



**COBEC WINTER CONFERENCE**  
**JOHN PAUL II JUNIOR COLLEGE**  
*FINDING WHAT MATTERS*

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2022**

**ATTENDEES:**

<b>Given Name</b>	<b>Organization/Institution – In Person</b>	<b>Given Name</b>	<b>Organization/Institution – Online</b>
Wesley Hickey	University of Texas at Tyler	John Kempainen	UNF / Emeritus Member
Hugo Gonzalez	Centro Escolar Mexico Junior College	Warren Hodge	UNF / Emeritus Member
Marlon Brown	Corozal Junior College	Betty Flinchum	UNF/ Emeritus Member
Yanira Oliveras-Ortiz	University of Texas at Tyler	Allison Martin	Bossier Parish Community College
David Ruiz	John Paul II Junior College	Larry Daniels	University of Tyler at Permain Basin
Karen Martinez	Ecumenical Junior College	Neil McCrillis	University of Illinois Chicago
Sharmayne Saunders	University of West Indies Open Campus	Ivan Nikolov	Valdosta State University
Jeannie Garbutt-Franklin	MoECST	Carly Womack-Wynne	University of North Georgia
Perla Marin	Centro Escolar Mexico Junior College	Yvonne Palma	MoECST
Marie Scott-Young	Independence Junior College	Kathaleena Monds	Albany State University
Fermin Magaña	Sacred Heart Junior College	Geoff Bradshaw	Maddison College
Eleanor Gillett	Wesley Junior College	Rocio Carballo	Sacred Heart Junior College

Eve Aird	Galen University	Steve Guns	Murray State University
Rita Curtis	Campbellsville University	Erbert Higinio	Peralta Community College
Emilia Hodge	University of Florida	Carrie Klima	
Gustavo Ellis	San Pedro Junior College		
Froylan Gilharry	San Pedro Junior College	Tanesha Ross	University of North Florida
Roberto Canche	San Pedro Junior College	Elodia Casimiro	
Natalie Gallatin	John Paul II Junior College	Hema Gonzalez	
Sharon Hudley	Campbellsville University	Esteban Coy	
Erinn Bentley	Columbus State University	Lisa Johnson	
Fr. Andres	John Paul II Junior College	Noel Carballo	Corozal Junior College
Sherry Gibbs	Galen University	Ashley Gillett	
		Jeanne Link	Sacred Heart Junior College
		Anna Broderson	
		Luciola Castillo	National Library of Belize
		Ethel Arzu	University of Texas at Permain Basin
		Emita Barrett	

### **1.0 MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at about 10:15 a.m. by Dr. Hickey, COBEC US Co-Chair.

### **2.0 WELCOME**

Dr. Hickey welcomed the membership to the business meeting. Dr. Hickey gave thanks to the personnel of John Paul II Junior College for the organization of the conference.

### **3.0 ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

It was agreed that the standing committee reports will be conducted at the end of the business meeting agenda.

The agenda was accepted by the membership as presented by Dr. Kemppainen and seconded by Mrs. Scott-Young.

#### **4.0 ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2021**

Dr. Hodge made reference to Research Committee Report (8.2.4), third sentence; he asked to delete: ... **into an action plan**. The sentence should read: **The goal of the Committee is to raise USD \$50,000.00 to operationalize the plan.**

Dr. Nikolov cautioned not raise the US \$50,000.00 or more. Raising \$50,000.00 would mean going beyond COBEC's threshold which would require hiring an accountant to file COBEC's tax return with the IRS. He also indicated that he isn't opposed to the plan of the Research Committee. But if that amount of money is raised, COBEC will need to change its procedures.

The minutes of July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 were accepted as amended by the membership as tabled on a motion made by Mrs. Gillette and seconded by Dr. Saunders.

#### **5.0 PRESENTATION OF BELIZEAN CO-CHAIR**

Dr. Hickey introduced the new Belize Co-Chair, Mr. Hugo Gonzalez, Dean of Centro Escolar Mexico Junior College. He asked Mr. Gonzalez to share a few words.

Mr. Gonzalez expressed gratitude to the Belizean membership for giving him the vote of confidence. He shared that he is on high spirits; he also willing to learn from the opportunity given, and if needed, he will surely react out to the membership.

#### **6.0 CONSIDERATION FOR EMERITUS MEMBERSHIP**

Dr. Hickey informed that Dr. Karen Martinez was a member of the Ad Hoc committee that considered Dr. Susan Catapano's Emeritus membership. He also shared that Dr. Emilia Hodge had made the nomination. He asked Dr. Martinez to share the Ad Hoc Committee recommendation.

Dr. Martinez shared that the committee recommended that the nomination be brought to the membership for consideration. Dr. Emilia Hodge expressed that her letter of support spoke about Susan's contributions to Belize and COBEC; she was a Fulbright scholar.

Dr. Susan Catapano's US Emeritus Membership was accepted by the membership on a motion made by Dr. Saunders and seconded by Dr. Aird.

Dr. Aird made a plea, given Dr. Catapano's extensive work in Belize, that COBEC continues sharing the collaborations and partnerships made between US and Belize COBEC institutions. The suggestion was accepted.

## **7.0 CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP**

No application was received.

COBEC members were asked make contact with potential members.

Mr. Gonzalez asked that COBEC reaches out to non-active COBEC US members to reengage with them.

Dr. Nikolov shared his support for the suggestion made by Mr. Gonzalez. Invitation was made to all COBEC members for small grants.

## **8.0 FINANCIAL REPORTS - BELIZE & US TREASURER**

Mr. Brown, Belize COBEC Treasurer's, reported that the process to change signatories to the Belize COBEC account had started. The transition should be completed by the end of February. He shared the Belize COBEC financial report for the period July 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. The beginning balance for the period was BZD \$8,408.26. Majority of the transactions were either BZD \$11.00 or BZD \$12.25 service charges. Two (2) travel allowance payments were made to the Belize-Co Chair and Treasurer for the summer conference hosted by the University of Texas at Tyler. He acknowledge Galen University for making early membership dues payment. One membership dues payments is unidentified but since the deposit was made at the Scotia Bank Corozal branch, he believes it is from the Belize Adventist Junior College. The ending balance was BZD \$7,941.01.

Dr. Aird motioned to accept the Belize COBEC Treasurer's report as presented. Mrs. Scoot-Young seconded the motion. The report was accepted as presented

Dr. Nikolov, US COBEC Treasurer, reported that the US COBEC account is healthy. He reported that most of the US COBEC institutions are current with their membership dues. The bank account balance is USD \$32,242.48. Two (2) mini grants were awarded to the University of Texas at Tyler and John Paul II Junior College. The total amount of the grants is USD \$1,500.00 and USD \$1,275.00, respectively. Operational expenses include: USD \$13.98 to Corpus Christie for John Paul II Junior college via Sal; USD \$2,033.78 for Wesley Hickey reimbursement for the COBEC website. Fourteen (14) US institutions have paid their 2021-2022 membership dues. He asked the membership to note that the work of the US Treasurer has become overwhelming which is mainly attributed to the payment method used by the US institutions. He proposed that an annual mini grant be awarded to the treasurer's office to address the payment transaction issues.

Dr. Warren Hodge asked whether the ledgers he had suggested were created? Dr. Nikolov indicated there is no need to create a special ledger. If the contribution is made to the Research Committee, a note will be made.

Dr. Kemppainen shared that the Treasurer's work has become much complicated since COBEC started. He suggested that a stipend be paid to the Treasurer. Dr. Nikolov shared that he doesn't need to be paid. But he has had to pay his assistant to do additional COBEC work.

Dr. Egbert Higinio asked whether the Perlata's deals have been paid. Dr. Nikolov suggested to put the contact information on the chat so that the information can be verified. He stressed that COBEC is always willing to collect.

Dr. Aird went back in history. She shared that Café Committee had a budget line item to support COBEC workshops in Belize. Dr. Saunders shared that Committee had to apply for the small grants. Planning had to be done in advance. Mr. Gonzalez shared that a request will be made for the next ATLIB summer professional development workshops in June.

Dr. Daniels motioned to accept the US COBEC Treasurer's report as presented. Dr. Kemppainen seconded the motion. The report was accepted as presented.

## **9.0 CONSIDERATION FOR MINI GRANTS**

No application was received.

## **10.0 CONSIDERATION FOR ONLINE CONFERENCE FEE**

Dr. Hickey provided context for the proposal. He indicated that UTT had planned the summer conference but as a result of COVID 19 the conference had to be transitioned to an online modality. In order to attract as many participants as possible, no fee was charged. The following year CEMJC hosted the winter conference. No fee was charged. However, it is noted that fees need to be addressed. If we do not move to face to face meetings, we will need to continue with online conferences. It takes planning, organization and additional expenses to make it work. It is in this context that the request is made.

Dr. Aird agreed that an online fee be charged. Online conferences in higher education require participants to pay an online fee. Her concern was how will the online conference fee be paid. She proposed that fifty percent of the conference registration fee be charged.

Mrs. Scott-Young was also in agreement of making an online conference fee but she asked to include a group online conference fee.

Mr. Magaña suggested that a package be developed for faculty to take advantage of the professional development sessions planned by the host institution.

Dr. Nikolov pointed out the challenges of making institutional payments. He is in agreement with the suggestions provided by the other colleagues. He suggested that the online conference fee collected be transferred for the next conference hosted by a Belize institution. He ask colleagues to note workshops for librarians. He suggested that a direct application by a Belize institution would be most welcomed.

Dr. Kemppainen suggested that a fixed amount or a percentage be considered. He stressed that the fee must be reasonable.

Dr. Aird suggested that we build on Mrs. Scott-Young's suggestion.

Dr. Hickey suggested that an online survey be conducted to determine a fair online conference fee.

Dr. Aird suggested that Dr. Nikolov and Mr. Brown work together to make a recommendation to the membership for approval at the summer conference. Both Mr. Brown and Dr. Nikolov agreed. Dr. Nikolov suggested that the proposed online conference fee shouldn't limit participation.

The membership agreed for both Mr. Brown and Dr. Nikolov to make a recommendation to the membership for approval at the summer conference.

## **11.0 CONSIDERATION FOR MINI GRANTS**

No application was received. It was noted there is funding for mini grants.

## **12.0 CONSIDERATION FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP**

Dr. Hickey shared that last summer conference membership by-laws for individual membership. In this respect, he added that Dr. Andy Novobilski submitted an application for individual membership. He tabled Dr. Novobilski nomination for individual membership.

Dr. Aird shared her support for the nomination of Dr. Novobilski but she asked what will be the extent of his participation in COBEC. Dr. Hickey indicated that he will not be able to hold office.

Dr. Daniels expressed that he was one of the individuals who nominated Dr. Novobilski. He is honoured to have Dr. Novobilski as an individual member. Several other colleagues expressed support.

Dr. Nikolov asked that the membership considers special status without voting rights for the past co-chairs.

On a motion made by Dr. Daniels and seconded by Dr. Martinez, Dr. Novobilski's nomination was accepted as an individual member of COBEC.

### **13.0 SUMMER CONFERENCE LOCATION – UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT PERMIAN BASIN**

Dr. Daniels shared that a flyer was sent to the membership either via email or chat. He gave credit to Dr. Hickey and Dr. Nikolov for their encouragement to bring the conference to the west of Texas. He noted that the summer conference will be hosted by UTPB on July 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. The Midland Regional Airport is about 15 minutes from the school campus. Shuttles and vans will be made available for those needing transportation from the airport and hotels. UTPB is looking forward to having many Belizeans and US nationals to the conference.

Dr. Flinchum expressed greetings to the membership. She shared that she is broken hearted because she was unable to be with the group in person as a result of her age. She thank the organizers of the winter conference.

### **14.0 STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **14.1 CAFÉ COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Magaña reported that due to technical issues only those in attendance for the conference were able to participate in the discussion. The group considered merging the Café workshops and the ATLIB summer professional development workshops in June or July. A budget will be prepared to include partners from both US institutions and Belize institutions. Areas to be targets include: cultural, historical and environment. The topics will be shared later this month.

#### **14.2 COLLEGE FAIR COMMITTEE REPORT**

Dr. Palma reported that the MoECST is pressing to have the fair on February 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022. A hybrid fair is being planned and it will be designed for potential college students. The plan will entail providing information on what is available, where to get the information and how to get there. Various college presentations will answer the question What and the presentations by the lending institutions will answer the question How. A call to interested US member institutions was made to participate in the fair.

#### **14.3 STUDY ABROAD COMMITTEE REPORT**

Dr. Aird, Committee Co-chair, reported that the Committee discussed the impact of COVID 19 on study abroad activities. Belizean students were unable to go on student exchanges in the US. One way to address this difficulty is to have an online course to give students the opportunity to build connection with each other before coming to

Belize. Dr. Aird and Mrs. Martin will develop a proposal on virtual exchanges to be tabled for the summer conference for consideration.

#### **14.4 RESEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT**

Dr. Hodge shared that it is his last meeting as the co-chair of the committee. He will remain a member of the Committee. Dr. Carlise Wynne will be the next US co-chair. He also shared that the Committee's strategic plan was shared last year. He asked that the membership considers approving the plan so that the Committee can move forward with its goals and objectives.

Dr. Wynne added that there is the need to highlight the collaborative research that is happening in Belize between US and Belize member institutions through COBEC. Collaborative projects, partnerships, online research journals and mentorships are some of the ways the Committee is trying to highlight all of the things that are happening.

Dr. Hodge recommended that the membership approves the Committee's strategic plan. Dr. Aird indicated that she hadn't received a copy of the strategic plan. Dr. Hodge replied by saying that a copy of the strategic plan was posted in the COBEC website.

Dr. Nikolov reminded the membership of the modalities used before by the previous Leadership such research scholarships visits for shorter period by a partner US institutions. He asked the membership to think outside of the box in order to address these issues.

Dr. Wynne indicated that the Committee is not limited for early career scholars in Belize and degree seeking students but looking at active scholars in order to build capacity.

Dr. Higinio expressed his support for the strategic plan. It is progressive and easy to read document.

On a motion made by Dr. Martinez and seconded by Dr. Aird, the Research Committee Strategic Plan was accepted as tabled.

#### **15.0 THANKS TO JOHN PAUL II JUNIOR COLLEGE**

Mr. Gonzalez gave a heartfelt thank you to Mr. Ruiz and his staff for planning and organizing such an excellent winter conference.

Mr. Ruiz expressed his gratitude to the JPIIJC team who made it all happen.



## 16.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:37 p.m. on a motion made by Dr. Aird and seconded by Mrs. Scott-Young.

Prepared by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marlon Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marlon Brown  
Recording Secretary