

June 5, 2014

COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE
REPORT NO. 6

ALL MEMBERS PRESENT.
CHAIR MILLS PRESENT AS EX-OFFICIO MEMBER.

1. RESOLVED, the following items are hereby received and filed:
- a. COMM. 10E-12 (2014)
COMPTROLLER: “ECC Financial Statements and Management Letter for Fiscal Year Ending Aug 31, 2013”
(6-0)

b. COMM. 11M-1 (2014)
ERIE COMMUNITY COLLEGE: “2014-2015 ECC Budget”
(6-0)
2. COMM. 10E-14 (2014)
COUNTY EXECUTIVE
RESOLVED, the Erie County Legislature hereby appoints Corrine Nelson (120 Marian Drive, Tonawanda, NY 14150) to the Erie County Youth Services Board for a term ending December 31, 2016.
(5-0, Chair Mills not present for vote)
3. COMM. 11E-18
COUNTY EXECUTIVE
WHEREAS, Erie Community College has continuously managed itself in a fiscally responsible manner and has maintained strong student enrollment levels; and
- AS AMENDED**

WHEREAS, Erie Community College's student population is comprised of almost 92 percent of Erie County residents and is the largest SUNY College in Erie County in terms of residents served; and

WHEREAS, Fifty-one percent of ECC's budget revenue is derived from student tuition and fees; and

WHEREAS, Erie County contributes approximately 15.5% of ECC's annual budget in its capacity as ECC's local sponsor; and

WHEREAS, State Education Law provides that four fifteenths (26.7%), or so much as may be necessary, of annual operating costs should derive from ECC's sponsor and as such Erie County's contribution is less than this percentage; and

WHEREAS, such local sponsor shortfall is over \$12.6 million for the 2014-2015 ECC budget; and

WHEREAS, New York State contributes approximately 28.2% of ECC's annual budget; and

WHEREAS, State Education Law provides that basic state financial assistance shall be the lowest of 40% of ECC's net operating budget or enrollment multiplied by the state reimbursement rate plus rental aid and using 40% of the annual operating budget as a measure New York State's contribution is less than this percentage; and

WHEREAS, such state funding shortfall is \$13.3 million for the 2014-2015 ECC budget; and

WHEREAS, the College has historically exceeded the 33.3% cap on student tuition as a percent of net operating costs which was in an amount of approximately \$20 million; and

WHEREAS, the historical practice of exceeding one-third cap on student tuition has been due in large part to the failure of both Erie County and the State of New York to fulfill their required funding; and Whereas: State Education Law provides that so long as ECC's sponsor (Erie County) "maintains effort" by not decreasing its annual contribution, the College may continue to exceed the one-third cap on student tuition cited above; and

WHEREAS, if Erie County does not fulfill its "maintenance of effort" obligations under State Education Law, the College will be faced with catastrophic budget circumstances which would potentially include closing one, or more, of its facilities all to the detriment of thousands of students and taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, ECC's 2014-15 budget process included a review of operations and services provided to ensure that the Erie County Executive and Erie County Legislature are presented with a balanced budget which is austere and reasonable given current economic realities; and

WHEREAS, ECC's budget may not address all of the needs necessary to fully service the approximately 20,000 unduplicated students who currently attend ECC; and

WHEREAS, this budget includes no increases for any collective bargaining agreements for ECC employees which may be negotiated by the County and/or ECC in the future; and

WHEREAS, the amount of \$17,429,317 reflected in the 2014-15 budget for sponsor contribution in no way waives ECC's rights for additional funding should pursuit of such funding become necessary; and

WHEREAS, despite difficult economic times locally, ECC has increased its enrollment by almost 37% in the past fifteen years; and

WHEREAS, even with significantly increased enrollment, ECC has decreased full-time staffing by 153 positions or in excess of 18% in the past 21 years; and

WHEREAS, the College has operated as one of the most efficient public education organizations in New York State; and

WHEREAS, proof of this efficiency is objectively demonstrated by relative rankings released by the State University of New York (SUNY) which places ECC as the fifth most cost efficient community college in the state of the 30 community colleges in terms of the amount expended to educate its students; and

WHEREAS, based upon State averages, this efficiency translates into an annual savings to the taxpayers of Erie County of almost \$17 million; and

WHEREAS, Erie Community College is the most cost effective administratively of the 30 community colleges in the SUNY system; and

WHEREAS, these efficiencies have allowed ECC to provide significant educational opportunities to thousands of individuals in Erie County and Western New York at reasonable cost compared to other public colleges and universities in New York State; and

WHEREAS, ECC's student population is derived mainly from Erie County residents as the percentage attending ECC is the second highest percentage of any community college in New York State; and

WHEREAS, studies demonstrate a community college student is much more likely to remain in the local region, thereby being employed, raising families, paying taxes, and contributing in a positive economic fashion to the vitality of the region,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that passage and submission of this budget by the Trustees shall not constitute a waiver of ECC's rights to pursue additional funding from Erie County should that become necessary and that the College reserves all rights in this regard; and

BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, this budget submission is expressly conditioned that Erie County, as ECC's statutory sponsor, shall "maintain its effort" at the minimum amount of \$17,429,317; and

BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, ECC's undesignated fund balance shall not be expended, earmarked, utilized or otherwise designated without the approval of the Board of Trustees consistent with autonomy and fiscal standards identified through Middle States accreditation; and

BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the ECC Board of Trustees and College President seek to work with the Erie County Executive and the Erie County Legislature to identify opportunities for additional funding for "one shot" initiatives; and

BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the ECC Board of Trustees and College President seek to work with Erie County and New York State officials to identify opportunities to better utilize ECC as the recognized leader in Workforce Development; and

BE IT FINALLY

RESOLVED, that upon approval by the ECC Board of Trustees, a copy of this Resolution, along with ECC's 2014-2015 budget, be forwarded to the Erie County Executive.
(5-0, Chair Mills not present for vote)

KEVIN R. HARDWICK
CHAIR