

**Minutes**  
**December Board of Director's Meeting**  
December 13th, 2021  
Via WebEx Call

<b>Attendees:</b>	Steve Deutsch	Brian Obach
	Melinda Cirillo	Rachel Rigolino
	Michele Halstead	Fred Destefano
	Stephanie Blaisdell	Logan Bross
	Corinna Caracci	Jordan Hennix
	Jeff Gant	Michael Cavalieri
	Kevin Saunders	

**Others Present:**

**Recording Secretary:** Jacqueline Pascar

**Call to order:** 1:00 pm

**Unanimous approval of agenda and November 4, 2021 minutes.**

**E.D. Report**

**Steve** highlighted the employee recognition party stating: "It went even better than we could have hoped for. I saw a lot of really big smiles on people's faces and a lot of people came up to myself and Mel afterwards and thanked us quite sincerely for thinking of them and going the extra mile to let them know that they were appreciated." **Steve** noted that CAS would be moving away from the past tradition of having an employee holiday party before winter shutdown and instead focus on employee recognition, whether that meant one or two parties per year.

**Sodexo General Manager: Michael Cavalieri**

**Steve** introduced **Michael**, the new General Manager of Dining Services, to the board and asked if he could give a brief overview of operations. Joining the campus about a month prior, **Michael** welcomed board members and the campus community to share any feedback for dining to provide the best service possible. **Michael** stated that dining continued to face challenges ranging from the supply chain to the labor pool. He said, "We're going to be running some job fairs and pushing out flyers in the area and email blasts to try and recruit as many people as we can so that we can operate more efficiently next semester." Dining planned to either shift or expand operating hours at some of the locations for the spring semester, including Element 93, Peregrine, Hissho Sushi and World of Wings. **Steve** asked if the operational changes were a result from a change in the labor pool or if Sodexo would be using employees in a more efficient way. **Michael** responded that he was trying to use workers a little more efficiently and explained, "We have picked up some new hires in recent weeks, which is great. The goal is to obviously pickup more in the month of January, but we can look at things strategically and stretch out our business operations accordingly." **Steve** commended **Michael's** operational plan, stating that "...one of the repeating comments that we had this year was about accessibility to all of the various locations." **Michael** agreed and shared that expanding dining options would also better support dietary needs on campus.

Another goal was to bring back registers at dining locations to increase sales for those who preferred to grab-and-go food rather than pre-order through GrubHub. **Steve** asked if there were any questions from

the board. There were none. **Steve** thanked **Michael**, stating that his impact on dining services since his arrival had been much appreciated.

### **Financial Overview**

**Steve** updated the board on the current financial standings. The spreadsheet shared on screen, displayed the various operations, operating revenues and expenses, and non-operating income. **Steve** noted at the bottom that there was a loss of \$373,000 on operations alone this semester. The bookstore and vending were in the black while everything else, most notably dining services, was “heavily in the red”. However, the portfolio was continuing to perform. The total non-operating income exceeded the operating loss, resulting in a profit of \$75,000. **Steve** commented that it was “...great news, but it's also a little scary because if the market tanks in February, we're behind the eight ball.”

In terms of moving forward into the spring semester, **Steve** stated that CAS would stay conservative. The few CAS positions that were planned to be filled this year would wait until Fall 2022. The corporation would remain mindful of all expenditures. Direct requests for supportive academic or student related programs would be put on hold. **Steve** stated, “The mind frame is to keep operating as though we're in the red, although in reality we are currently in the black.”

### **Program Funding Policy**

After some programming funds were questionably spent, **Melinda** worked directly with **Michele** and Julie Majak to establish a new policy requiring prior approval from signatories before expenses were paid for. **Steve** explained, “One of the great things about CAS money is that it spends better than state money... and we don't want to take away that flexibility, but if you don't have any checks and balances, it can tend towards abuse.” The policy would go into effect beginning January 1, 2022. **Michele** asked the board to let her know if they experienced any pushback from the new policy. With the small set of funds that she administered, **Michele** shared that she planned to give pre-approval on items by asking project initiators to provide an outline of expenditures at the beginning of the year. However, signatories were not required to obtain an outline at the beginning of each year and could instead choose to approve item by item before the funds were spent.

**Michele** stated that she had initiated the request for a program funding policy, explaining that “I had an expenditure come to me, with a very small pot of money, folks decided that it was in their best interest to have an event at someone's home, catered, with no students in attendance.” Though it may have been to discuss the annual plans, **Michele** commented “I just thought it was not well thought of especially in this budget climate.” The new policy would help to enforce that programming funds were spent to ultimately benefit students.

**Steve** noted that the policy also addressed the common practice of spending the funds, derived from student dollars, for off-campus catering. Though catering was technically allowed on campus from outside vendors, **Steve** stated “If you're going to have a campus event, you should use campus dining. If you absolutely need to have that catering, that's great, but you really shouldn't be turning to CAS and asking for money to do that.” **Logan** shared that the issue of using off-campus catering recently came up with RHSA's fall banquet. **Logan** asked whether off-campus catering would be approved if dietary options were not available through the campus offerings. **Steve** reiterated that the goal was to keep the system flexible and stated that, “we don't want to make this absolutely a hard and fast rule, but it's what our preference is and that's why the pre-approval process is so important.” **Steve** asked for groups to see if Sodexo can accommodate any needs first, and if Sodexo is unable to meet the needs, then the group or person should speak with CAS to discuss other options. **Michael** noted that “There are little

things that we should not be able to do. Yes, there is some parameter that we're stuck in in the corporate world, but there are ways around a lot of different things...".

**Brian** highlighted how the flexibility of CAS funding "builds a lot of goodwill for CAS" and suggested considering how big the problem had been and whether the issues could be handled on an ad-hoc basis if there were relatively few cases. **Steve** responded that he believed the policy was the "least restrictive" way to better manage program funding. **Brian** asked in what form were those awarded programming funds given guidelines about these matters. **Steve** stated that there were not good guidelines before, and the policy presented before the board was new.

**Michele** noted, "When I got this catering request, I really was this close to kicking it back... but since we didn't have a policy in place, I felt like I didn't have the ability to do that without having a previous conversation." **Brian** agreed that expenditures like the one **Michele** had dealt with should not be allowed and commented, "I just don't want us to have too strong of a policy for what was relatively a rare and minor problem, and then sort of squander the goodwill that comes with the fact that CAS is so much easier to work with than the state." **Steve** explained that for most people, the policy would result in no difference at all. **Melinda** agreed, noting that disbursement orders were already approved before they were submitted to CAS. The main different would be limiting off-campus catering. **Melinda** explained, "I'm just trying to curtail [off-campus catering] because we're in a negative operating budget. So, I'm just trying to make the funds more useful."

**Steve** thought the policy was "fairly dense" and suggested possibly providing a simpler list of important points along with the policy. **Michele** reminded the board that policies and procedures were criticisms on the annual audit and agreed that a list of the important points may be useful with turnovers in the board, signatories, and the student body.

**Jordan** noted that since RA's and Hall Governments tended to plan a lot of programs at the beginning and end of each semester, Sodexo might experience a high volume of catering orders. **Jordan** further asked how one would go about requesting to order food off-campus for a culture potluck or another event with specific food requirements. **Steve** responded, "If there were for instance a specific kind of food that Sodexo can't do or can't do correctly, and it's really central to that event, we can talk about that. We want to retain that kind of flexibility." **Melinda** clarified that the recent catering for RHSA's banquet, as mentioned before, raised concern since it was over an \$800 bill to be spent at Pasquale's. RHSA was directed to use Sodexo if possible, to keep the funds on campus. **Melinda** emphasized, "We have to be cognizant of the big-ticket items and try to give our vendors a chance to provide the service they need." **Jordan** asked if there would be a spending limit for using money off-campus. **Steve** stated that "we really would like to retain the flexibility" and reiterated that having signatories signing off on expenditures before they are spent would clear up these issues. **Steve** asked if there were any additional comments. There were none. **Steve** concluded that **Melinda** and he would work on creating the quick reference guide to accompany the new program funding policy to be rolled out on January 1, 2022.

### **Good and Welfare**

**Brian** announced that he would be out on sabbatical for the spring semester. **Rachel Rigolino** would be standing in as a faculty board member. **Brian** also brought up the Follett Access program, suggesting that any progression should be slow and include a lot of consultation with students and faculty. **Brian** explained, "I've already heard from some folks who are very skeptical and concerned about it. I assured them that this was not something that was going to be dropped on the campus next semester, but there's definitely going to be some views that we're going to want to take into careful consideration

before any kind of move is made.” Since New Paltz would be the first comprehensive college in the system to use the program, **Steve** agreed that planning would progress slowly to consider all variables and perspectives. **Steve** asked if there was anything else to be discussed. The answer was no.

**Steve** thanked board members for their participation this semester and wished everyone Happy Holidays.

**Meeting adjourned:** 1:37 pm