

## Auxiliary Enterprises Corporation Board of Directors Meeting October 17, 2017

### Board Members

*Michelle J. Anderson*

Joseph Giovannelli

*Francis Fitzgerald*

Alan Gilbert

Daniel Tinkelman

*Christopher Richards*

Arlene Lichtherman

**Harriet Rosenblum**

**Nissim Said**

**Elizabeth Koennicke**

Mendy Eidelman

*Abraham Minkowitz*

### Staff

Beatrice Gilling-Raynor

Yasmin Ali

Andrew Lanza

Those listed in italics were not in attendance.

Those listed in bold attended remotely.

The meeting was called to order at 2:15 PM

The meeting began with Joe recapping the transition to Akademos, Brooklyn College's virtual bookstore. He explained that the revenue from Barnes and Noble, our previous brick and mortar bookstore, was steadily declining. He further delved into the "request for proposal" (RFP) process that CUNY underwent to identify a new virtual book vendor, and that Brooklyn College decided to opt in. He said that Barnes and Noble was also part of the RFP for a virtual bookstore, but were not selected. Barnes and Noble ceased operations in June 2017, with Akademos beginning officially for the Summer II semester. Joe continued to describe the Akademos "adoption" process in brief, in which a professor submits their list of required books for perusal by students in the Akademos portal. He spoke about the fact that federal law mandates faculty to list books for students, but not for students to purchase in any particular marketplace (like Akademos). Alan Gilbert added that the University will be allocating funds such as the signing bonus and commission payments from Akademos, but a timeline and exact amounts were not provided to the corporation. Alan remarked that funds would be distributed by CUNY directly.

The students present described a town hall meeting in which students remarked how it would be more convenient to have a brick and mortar bookstore on campus. They also spoke about concerns from students who have had their book orders cancelled by Akademos, which were problematic for the students affected. Yasmin Ali remarked that 34% of books listed by faculty on the Akademos portal were not purchased by students, a figure listed in the Akademos launch recap meeting that occurred on October 10, 2017.

The discussion then turned to branded items that were once sold in the Barnes and Noble bookstore. Arlene Lichterman commented that there was some pushback from College alumni about the lack of a physical location to purchase branded items like sweatshirts, hats, and mugs. Joe told her and the group

about the CUNY online store, currently the only place to buy branded merchandise. Alan. began discussing the possibility of kiosks on campus that only sell said merchandise.

Beatrice Gilling-Raynor discussed the BCAEC Audit and Finance Committee meeting that occurred on September 14, 2017. She said that the committee reviewed and approved the draft financial statements of the corporation. She remarked that the Corporation had a “clean audit”, and an unqualified opinion was issued. Alan discussed the statement of net position on page 9 of the financial statement. He discussed how the Corporation covered the bill for Hurricane Sandy roof repairs expecting to be reimbursed by FEMA through the College. He explained that we may never be fully reimbursed for this emergency use of BCAEC funds.

Dan Tinkelman asked what equipment was purchased by the Corporation, to which Beatrice Gilling-Raynor replied “computer equipment” Alan remarked that the ultimate goal is for the Corporation’s funds to be donated to the College and for the Corporation to not hold any fixed assets.

Joe discussed the fact that the Barclay’s Center commencement ceremony from 2017 was fully funded by the Corporation, and how students were not charged for the use of the venue.

Alan then went through the 2018 budget line by line.

Joe began a discussion about Metropolitan food services and the previous RFP to select a food service vendor on campus. The fact that there are many outside food options surrounding the campus makes Brooklyn College unattractive to potential on-campus food vendors. Arlene remarked that the vending machines on campus are too expensive, to which Joe replied that vending is where Metropolitan makes the lion’s share of their sales, and that their prices were competitive. The issue of halal food in the cafeteria came up to which Joe replied he would be following up.

Alan continued through the budget, touching on Pouring Rights, Sustainability, and Parking Fees. He and Joe began discussing external rentals, including film productions, which Joe described as “found money.” Alan remarked how all shoots go through an intense vetting process by the senior administration of the College.

Alan then switched to the Expenses portion of the budget, and spoke about how the Corporation pays for a portion of the salary of the resident legal team at CUNY Office of General Counsel. He described other miscellaneous expenses paid for by the Corporation, including the President’s annual holiday party and Staff Appreciation Day. He also briefly touched upon the Marese Ladson scholarship for students and its purpose.

Joe went into detail about residence life and explained the current 10-year referral agreement that we have with the Residence Hall. He explained that the Hall was not owned or operated by the College, and how the College had originally paid for residence counselors to live in the Hall. He explained that while we no longer pay for residence counselors, we still fund the 24/7 security personnel for the Hall.

Alan returned to the Barclay’s Center expense, and explained that while the Corporation covered this cost in full, the College experienced savings on the tax-levy budget due to the lack of necessary overtime labor to host an on-site commencement ceremony.

Dan suggested that there be an orientation for board members to explain their role within the Corporation and the role of the Corporation in general. He asked how it is decided to spend Corporation money on certain initiatives as opposed to others. Joe replied that value judgements are made by the Corporation during meetings of the Board of Directors, or if in an emergency situation, the Executive Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 PM.