

**Minutes**  
**SUNY Downstate Medical Center**  
**Council Meeting**  
**President's Board Room**  
**September 9, 2015**

**Council Members Present**

Dr. Philip Abramowitz  
Michael Connors, Esq.  
Johnson Ho  
Kimberly Laughton  
Dr. Garry Sklar  
Dr. Constance Shames  
Elgin Watkins (by phone)  
Dr. Mirian Zavala

**Downstate Administration in Attendance**

Dr. John F. Williams  
Astra Bain-Dowell  
Melanie Gehen  
Dorothy Fyfe  
Anthony Jones  
Patricia Winston  
Michael French  
Ellen Watson  
Michael Harrell

Minutes from the May 13, 2015 meeting were accepted and approved.

The meeting began with an announcement from Ellen Watson, assistant vice president for institutional advancement, that Dr. Monica Sweeney had formally resigned as chair of SUNY Council to accept a position in Downstate's School of Public Health as vice dean of global engagement and professor and chair of SPH's Department of Health Policy and Management. Ms. Watson also introduced a new student member of the Council, Kimberly Laughton, who is enrolled in the Physician Assistant Program.

***President's Report:***

President John F. Williams briefed the Council on a meeting of the Board of Trustees held at Downstate in August. The trustees were briefed on the campus, its contributions, and its needs, especially in the area of capital funding.

Dr. Williams also noted several new campus appointments. Dr. Allen Lewis has been hired as the new dean for the College of Health Related Professions and will begin January 1. William Walsh has been brought on board as senior vice president for hospital affairs and managing

director of University Hospital. A search for a senior vice president for research is in progress; a national recruitment effort has yielded excellent candidates.

Dr. Williams reminded Council that an accreditation site visit by the Middle States Commission for Higher Education will be held in 2016. Preparations for the site visit are ongoing.

Downstate continues to work closely with HHC on developing new programs. For example, University Hospital of Brooklyn will be working with Kings County Hospital Center to jointly recruit a chair of neurosurgery. Additional partnerships with Coney Island and Woodhull are also under consideration, as we move towards creating an integrated system.

### ***Hospital Report***

Tony Jones, interim UHB chief executive officer, noted that University Hospital was recently honored with a visit from Dr. Howard Zucker, Commissioner of Health for New York State, and Paul Francis, Deputy Secretary for Health and Human Services. The meeting focused on SUNY and the Brooklyn community, with a strong information exchange.

Mr. Jones updated Council on a number of high-impact service lines in University Hospital, including Neurosurgery, the Cancer Program, Orthopedics, Digestive Diseases, and Cardiovascular Services. These align with UHB's market focus, which includes the elements of becoming the partner of choice for physicians and affiliates, the employer of choice, and the hospital of choice for patients. Market focus also includes setting a course for physicians and pursuing population health management initiatives. Recent hires include a new assistant vice president for hospital finance, a new assistant vice president of ambulatory care, and key positions in the clinical practice plan and perioperative service. Interviews are in process for a new assistant vice president of managed care.

Mr. Jones showed admissions and discharge statistics that indicate that Downstate's volume is beginning to stabilize. Trends show that volume has begun to grow: Ob/Gyn deliveries are up; cardiac catheterizations are up; cardiovascular services are up. Length of stay has decreased, indicating an increase in productivity.

Facilities priorities include roughly 20 items, including the operating room construction and renovation of the PICU. In IT, the current priority is the October 1 deadline for conversion to ICD 10 (a federal mandate that will increase the number of billing codes from roughly 17,000 to 175,000). The conversion required a complete review of systems and restructuring of computers. Another IT priority, Meaningful Use tracking for electronic medical record implementation, appears on course.

### ***Academic Report***

Dr. Carlos Pato has been reviewing strengths in the research programs, with the goal of defining areas where Downstate can excel. He has also been examining potential collaborations with the School of Public Health and other colleges, looking at ways to coordinate studies on population health and clinical translation. Dr. Pato and his wife, Dr. Michele Pato, recently received major awards from the NIH focusing on genomic health for their research on understanding the genomics of health risk. Through a database of approximately 30,000 individuals, questions

under examination include, “What promotes health and resistance to illness? What are the genomics of serious illness in a variety of populations, especially those who are underserved?”

Dr. Pato also noted that he has partnered closely with Dr. Pamela Sass, who had been serving as interim dean, and is now vice dean for academic affairs and chair of the Department of Family Medicine. Dr. Miriam Vincent, the former chair of Family Medicine, has been appointed vice president for innovation.

### ***ACT Conference***

Council was reminded of the ACT Conference, which draws Council members from across 64 SUNY campuses. In addition to presentations by Board Chairman Call McCall and Chancellor Nancy Zimpher, sessions will focus on philanthropy and governance.

There being no further business, the meeting was concluded.