Special Called Meeting For Closed Session—CCC Board of Trustees—Sunday 6 PM July 30, 2017—No Action Taken!!!—Report by Robert A. Williams

First of all the CCC Board of Trustees are getting better at a few things. They gave proper notice for this meeting according to NC Law. They followed NC Law when they went into Closed session and when they came out of Closed Session. They followed their agenda except for one thing, a good thing. They allowed members of the public to speak by adding a "Public Participation" item to the agenda. Adding a public participation part of the agenda when one was not pre-planned or required by law has not been allowed by the Commissioners or the School Board. Hopefully this will catch on. All of the governmental agency folks should remember who pays the bills. But, the Board of Trustees are not there yet. Calling a special meeting that was not an emergency meeting on Sunday Evening shows a bit of poor planning and poor scheduling. And, not taking any action on anything surely raises questions about what this group is up to. There is a saying that "all's well that ends well." That, however, remains to be seen.

Back to the Meeting.

Ten Board members were present. Members Rev. Dr. Lamont Littlejohn and Chris Turner were absent. Hold-over Board Member June Yarboro was present along with newly appointed but not sworn in Board Member Allen Langley was present and sitting with the Board. Still President and still Secretary to the Board (until July 31, 2017) Dr. Steve Thornburg was absent. Another person sat in to take the minutes of the

meeting.

Attorney David Teddy attended this meeting instead of regular CCC Board Attorney Ralph Meekins. Teddy was sporting a sling supporting his left arm resulting from a fall out of his hammock. Teddy had booked a trip to Ireland to play golf and his injury prevented him from playing golf, so Meekins went to Ireland instead.

Chairman Wes Westmoreland conducted the meeting in a professional manner. As well as bringing up the public participation part of the agenda to the full board, which was accepted unanimously.

Brendan LeGrand was the first speaker. Mrs. LeGrand has scolded the Board of Trustees on several occasions, and rightly so, regarding the handling of the many scandals at CCC. On this occasion Mrs. LeGrand clearly informed the Board that the payoff to President Thornburg was rewarding bad behavior on Thornburg's part and was very unpopular with the public. "This is on you" Mrs. LeGrand told the Board, "you should put up the money" to pay off the debt that you created. Mrs. LeGrand also stated that Thornburg had not paid off the fine the Board had previously imposed.

Susan Ubanski spoke next. Ms. Ubanski has also spoken to the Board on other occasions regarding the situations and circumstances that caused her to quit CCC in disgust. On this occasion Ms. Ubanski recommended the Board to make their own decisions and not be unduly influenced by others who have their own agenda that may not be in the best interest of CCC. Ms. Ubanski also chided those that were going around saying "there are two sides to every story." When you are an employee and had to deal with Shannon Kennedy it was always one-sided and Kennedy didn't care for the little people. She added that "the other side of the story" was never heard by the Board, only Kennedy and her team had the ear of the Board. Many people were simply run off from CCC by the Kennedy crowd.

Wanda Leonard was the next speaker. Ms. Leonard told the Board about her own personal experience with being run off by CCC. Ms. Leonard had helped initiate a specialty nurses training program out of nothing at CCC and turned it into a very good programs where Hospital Emergency Rooms actually sought out her students at graduation. But Ms. Leonard somehow ran afoul of the Kennedy crowd and one day in the middle of a class, Director Becky Sain and HR Director Knicely came to her classroom carrying a brown box, asked the students to leave the classroom, terminated Ms. Leonard's contract on the spot, packed her personal stuff into the box and escorted her to her car. Ms. Leonard stated to the Board that CCC used to be a good place to work but when Kennedy and her entourage took over "things went to hell in a handbasket."

Libby Stone spoke next. Ms. Stone stated that the CCC Website needed improvement. That minutes to meetings and other things could not be found. (I told the Board the same thing in a previous meeting.) Also some minutes were vague and didn't particularly provide an accurate accounting of what transpired in the meeting. I have discovered much of the same thing basically through many years until just recently, now that CCC and the Board are under a microscope and rightly so. Ms. Stone also stated that the CCC Board of Trustees should attend the mandated Trustee and ethics training.

Ginger Bullock Spoke next. It was an improvised but totally damning an powerful example of an inactive CCC Board of Trustees. Mrs. Bullock states "I am tired of seeing my name in the newspapers, Political Smack-Down and other Media" when the entire Board of Trustees, specifically Allen Langley, never spoke to me or asked me not one single question. (After the meeting I asked Allen Langley about this and Mr. Langley admitted Bullock's statement was true. According to Mr. Langley he had been directed not to talk to Bullock as the employee grievance policies did not allow this. I stated to Mr. Langley that the Board's Policies were clearly not

effective and the CCC Board was hiding behind poor policies to justify their actions, inactions in this case. More about this in other articles.) Mrs. Bullock told the Board that she had PROOF to show what she has said is true. Mrs. Bullock asked the Board, “How can you review me without talking to me.” And “What has taken you so long.” Mrs. Bullock then described how she was treated when she was only trying to make sure the lessons she was responsible for were done properly and that she simply got a letter in the mail that she was terminated.

No Board member had any comments, statements of questions for any of the speakers.

Chairman Westmoreland asked for a motion to go into Closed Session and Board member Bill Turpish made a clear and concise motion to go into closed session and included all the required sections of NC State Law that are required to go into closed session. It is obvious that this Board is making a large effort to get the legal requirements in running their Board Meetings in accordance with the law. The motion passed unanimously and the public was asked to leave the meeting room.

The Closed Session attendees included all Board members present, including Allen Langley (as a guest) as well as the CCC Public Information Officer, Paula Vess, a secretary to take minutes and Attorney David Teddy. I am uncertain of the lawfulness of inviting guests and Public Information Officers into official Closed Sessions.

The Closed Session lasted the better part of two hours and the members of the public attending the meeting were speculating what was being discussed. Everything from where was CCC going to get the cash to pay off Thornburg (I had heard the plan was to take money out of allocations to repair roofing, but they likely were told that was illegal.), to terms of the Interim President’s Contract.

Whatever transpired in the Closed Session is unknown as when the Board came back into Open session, they took no action regarding the Closed Session and adjourned the meeting. It will be interesting to see what comes out of this because no action was voted on in open session as is required by law. In many respects it seems that whatever they do that came out of the closed session will be illegal. Maybe I was doing too much bragging previously about the CCC Board trying to conduct their meetings in accordance with state law.

After the meeting was adjourned I asked the Public Information Officer “what is the public information that is coming out of this closed door meeting?” Ms. Vess told me that it was confidential right now. I stated (since I have requested to be placed on the CCC Sunshine List) “I want to be one of the first to know.”

I had some other conversations after the meeting that will be the subject of forthcoming articles. Stay Tuned