

WILLIAMSBURG TECHNICAL COLLEGE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AREA COMMISSION
January 12, 2026 12:00 noon
Room #236A

Area Commission

Present:

Johnny M. Gardner, Chairman
Henry M. Poston, Vice-Chairman
S. Christine Green, Secretary-Treasurer
Harmon Cooper, Jr.
S. Lide Howell
Gertrude P. Williams
James S. Stuckey, Jr.

Administration

Present:

Dr. Patty Lee
Missy Coker
Edgar Staggers
Martha Burrows
Paige Brown
Dr. Alexis Dubose
Tyrone Thomas

Absent:

Dr. Darrin Campen

Staff:

Elissa Swicord, Executive Assistant

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Gardner called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m. and presided.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Green made a motion that the minutes of the December 1, 2025 meeting be approved. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Williams and carried unanimously.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Business Affairs: Ms. Coker reported that the college would receive one more disbursement of state funds in the next two months. Most of the county funds will be dispersed from January to March. The large expenditure under PIO is for website design, which will be launched at the end of the month. The library's budget for books has not been spent because they mostly utilize subscriptions. Mr. Thomas shared that Facilities has been busy finishing jobs from the holidays. They are also managing HVAC maintenance and repairs to the LED outdoor signs.

Academic Affairs: Mrs. Brown reported that it was the first day of spring classes. Currently, 18 tenth grade students are starting Early College classes. SACS has approved the Prison Education Program at FCI-Williamsburg. The next step on the process is approval from the Department of Education and a site visit to follow.

Student Affairs: Dr. Dubose shared that the college is close to meeting last year's spring enrollment. However, she is confident we will exceed last year's numbers. Students are still registering and late start classes begin in mid-February. Text and email reminders to register are being sent to students.

Workforce Development: Mr. Staggers shared a handout showing the impact of the CDL program. In the last year, 73 students enrolled, 66 (plus 6 who are still active) completed the course, and 60 were licensed (91% pass rate). According to his chart, the cost of training one student is \$5,000 and the return on investment is tremendous with starting salaries from \$46,000 to \$80,000 per student per year. Mr. Cooper inquired about length of classes. Mr. Staggers informed the group that weekday classes run for four weeks and weekend classes last eight weeks.

The next EMT class will start on February 16.

Public Information: Mrs. Burrows shared that the new website will be live in the next few weeks. As part of the new look, commissioners and the executive team will need new headshots. A photographer will be at the college on Monday, February 2 to take these. Commissioners can schedule an appointment before or after the meeting that day.

Approval of the 2026 Meeting Schedule: Mr. Poston made a motion that the 2026 meeting schedule be approved. Mr. Cooper seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

President’s Report: Dr. Lee shared that she and several WTC employees attended a reception honoring our state legislative delegation on January 6 at McNamee Plantation. She and Ms. Coker will attend the House Ways and Means meeting on January 21 to hear the state technical colleges’ budget requests. The State Board of Economic Advisors (BEA) is projecting a \$734 million dollar surplus in recurring funds, \$1.7 billion in non-recurring funds, and 5.3 million in lottery funds. According to statistics, 49,000 more people were employed in the state in December 2025 compared to December 2024 which made an increase of \$164 million in state tax revenue.

She discussed the CDL program and explained that the program is great for students but the college does not make much profit. In the last three years, 273 drivers have been trained on our campus and the parking lot training area has been affected badly. The college has requested state funds to build an adequate concrete training pad with proper markings and guidelines for training and testing. Additionally, the college is requesting funds to repair the damage of the existing lot. The total request will be around \$475,000.

She also shared that architectural consultants visited the college in December to submit a cost analysis for the expansion project. She emphasized that the college will build according to the funds available and borrowing money is not part of the plan. She also said this does not mean skimping but the goal is to keep the project affordable. She will meet with the JBRC on March 24 and the SFAA on March 31.

Dr. Lee proudly shared that the college’s RN program has achieved a 100% pass rate for the third year in a row. Our program was one of five in the state for this year. No other technical college or public college had a perfect pass rate this year. Several important funding opportunities for allied health programs look promising, including the South Carolina Hospital Association and President Trump’s rural health care initiative.

Upcoming Activities

January 12	Spring Classes Begin
January 19	MLK Holiday – college closed
January 14-15	Pathways 2 Possibilities – Middle School Info Fair, Myrtle Beach
February 12-14	SCTEA – Myrtle Beach
February 16	Late Start Classes Begin
February 27	High School Math Competition
March 14	SAT Testing

SCATCC Report: Ms. Green gave a report from the December meeting:

- The SC Tech Foundation Director gave a report on the Tech to Teacher grant program.
- The lobbyists for the technical colleges were given a 3% raise.
- A decrease in Medicaid funds will likely put strain on state funds.
- President Hardee emphasized the importance of graduation rates.
- Northeastern and Lowcountry are looking for presidents.
- Central, Denmark, and Greenville have new presidents.
- The state technical colleges’ fund balance has increased from \$517 million to \$586 million. WTC has \$17 million in unassigned funds. Dr. Lee explained that these funds are unassigned until projects are approved. She added that most of the fund balances are projects waiting for approval and the state has that money in their coffers.

- President Moore of York could not be at the meeting but shared via email that concerns include funding needs regarding SC WINS, Continuing Education challenges, and Workforce Pell.
- Tommy Branyon, commissioner from Horry Georgetown, shared that their college has an excess of \$200 million in funds due to a penny sales tax.
- Training for new commissioners will be held on April 21. Dr. Lee shared that Williamsburg Tech is in the process of getting three new commissioners.
- The Legislative Luncheon is scheduled for February 25. It will be held inside this year.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for February 2, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioners adjourned the meeting at 12:54 p.m.

Approved:

Johnny M. Gardner, Chairman

Elissa Swicord, Recorder