

**NEW JERSEY COUNCIL OF COUNTY COLLEGES  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2025 6:00 PM  
MIDDLESEX COLLEGE, 2600 WOODBRIDGE AVE., EDISON, NJ**

**MINUTES**

**I. WELCOME**

**1. Meeting was Called to Order at 6:00 p.m. - Reading of Public Announcement**

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey, advance notice of this Public Meeting of the Council was provided on November 21, 2024 by posting written notice of this meeting on the Council website and by transmitting the meeting notice to The Trenton Times, The Trentonian, and to the Secretary of State.

**ATTENDEES:**

<u>College</u>	<u>President</u>	<u>Board Chair</u>	<u>Board Alternate/ Other Trustees</u>
Atlantic Cape	Barbara Gaba		
Bergen	Eric Friedman		Sheetal Ranjan
Brookdale			Tracey Abby-White
Camden	Lovell Pugh Bassett		Jessica Purnell
Essex	Augustine Boakye		
Hudson	Christopher Reber		
Mercer	Deborah Preston		Scarlett Rajski
Middlesex	Mark McCormick		Chrissy Buteas
Morris	Anthony Iacono	Paul Licitra	
Ocean	Pamela Monaco		
Passaic	Steve Rose		
Raritan			Michael Goldberg
Rowan at Burlington	David Spang		
Rowan at South Jersey			
Salem	Michael Gorman		Dot Hall
Sussex			
Union			Brian Campbell
Warren	Marianne VanDeursen (Acting)		

There were 21 voting members of the Council who were present during the business meeting, constituting a majority and quorum.

**Council Staff:** Aaron Fichtner, Catherine Starghill, Megan Swieconek, Linda Scherr, Maria Heidkamp, Jacob Farbman, Jessica Britt and Mikal Jenkins.

**Special Guests:** Jamie Segal (UCNJ), Maris Lown (UCNJ); and Joanie Coffaro (Middlesex).

**2. Introduction and Announcements- Chair Sheetal Ranjan**

- ACCT Congress Review
- National Legislative Summit February 8-11, 2026 – Washington, DC

**II. Election**

**3. ACTION: Election of Officers**

By motion of Eric Friedman, and seconded by Lovell Pugh Bassett the Council elected the following slate of officers to serve 2025-2026:

**Trustees:** Jessica Purnell (Camden)- Chair; Barbara Horl (Brookdale)- Vice Chair; Dot Hall (Salem) Trustee at Large; Sheetal Ranjan (Bergen) Trustee at Large

**Presidents:** Mark McCormick (Middlesex)- Secretary; David Stout (Brookdale)-Treasurer; Margaret McMenamin (UCNJ)- President t Large

**III. Business**

**4. ACTION: Adoption of Organizational Resolutions Including Council Meeting Dates, Authorized Depositories, and Appointment of Legal Counsel and Auditor**

By motion of Tony Iacono and seconded by Jessica Purnell, the Council adopted the Organizational Resolutions.

- **Legal Services Request for Proposal**

The Council membership agreed to postpone the appointment of Legal Counsel, until the Executive Committee had time to review the proposals received from the RFP recently posted. A recommendation will be brought back for consideration at the February 23, 2026 Council meeting.

**5. Approval of Minutes**

By motion of Jessica Purnell, and seconded by Brian Campbell, the minutes of the of September 8, 2025 Executive Committee meeting; September 15, 2025 Council meeting; and October 13, 2025 Executive Committee meeting were approved without amendment.

**6. Acceptance of Council Financial Statements**

By motion of Chris Reber, and seconded by Tracey Abbey-White, the Council accepted the financial statements for September and October 2025.

## 7. Report on Temporary Investments

The Council currently keeps its cash reserves in an account with Spencer Savings Bank. The Council is also enrolled in the NJ Cash Management Fund. As of October 31, 2025, the Council's NJ Cash Management Fund holdings are \$2,219,117.

## IV. Strategy

### 8. State Policy Agenda and Budget Request

- **Gubernatorial Election**

Fichtner and Heidkamp had previously briefed the Governor-Elect's campaign on the Council priorities. Right now the top priority is to get a seat on her transition team. Heidkamp reviewed the new administration cabinet members that have been named so far. Lt. Governor-elect Dale Caldwell will chair the transition team. Heidkamp also reviewed the new make-up of the New Jersey Assembly since the election. No leadership changes are expected at this time.

- **Future Ready States Coalition**

Heidkamp reviewed the current list of Coalition Partners who have signed on to NJ's Future Ready States Initiative. It is an impressive list, that will continue to grow. Next steps are a signing ceremony and launch in January.

- **Lame Duck Strategy Opportunity Agenda Bill Package Update**

Heidkamp reviewed the current status of the Opportunity Agenda bills with the Council.

- **Statewide Economic Impact Study**

Fichtner reported that the draft from Lightcast should be available late December/early January for review.

- **Discussion: FY2027 State Budget Request**

Fichtner opened the floor to the Council members to weigh in on the ask in the upcoming state budget request. The central issue needs to be the health insurance increases. Other suggestions included setting a funding base through legislation for Community College Operating Aid. The Council members all agreed that we needed to go bold in our ask. The Collaboration/Operations Committee will work to develop the draft budget request and it will be transmitted to the Council for consideration through an electronic vote in December/January.

### 9. Council Convenings

- November 18 & 20, 2025 – Trustee Leadership Academy (Virtual)
- April 24, 2026 – Student Leadership Summit (Brookdale Community College)
- June 9-11, 2026 – Pathways and Community College Opportunity Summits (Hard Rock, Atlantic City)

**Meeting Adjourned.**