hall, Ms. Iris Hopper, Ms. Resa Hoyle, Mr. Steve Huffstetler, Ms. Janie Peak, Ms. Suzanne Riley, Ms. Julie Stroupe, Mr. Randy Vinson, and Ms. Najira Davis.

- **Invocation – Ms. Peak**
- **Ethics Awareness and Conflict of Interest Reminder**

Chair Dancoff reminded Trustees of the ethics requirements of public servants and requested they identify any conflicts of interest or appearance of conflicts of interest present. No conflicts were identified.

#### **A. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**Chair Dancoff asked if there were any changes, additions, or corrections to the agenda. None were identified.**

**Ms. Davis moved to approve the agenda; Mr. Hall seconded the motion. Chair Dancoff asked if there were any objections to the motion. As there were no objections, the motion carried.**

#### **B. WELCOME AND PRESENTATIONS**

Chair Dancoff welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced that the Trustees will hear three architect firms' presentations in their bid to be selected as architect for the Kimbrell Campus Fiber Innovation Center project. The three firms were WHN Architects, ADW Architect, and Boomerang Design, and each company had been invited to provide a 10-15-minute presentation.

##### **WHN Architects Presentation**

Mr. Alan Hunter-Partner-In-Charge, Mr. Paul Garafola-Principal, Ms. Beth Matthews-Project Manager, and Ms. Chanel Carter-Harris-Design Manager with WHN Architects provided a presentation for the Trustees that included a snap-shot of the company's 30-years of experience with public, private, and industrial projects. With this project, Mr. Hunter would

be the main point of contact and work with a group of hand-selected project specialists. He shared a timeline of the project process, detailed the decision-making process involved in the early design phase, and WHN's experience handling similar industrial projects. WHN uses a 3-dimensional software for design as it provides a more realistic view of a project. As the project moves forward, WHN keeps their constituents informed regarding the budget, any construction changes along with the reasons for the changes, and milestones met. During WHN's presentation, Mr. Hunter detailed several of WHN's projects already completed similar to the Fiber Innovation Center project. This firm has worked with State Construction on several projects and is aware of the State's reporting requirements.

### **ADW Architects Presentation**

Providing the presentation for ADW Architects were Mr. Jim Powell-Managing Principal for higher education projects, Mr. Phillip Steele-Senior Principal and Program Manager, and Mr. Michael Newton-Director of Design. ADW has been in Charlotte since 1977, with a staff of 40, which includes 20 licensed architects, and a six-person core design team. ADW has worked with Gaston College on other educational building projects including the Pharr Trade and Industrial building, the 2016 Facilities Master Plan, the Cosmetology School remodel, and the D.F. Beam Center for the Visual Arts building assessment. ADW has also worked with 13 other community colleges in North Carolina. ADW clarified their experience with extrusion lab design spotlighting a Center for Advanced Manufacturing they built at Horry-Georgetown Technical College in South Carolina and their company's familiarity working with the State Construction Office.

### **Boomerang Design**

Boomerang Design's presenters included Mr. Stan Anthony-Principal in Charge, Mr. Rob Buckanavage-Project Manager, and Mr. Rick Brown-Principal. This company has been in business for 40 years. The consulting engineers for this project will be the same group that worked with Gaston College on the Center for Advanced Manufacturing. Boomerang Design has more than 25 years of experience working as a team. They have completed 17+ industrial/workforce training facilities, 219 college/governmental projects, and 21+ projects in Gaston County. Boomerang Design is aware of the strict land use guidelines in Belmont, and they will take that into consideration with their design plans. They provided a proposed project layout design based on considerations listed in the RFQ submitted by the College. Mr. Buckanavage then discussed Boomerang Design's quality control guidelines; he stated communication is a major key.

Chair Dancoff thanked each of the architectural firms for their presentations as they left the meeting. The Trustees asked several questions of each of the firms to clarify points of interest and/or concern.

## **C. FACILITIES**

Chair Dancoff brought forward the first of three Facilities Items.

### **1. Selection of Architect for the Gaston College Fiber Innovation Center**

Gaston County issued a Request for Qualifications on October 21, 2020, for qualified architect services to undertake the design of a new 20,600 square foot extrusion and testing building to blend with the existing campus buildings and be located behind the existing Textile Technology Center on the Kimbrell Campus. The Request for Qualifications was provided to the Trustees for their information about the project specifications.

Gaston County received 14 responses to their request for submittals. A selection committee evaluated the submittals and identified three finalists for consideration. The three finalists were WHN Architects, ADW Architects, and Boomerang Design.

Gaston County has since relinquished construction responsibilities and project funding to the College.

The top three architect finalists presented to the Facilities Committee at the February 24 meeting. Fifteen minutes was allocated to each firm for the presentation.

1. WHN Architects
2. ADW Architects
3. Boomerang Design

The firms focused on the following for their presentation/interview:

- Discuss your specific experience in design of extrusion centers.
- Examples of how your team took an innovative approach in solving a problem.
- Experience your team has working together.
- What is your quality control program?
- Explain cost control measures employed during construction phase.
- Discuss your experience with design cost versus actual cost and total change orders versus base bid.
- Examples of how your team is able to evaluate, control and positively impact the project schedule.
- Be concise, open and honest. Show us how passionate you are about what you do.

Dr. Hauser explained to the Trustees that this meeting had been called so the College could submit their selection of architect for the Fiber Innovation Center project to the State Board for approval at their next meeting and thereby eliminate a project delay. He provided the educational and industrial project purpose, the history of the project approval for funding through the legislature, the previous selection of an architect with the County, the issue surrounding the expenditure of the funding by December 31, 2020, and the transfer of funding back to the College from the County.

The Trustees discussed in depth the various aspects of the three architect firms competing for the project related to type of experience, design, and cost.

**Sheriff Cloninger moved that the Gaston College Board of Trustees approve the appointment of WHN Architects as the architects for the Gaston College Fiber Innovation Center on the Kimbrell Campus; Mr. Huffstetler seconded the motion.**

Chair Dancoff asked if there was any discussion. There were no questions asked; however, Sheriff Cloninger noted that his motion was based on cost per square foot and wanted WHN Architects to know that, and that the firm will be held to that cost per square foot and still maintain the quality of work the College has received in the past from the other competing firms.

**A roll call vote was conducted resulting with 10 yea votes and 1 nay vote. The motion carried.**

## **2. Construction Management At Risk Discussion**

House Bill 1105 Coronavirus Relief Act awarded Gaston County a \$5.3 Million grant for an Incubator and Extrusion Center for advanced fibers for Gaston College. In order to expend the funds by the December 31, 2020, deadline, Gaston County applied the \$5.3 Million to appropriate areas within the guidelines for County expenditures approved by NCOSBM. Gaston County then approved to appropriate \$5.3 Million to Gaston College for the new innovation center through capital funds.

College Administration proposes two options for the Technology Innovation Center construction process:

### **Option #1 Traditional Process**

- Owner must accept low bid for contractor
- 6 months to begin construction
- highly possible project will exceed \$5.3 Million budget

### **Option #2 Construction Manager at Risk Process**

- Owner can advertise for a Construction Manager during the design phase.
- Owner can establish budget for construction and final cost analysis
- The project would not lose time.
- Construction starts earlier under this process.

Under General Statutes, a construction manager provides construction management services for a project throughout the preconstruction and construction phases. The services include preparation and coordination of bid packages, scheduling, cost control, value engineering, evaluation, preconstruction services, and construction administration.

Dr. Hauser provided a list of current North Carolina Community College construction manager at risk projects and other pertinent information about this process. Ms. Shelly Alman and Mr. Russell Smyre have recommended the College pursue this process. WHN Architects have experience with this Construction Manager At Risk process.

**Sheriff Cloninger moved that the Gaston College Board of Trustees approve the use of the Construction Manager At Risk process for construction of the Gaston College Fiber Innovation Center project on the Kimbrell Campus; Mr. Hall seconded the motion.**

Chair Dancoff asked if there was any discussion. A question was asked as to who oversees selection of the Construction Manager At Risk. Ms. Alman explained that a bid for services as Construction Manager At Risk for this project will be posted on the State Construction Board's website. The companies bidding to be State Construction Manager At Risk for the project will be sent to Gaston College. A College committee will be formed to review the candidates for the position. The College will send the State Construction Office their top three company selections for the Construction Manager At Risk; the State Construction Office will negotiate and select the Construction Manager At Risk for the project. No other questions were asked.

**A roll call vote was conducted resulting with 11 yea votes and 0 nay vote. The motion carried.**

### **3. NCCCS Form 3-1 for Gaston College Fiber Innovation Center**

On October 5, 2020, the Board of Trustees approved working with Gaston County on the construction of an Incubator and Extrusion Center for advanced fibers. The preliminary cost estimate provided by ADW Architects projected a total cost of \$7 Million. At that time, the College administration was evaluating options to fund the \$1.7 Million shortfall and has since decided to adjust the building size to fit the funding on hand.

It was later determined that special legislation was required for the county to build a structure on campus. Therefore, Gaston County has relinquished the construction responsibilities to the college along with the project funding. The project will now require State Construction Office approval.

Attached is NCCCS Form 3-1 for the proposed Innovation Center. This project consists of the construction of a new approximately 20,600 square foot pre-engineered building to blend with the existing campus buildings, to be located behind the existing Textile Technology Center on the Kimbrell Campus of Gaston College in Belmont, NC, to house extrusion process and incubator space.

Preliminary specifications based upon initial programming will include:

- Extrusion lab to house:
  - Melt Spinning, 50' x 60' with 30 ft. ceilings.
  - Draw Line 20' x 100' with 24 ft. ceilings.
  - Texturing 50' x 40' with 24 ft. ceilings.
  - Polymer Lab 100' x 30' with 24 ft. ceilings.
  
- Spun Yarn & Filament Processing:
  - Fiber yarn processing for major equipment suppliers: 3 rooms at 50' x 40', 50' x 135', and 30' x 135', all with 24 ft. ceilings.
  - Yarn conditioning & Twisting lab 50' x 20' with 24 ft. ceilings.
  - Quick Spin & Testing Lab 20' x 30' with 24 ft. ceilings.

Each process (above) should have a cubical space attached as open office space and wide doorways throughout for access with material handling equipment.

- Administrative area/reception area including 2 offices and a work room.
- Storage/warehouse area with racks 50' x 100' – climate controlled (conditioned) space, capable of access with material handling equipment.
  - Roll up door into extrusion lab for access.
  - Dock/loading area for shipping 10' x 24'.
- Incubator flex space – layout to be determined – 56' x 20'.
- Building systems including electrical service, electrical closet, emergency power service, building data MDF, telecom/data closet, janitor's closet, auxiliary room (2000 sq. ft.), air handler room, sprinkler riser room, toilets, corridors, and circulation.
- Parking spaces for 12 vehicles.

This item was presented for information only. The Form 3-1 requires the signatures of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the College President. However, a motion was made to approve signature of the document.

**Sheriff Clonger moved to approve signature of the Form 3-1 Capital Improvement Project Approval by Board of Trustees Chair, John Dancoff, and Gaston College President, John Hauser; Ms. Hoyle seconded the motion.**

Chair Dancoff asked if there was any discussion. There was none.

**A roll call vote was conducted resulting with 11 yea votes and 0 nay vote. The motion carried.**

#### **D. AJOURNMENT**

Ms. Janie Peak asked Chair Dancoff if she could address the Board as she had some news. He complied.

Ms. Peak began by relaying that since Dr. Hauser had come to Gaston College, while working with Mr. Chris Peek, CaroMont Regional Medical Center President and CEO, Dr. Hauser had initiated three new medical programs. Approximately three weeks ago, Mr. Peek, came to Ms. Peak, who is a member of the CaroMont Health Foundation, to relay his concerns about staffing for the new hospital buildings and satellite campuses currently underway. He asked her, through the CaroMont Foundation, to come up with a scholarship for students, and he will match it. Ms. Peak relayed that although this is news to the Trustees, she noted that this has been discussed previously with Dr. Hauser and with Dr. Booker.

The scholarship the CaroMont Foundation is initiating will be open to any student in Gaston County who is in one of the medical academies, which includes the Gaston Early College High schools, as well as the students in the new medical programs at East Gaston High School. The CaroMont Foundation came up with \$200,000 in scholarship funding for applying students. Furthermore, it will assure that a high school student who goes through one of the medical programs within the school system and then goes to Gaston College (and they do have the option to go on to Belmont Abbey College) and successfully completes Gaston

College's program that Mr. Peek has guaranteed they will have a job at CaroMont Regional Medical Center. Ms. Peak is excited to share this news as nothing like it has ever occurred before, and it is a great incentive to students. Other scholarships with the CaroMont Foundation will continue as always, but this is exclusive of that.

Ms. Peak continued by relaying that she had spoken to Mr. Upchurch and asked him if the Gaston College Foundation could work with the CaroMont Foundation through Academic Works (which is the College's award system) to help align some of the medically specific scholarships to the students. This will help both Foundations guide students, so they stay on their prescribed pathway to complete their program of study. Mr. Upchurch was glad to help in this endeavor; Ms. Peak added her thanks to him.

Ms. Peak also thanked Dr. Hauser as a visionary for Gaston College and the County. Knowing the 160 proposed new students to come to Gaston College's new medical programs in the next few years will not have financial issues while they finish their education, and they can graduate to a local job waiting for them, is an exciting possibility not seen before.

A question was asked if this will work for Lincoln County students. Ms. Peak stated that if a student attends any of Gaston College's campuses, they qualify. Dr. Hauser stated that this partnership with CaroMont Regional Medical Center might be one of the only in the State. He was delighted with this partnership and its seamless pathway for students to a great education. Chair Dancoff thanked Ms. Peak for that very good news.

Chair Dancoff then thanked Ms. Savonne McNeill and Ms. Brittany Wilson who assisted with the Zoom technological meeting details. With all the lights and screens in the CAM conference room, he equated it to a spaceship! He then thanked the trustees for attending. In closing, Dr. Hauser addressed the Board to tell them that an interview with Mr. Gene Banks, as Gaston College's new Athletic Director, was set to air this evening, and he hoped they would see it.

**Chair Dancoff entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Davis moved; seconded by Mr. Hall. Chair Dancoff asked if there were any objections to the motion. As there were no objections, the motion carried.**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Dancoff adjourned at the meeting at 5:53 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Sheriff Alan Cloninger, Secretary**

**Mr. John Dancoff, Chair**

**Mary Ellen Dillon, Recording Secretary**

**(College Seal)**