

**Bristol Community College  
Fall River, Massachusetts**

**Board of Trustees**

**Trustee Affirmative Action and Policy Review Committee Meeting**

**February 3, 2017**

**A. Convening**

The Bristol Community College Trustee Affirmative Action and Policy Review Committee met in D209 of the Hudnall Administration Building at the Fall River Campus. Chair of the Committee Steve Torres called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

Trustees present: Steven Torres, Esq., Chair of the Committee; Jean Medeiros; Anthony Sapienza.

Trustees absent: Joseph Marshall, Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Others present: Steven Kenyon, Vice President for Administration and Finance, to serve as Resource person; and Kathleen Wordell, Recording Secretary.

Committee Chair Steven Torres welcomed all to the meeting.

**B. Consideration of Minutes of Meeting of January 30, 2017**

Upon a Motion made by Trustee Medeiros to accept the Minutes of the January 30, 2017 meeting, as submitted, and seconded by Trustee Sapienza, it was

VOTED to accept the Minutes of the January 30, 2017 meeting as submitted.

**C. Define Project Work with Consultant**

Committee Chair Torres welcomed Mr. Larry Gibson of Gibson Consulting to the meeting. Mr. Gibson had been selected by the Board of Trustees at the January 30 Board Meeting as the consultant for the Trustee Affirmative Action and Policy Review

initially contacted: three responded and one reached out to recommend another. Two consulting firms were interviewed on January 12, 2017.

We want no misunderstanding as to the role of the Committee; we wish to make this very clear. At the Board of Trustees meeting to determine the role of the Committee

initial motion made it very clear – this is not an investigation but a review of policies and procedures. This is not an investigation and is not disciplinary; we are not concerned with who did what but how to correct it. The process will involve the entire campus and be a programmatic approach. The draft outline for the process includes a document review, policy review, policy guidance document review, interviews of staff of the office of primary responsibility, and a data review. It will begin with Human Resources and

Affirmative Action, and include anyone who wishes to speak to Mr. Gibson. It is important that all understand this not an “us” and “them” process but a collaborative effort; communications and thoughts are not to create a divisive process. The Board of Trustees is not the administration of the College; we are the Board of Trustees and we want what is best for the students and the employees of the College. We do not want to see this as a divisive process; we want to build bridges not walls. The Board cannot interfere with the executive order and function of the college's administration; the Board would be overstepping our bounds.

Vice President Tafa Awolaju is to retire which creates a vacancy in a critical department. President Sorega must fill the position in Human Resources on an interim basis until the new President and Administration can fill the position. President Sorega is obligated to fill this position by statute. Trustee Sapienza said that he is completely in support of these ideas – the interim appointment of the Vice President for Human Resources' position cognizant of the new President and her hiring priorities.

Mr. Gibson said that the draft outline is still ongoing. Chair Torres shared some of the outline with others present at the meeting (see attached outline). Mr. Gibson said that in *Part III Section e - Review of historic and pending complaints*, he will be looking at that and Title VII – employer takes a stance to protect staff. He will look at complaints lodged in an objectively and timely fashion. He concurs with Chair Torres – this is not an investigation but a retrospective analysis of past complaints and prescriptive recommendations.

Trustee Sapienza said to Mr. Gibson about *Part II Human Resources Department Review* – he should be aware that if during his review he finds record keeping was not appropriately chronicled or if there was not a good paper trail and complaints were not reported, he would then need to figure out how to access information that may be missing. Mr. Gibson said that he is hoping he does not have to respond to anecdotal accounts.

Chair Torres said you may find that some people may not have brought complaints forward and the reason why they did not come forward. Trustee Sapienza's concern of lack of information or culture of harassment may or may not exist. There are 11,000 students, 400 full-time employees, and 1,000 part-time employees. Mr. Gibson said that will come out in the *Part IV Campus culture review regarding affirmative action* and in interviews and discussions. Mr. Gibson will ask the Vice President if he can help identify those needed to be interviewed. Trustee Sapienza said that the interview process as required or requested needs to have an open door – more interviews rather than fewer. Mr. Gibson said that in previous circumstances in his experience where there have been a number of people in need of help, he has utilized a focus group and focus group setting to interview.

Chair Torres said regarding issue findings, the Committee wants to keep the process as transparent as possible. However, Number 1 – Mr. Gibson's findings on Mr. Gibson's

findings. The Committee will not look at the findings behind the scenes. Number 2 – this is not an investigation but a remedy. It is not disciplinary but staff and department remedies for the new President.

Trustee Medeiros asked what the start date would be for Mr. Gibson. Mr. Gibson said that he will start the latter part of next week. Mr. Gibson asked how he would be introduced to the College and the reason as to why he is here, and also how he would be introduced to the initial key people to talk to in Human Resources. Trustee Sapienza said the notice to the College Community should come from the Committee. Any type of communication regarding this process should come from the Committee to keep people in the loop.

Mr. Gibson said we must maintain the balance of transparency but there will be confidentiality issues. He also said that we need to know the degree of confidentiality in order to determine findings and recommendations for policy and procedures.

Chair Torres said the Committee will send out a memo early next week that includes the protocol/outline updating the College Community and the students as to where we are in the process and solicit responses.

Mr. Gibson said that he was very appreciative of the opportunity given to him and is confident that he can help.

**D. Old Business**

At the Board of Trustees Meeting on January 30, 2017, it was suggested that the name of the Committee be changed. Since other Board members, not on this Committee, may want to review this suggestion further, it was decided that this would be reviewed at the next Board of Trustees Meeting.

**E. New Business**

There was no new business to come before the Committee.

**F. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Committee Chair Torres declared the meeting adjourned. The time was 2:39 p.m.

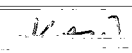
Respectfully submitted,



Steve Torres, Esq., Chairman



Approved



Initials

Trustee Affirmative Action and Policy Review Committee