

MINUTES

**South Arkansas College
Board of Trustees Meeting
ADM 309 – Board Room
September 19, 2023 3:45 p.m.**

Trustees Present: Steve Cousins, Chair; Gary Griffis, Vice Chair; Crystal Yeager, Secretary; José Covas; Wayne Gibson; Melissa Jerry

Trustees Absent: Courtney Kelley; Kerri Brown

SouthArk Staff Present: Dr. Stephanie Tully-Dartez; Jenny Sanders; Dr. Tim Kirk; Ann Southall; Gabe Schroeder; Mary Kate Sumner; Cynthia Reyna; Christy Wilson; Heath Waldrop; Philip Shackelford; Ray Winieki; Stephen Grayson

Others Present: Greg Withrow, SouthArk Foundation

- I. Call to Order – Steve Cousins, Chair – 3:45 p.m.
- II. Recognitions and Awards
 - a. Dr. Stephanie Tully-Dartez recognized the following SouthArk employees for their years of service: Gary Hall and Sam Allen for 5 years at SouthArk, Joey McAdams and Barry Bagwell for 10 years at SouthArk, Genevieve White for 15 years at SouthArk, and Karsten Tidwell for 20 years at SouthArk.
- III. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes
 - a. The minutes for both the regular board meeting on May 16, 2023 and the special called board meeting on June 26, 2023 were presented to the board. **Jerry/ Gibson – Approved.**
- IV. Approval of Consent Agenda
 - a. Steve Cousins asked the board if anyone would like to pull an item from the consent agenda to vote on separately. Steve Cousins requested that Dr. Stephanie Tully-Dartez highlight important aspects of the monitoring report, Viability (Policy #23 ENDS 1) to the board.
 - i. Dr. Tully-Dartez reported an increase in concurrent credit and adult education enrollment for the Fall 2023 semester. She stated that SouthArk has begun reporting the academic success of their athletes, as it is important that the athletes are successful students first. Student success for both distance learning and in person students has increased post-pandemic. Dr. Tully-Dartez also reported that she would like to see an increase in students who attend other institutions, or obtain credentials needed in the workforce, following their education at SouthArk.
 - b. The consent agenda was presented in its entirety to the board for approval. **Gibson/ Griffis – Approved.**
- V. Board Committee Reports
 - a. Real Estate/ Facilities Committee – No report.
 - b. Budget/ Finance Committee – The 2023/24 Physical Plant Fund Budget was presented to the committee on September 13, 2023. The committee recommended that the board approve the budget. – **Approved.**
 - c. Personnel/ Planning Committee – The President’s Goals for 2023/24 were presented to the committee on September 13, 2023. The committee recommended that the board approve the goals. – **Approved.**
 - d. Policy Governance Committee – The revisions to the Board Policy Governance Manual to update Policy #23 and update the college’s name to South Arkansas College were presented to the committee on September 13, 2023. The committee recommended that the board approve the revisions. – **Approved.**
- VI. Chair’s Report

- a. Appointment of Nominating Committee for Officers – Steve Cousins asked Wayne Gibson, Melissa Jerry, and José Covas if they would be willing to be members on the Nominating Committee. All accepted.
- b. Board Process & Performance Monitoring – Steve Cousins opened the floor for any complaints or suggestions from the board regarding their performance. No comments were made.
- c. Board Review & Approve President’s Annual Goals – Steve Cousins declared that the board has already handled this item during the committee reports. No further action was taken.
- d. See Supplemental Packet
 - i. FINRA Grant Approval – This grant provides funding for the Mahony Family Library to offer financial literacy classes to teenagers. The grant awarded \$43,695 toward the initiative. **Covas/ Jerry – Approved.**
 - ii. MentorLinks Grant Approval – This grant pays for professional development and provides a mentor to work with PIs on development of Industrial Lab Technician track. The grant awarded \$30,000 to the initiative. **Covas/ Yeager – Approved.**
 - iii. Succession Plan Approval – A new succession plan due to prolonged absence or incapacitation for the president of the college was presented to the board. Dr. Stephanie Tully-Dartez is currently serving as Interim President; if she is absent, Jenny Sanders, Vice President of Student Affairs will serve as acting president, followed by Dr. Tim Kirk, Associate Vice President for Administration/ CIO, and Ann Southall, Associate Vice President for Finance/ Controller. **Covas/ Gibson – Approved.**

VII. Financial Services Report

- a. The financial report was presented in part to the board. Full financial reports for the months of May, June, July, and August will be presented to the board for approval in November. During preparation for the September board meeting, there were some concerns over the reports that SouthArk’s software was pulling. SouthArk’s general ledger accounts have been verified to be accurate, and SouthArk staff are working to resolve the reporting concerns.
- b. Revenue from tuition met the budgeted amount for the Fall 2023 semester.
- c. Dr. Stephanie Tully-Dartez requested that board members attend the to be scheduled October workshop where financial training will be provided.
- d. The El Dorado Conference Center reported a decent 3rd quarter, with Dr. Stephanie Tully-Dartez stating that she expects a good 4th quarter.

VIII. President’s Report

- a. Administrative Reports
 - i. Cynthia Reyna, Executive Director of the SouthArk Foundation, introduced Greg Withrow, President of the SouthArk Foundation, and allowed him to speak about the SouthArk Outdoor EXPO which was held on September 9, 2023.
 - 1. The event raised \$92,000 for the SouthArk Foundation which will go to support scholarships for students, as well as 1,200 pounds of food donations to help local food pantries.
 - 2. The event had 127 participants in the Leslie Darden Hero 5k Run/ Walk, over 40 sponsors, and over 300 entries for the Student Art Contest.
 - 3. There was a total of over 6,000 attendees, up from roughly 4,000 attendees in 2022, and each attendee spent an average of 2 hours at the EXPO.
- b. President’s Report

- i. The unduplicated headcount of students for the Fall 2023 semester is 1,202, demonstrating a recovery to pre-pandemic enrollment.
- ii. The Catalyst Program began this year and has already shown results beyond what SouthArk staff anticipated. The objective of the program is to help support the local chemical oil and gas industry by providing students with both employability and technical skills, in turn helping the students to find a career.
 1. Out of the first cohort of 35, 24 advanced into the second phase to learn technical skills.
 2. Students have reported that the program helped change their mindset from looking for a job to looking for a career.
 3. Dr. Stephanie Tully-Dartez commended the support of the Arkansas Office of Skills Development and local Industry Partners who assist SouthArk with the program.

IX. Announcements

- a. Dr. Stephanie Tully-Dartez introduced Stephen Grayson, SouthArk's new program director for the newly launched forestry program. She also announced to the board that Philip Shackelford, Director of the Mahony Family Library, would be resigning later in September.

X. Adjournment – Yeager/ Jerry – 4:48 p.m.