



BOARD OF TRUSTEES Special Meeting

Minutes July 10, 2025

A meeting/retreat of the Ocean County College Board of Trustees was called to order at 12:18 p.m. on Thursday, July 10, 2025, by Mr. Jerry Dasti, Chair, in Room 102 of the Conference Center on the College campus and via Webex.

Call to Order

The announcement of public meeting was made by Ms. Connie Bello in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1975. Notice of this meeting was publicized through a resolution adopted at the November 2024 reorganization meeting and distributed as required by law. In addition, a notice was distributed on July 3, 2025, indicating that this meeting would be held via Webex, as provided for by New Jersey Public Law 2020, Chapter 11, approved on March 20, 2020, for public bodies to conduct meetings by electronic means.

Public Meeting
Announcement

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Those in attendance were Mr. Dasti, Mr. Frank Dupignac, Mr. Stephan Leone, Mr. Steven Zabarsky, Mr. Lynn Canfield, Mr. Robert Fall, Ms. DiAnne Gove, Mr. Jack Sahradnik, Commissioner Jennifer Bacchione, Dr. Pamela Monaco, and Ms. Connie Bello. Also in attendance were Dr. Alexa Beshara-Blauth, Executive Director, Institutional Planning, and Mr. Hunter Mantz.

Attendance

Dr. Alexa Beshara-Blauth provided a brief history of the Board's self-assessment process since it was initiated in 2016. This year's assessment opened on April 21, 2025, and closed on May 15, 2025. Ten current trustees participated in this year's assessment. Dr. Beshara-Blauth highlighted the following:

- The New Hampshire Center for Non-Profits recommends that all items with a 65 percent or higher rating from the trustees of "strongly agree" or "agree" be identified as strengths. All but one of the 52 statements received 65 percent or more. Dr. Beshara-Blauth reviewed the statements that received 75 percent of "agree" or "strongly agree" responses from the trustees. The New Hampshire Center defines questions receiving 30 percent or more responses in the "disagree" and "strongly disagree" categories as areas for potential development. There were no questions having met this criteria.
- As Dr. Beshara-Blauth presented the results of the assessment, trustees discussed some of the reasons they responded as they did. It was requested that the trustees take the time to review the information presented by Dr. Spilde at the June 12, 2025, Board meeting. The trustees expressed their commitment to this evaluation process.

Dr. Beshara-Blauth provided an overview of OCC's Five-Year Strategic Plan, which has been in development through a collaborative effort involving the College community since August 2024. Following the presentation, the trustees shared several comments and questions:

- Mr. Leone emphasized the importance of greater trustee involvement in the development of the Strategic Plan.
- Trustees expressed the need to understand the outcomes, both successes and shortcomings, of the current Strategic Plan as context for evaluating the proposed plan.
- Mr. Leone requested that trustees be included in upcoming planning meetings. In response, Dr. Beshara-Blauth explained that while formal committee meetings are limited to committee members, trustees are welcome to participate in the Focus Groups.
- Dr. Beshara-Blauth also noted that multiple communications were sent to trustees inviting participation in the process, though traditionally, trustees have not served as members of the planning committees.
- Commissioner Bacchione shared insights from her experience with K–12 school boards, describing how similar processes work in that context.
- Mr. Fall sought clarification on the distinction between administrative responsibilities and Board oversight, expressing a desire to remain respectful of appropriate roles while understanding how the Board can be meaningfully engaged.
- Dr. Monaco affirmed that trustees will have the opportunity to review the proposed plan in full and provide input on the goals, including voicing any concerns about goals they feel may not be appropriate.
- Mr. Zabarsky requested that the trustees revisit the materials presented by Dr. Spilde during the June 12, 2025, Board retreat, noting that the presentation offered valuable insight into trustee roles and responsibilities. Mrs. Bello will email this information to all trustees following the meeting.

Mr. Dasti requested comments or inquiries from members of the public before moving to a closed session, and none were received.

Public Comments

At 1:02 p.m., a resolution was introduced and unanimously adopted by the trustees to move into a closed session to discuss personnel issues. It was estimated that the closed session would be no longer than sixty minutes, after which the public meeting would resume and adjourn.

Resolution Adopted
for Closed Meeting

At 1:46 p.m., the public meeting resumed. The next meeting of the Board was announced to be Thursday, July 24, 2025, at 3:30 p.m. in the Conference Center, Building 10, and via Webex.

Public Meeting
Resumed

With no further comments from the Board members or the public, the public meeting adjourned at 1:47 p.m.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Stephan R. Leone
Secretary

Jodi Heitmann
Special Assistant, Operations
Office of the President