

[**DR. SKI** and **MR. TOM RICHEY** sit at a table facing the camera]

**DR. SKI:**

My name is Dr. Ski, President of HACC, Central Pennsylvania's Community College and I want to welcome you and thank you for taking time to be with us this afternoon.

**MR. TOM RICHEY:**

My name is Tom Richey, the current board chair of the board of trustees of HACC, our favorite Community College. I've been a member of the board of trustees, a proud member since 2007. I've been board chair since 2015 and I would like to go on record at this point just by saying that the board of trustees of HACC supports Dr. Ski and his cabinet unanimously.

**DR. SKI:**

Thank you Mr. Richey. So before we get into some questions and answers I'd like to give you some background information. And this may take a few minutes, but I think it's important for us to really understand the situation and prepare us for the conversation we look forward to having with you today. As many of you are aware, a media statement was published on January 11<sup>th</sup> that talked about an online survey that the Faculty Senate cabinet distributed to the faculty. The college as you may have read, and I want to make sure we get this information correct, has 957 full-time and adjunct faculty members, vested adjunct faculty members. To be clear, a vested adjunct faculty is someone who has taught at least six credit hours and six semesters at HACC. According to the president of the faculty organization of the 957 full-time and vested adjunct faculty members 421 full-time and vested adjunct faculty members responded to the online survey. Of that number, 254 said that they had no confidence in HACC senior leadership, 109 responded that they did have faith and belief in HACC's leadership and we had 58 respond by abstention, they abstained from voting. Although this action that has presented itself is very unfortunate, it was taken by a small number of HACC, the total number of HACC employees. As the college's president and chief executive officer, I expect my colleagues to challenge me as they have over the last almost nine years that I have been president of the largest and oldest Community College in Pennsylvania. As the College's president, I expect them to continue to challenge me because I value the critical thinking, I value and have. There are many examples over the last that this College continues to be a stable higher ed entity in our service region. However, this vote represents a breakdown in communication that I want to resolve as quickly as possible. I have many examples over the last nine years of working with all four of our constituency groups, starting with our students, center of why we exist. But I have worked through four administrations of leadership of the faculty organization. I've worked through various leadership within the administrative and professional organization the classified employee organization as well. And so I want to make a very important invitation. I need, we need as we have historically seen, need the faculty to work with us to ensure that this institution continues to remain a very important and vital resource in our community. I believe that the reorganization that we are taking, that was supported by and encouraged by our Board of Trustees, is done with data, it is data-informed, it is based on best practices across the country. As you may know, there are 1,100 community colleges in this country and we have looked at many of our aspirational institutions, but I think most importantly, these are student-centered decisions. They're difficult but they are student-centered decisions that will have a standardization across all five of our campuses and within our virtual learning element. I acknowledge that I have made some missteps, like any human being, any leader, I admit to that.

[The screen switches to a HACC branded slide with bullet points. The headline reads, "Our Path Forward." The first bullet reads, "1. We will continue to make decisions based on the needs of our students and communities." The second bullet point reads, "2. We will continue with the collegewide reorganization." The third bullet point reads, "3. We will convene a committee of HACC employees and students to address concerns, including those raised in the faculty resolution." The fourth and last bullet point reads, "4. We will continue to meet regularly, host forums, listen and solicit feedback."]

**DR. SKI VO:**

What I'd like to show you now are two slides that may provide some input, additional input for you. Our path forward. We will continue to make decisions based on the needs of our students and communities. We rewrote a three-year strategic plan that our board of trustees agreed and voted in favor of this past spring and part of this reorganization, this One-College model, is one of the goals that the board of trustees has been very interested in, very eager and very, very supportive of so that by July or even the worst December of 2020 our College will go through a reorganization so that our students, no matter where they are, on a campus or online, will have the same standard experience. We will continue with the collegewide reorganization, the board of trustees has been very adamant about making sure that we continue to do what we have done. You know, I have a, I'm going to digress very quickly, I have a favorite author, her name is Rosabeth Moss Kanter. She's a Harvard instructor, a Harvard Business School instructor, and she had a quote in a book that I read a while ago. It said that everyone loves inspiring beginnings and happy endings. However, everything looks like failure in the middle. And I think that quote provides sort of what we are going through here at the college, and you know we're not alone in this. There are many community colleges, many higher ed institutions and for you as reporters who cover higher ed, you know that there are many institutions in our service region that are looking at declining enrollment, looking at reorganizations in their organizations as well as nationally. You don't have to go far or type into one of your browsers to find how higher education is under assault in many ways and what they are all trying to do to compete effectively and go forward. You know, when I talked to the board this spring about our vision and about our plan, I said that maintenance is not a vision and repairing is definitely not enough. That's why we are looking at data, we're looking at design concepts and we're really looking at deep domain expertise, people who can come into our institution, work with us to ensure that this institution remains viable and remains relevant for the students we serve today and those we serve tomorrow, as well as our business community, for all the work we do with our businesses in that community. I have provided opportunities over my nine years to engage all four of the constituency groups starting with our students, our faculty, our administrative professional organization and our classified organization, a variety of ways that I have kept the college community informed. When I first got here eight and a half years ago, the number one thing that I heard is the administration doesn't communicate enough. Interesting to note, I took that to heart and I have provided a variety over these eight and a half years, with the college community through my monthly SKI Grams, through forums on each of my campuses, through zoom sessions every Thursday dealing with the topic, various focus groups with all four of the constituency groups and my staff that the senior leaders also who are part of the vote, have done that with their groups as well. We have documented times of where, over at least the last six months to a year, you [audio cuts out] at these senior leaders have met with dozens of groups of employees throughout the college, who have provided input and what has helped shape our strategic plan, has shaped what the One-College model is truly going to look like, and we will continue to meet regularly. I'm going to continue to host these forums, listen sessions with all four of the groups, and as far as what we are going to do, we're going to bring 20 individuals together, something that has been taking shape over the last several months, which started out as a committee of eight, maybe four faculty members, four administrators, I've now changed that to ensure that we have representation from each of the constituency groups and that's why I'm calling it 20 in 20. So that we can take a look at the concerns, the issues that our constituency groups have to ensure that HACC is a very good place to be, a place to work, a place to learn. And I believe that that is very possible.

[The slide changes to another HACC branded slide. The heading reads, "Our Successes." The first bullet reads, "1. We make a college education more affordable through tuition giveaways, scholarship and low or no-cost education resources." The second bullet reads, "2. We offer cutting-edge apprenticeship programs that invest in our students, community, business partners and government." The third bullet point reads, "3. We partner with businesses across the region and develop programming based on the needs of employers." The fourth and final bullet point reads, "4. We provide pathways to success for students, including our large population of veterans."]

**DR. SKI VO:**

Our successes, and many of you who cover us know that we have many successes to be proud of over my nine years and over the 56 years of this College's history there are numerous, numerous examples of pride. You know, some of that is that we have over 700,000 individuals

who have taken classes at any five of our classes or online. We have nearly 100,000 graduates in this institution. If you look at, or if you visit hospitals, nursing homes, if you go into some of our manufacturing facilities, most or if not many of those individuals have been touched by HACC one way or another. The Board of Trustees and I commend them for this, have told me from the first day that I started that tuition needed to be affordable. We made it, we needed to make sure that we were the on-ramp to higher education, the first choice of higher education in our service region. And we, and I believe, thanks to the leadership of the board, we've been able to do that. Also, from our Foundation, the College's Foundation they have been very, very focused on raising dollars for scholarships, raising dollars for equipment, raising dollars for resources that we need to be able to provide to our students and our employees, including faculty. Last evening I was proud to welcome our virtual learning faculty back to the spring semester and celebrated with them some of the good work, some of the good experiences that our students are enjoying now from the brilliance of our faculty, in many ways thanks to our College's Foundation that really was able to fund some of the programs, some of the technology that they are now using to ensure that our students are very successful, not only in the classroom, but outside the classroom. We are offering a lot of apprenticeship programs. We were the first college in the state, thanks to many of our faculty and others, to offer apprenticeship programs to industry. Tomorrow night we'll be celebrating a graduation in Lancaster with High Industries, starting the first hospitality apprenticeship program and again a list could go on and on. We just don't have enough time at this point to talk about all of the successes we have enjoyed, are enjoying and will enjoy because I firmly believe and the board has reiterated this to me, as we realign the institution, we'll become even more agile and more nimble to address not only the changing needs of our students, but also the changing needs of our employers and what they need for Central Pennsylvania to remain competitive and successful. The other point that I want to make mention is that we are working very closely with business and industry. Our faculty are teaching at business locations, they're listening to employers to ensure that the information they receive is integrated into the curriculum that is being offered to students. And we are focused on providing pathways for our students, especially our veterans. We're focusing on, on many populations now as maybe we never have, but our veterans play a very important role. You know we are the largest provider, the largest community college provider of education to veterans and/or their families. And in fact, we're the second largest provider of education and training to veterans next to Penn State in University Park. And so finally, I want to say that through all of this hopefully you are able to see that there has been a lot of work put together by all four of our constituency groups, and especially three of our constituency groups as we focus on our students, Because what is most critical for us is that the students need to remain the focus. And I believe that our faculty, our classified employees, our administrators and especially senior leadership understand the gravity of what we're going through now and I again as I said earlier, I am eager to work closely with our faculty, especially our faculty leadership, to ensure that our students, our communities, our employers will continue to receive what they have received over the years. And I want to say that in the 56 years of our existence, I believe that our future is truly brighter than ever. I think going back to Rosabeth Moss Kanter's quote about everything looks like a failure in the middle is quite where we are, but I think you can see or you'll realize the arrows are moving in very positive ways now. There are many answers to questions that may have existed months ago regarding organizational structure and as you may or may not realize an organization this size, a very complicated organization, with nearly 2,000 employees, five campuses, virtual learning there's an awful lot of moving parts, there's an awful lot that has to be put into effect for it to really [interference] any change. And so I am believing that we will not let this experience blemish the 56 years that we have. I believe if anything this will allow us to recalibrate, this will allow us to work together moving us forward in ways that really are 21st, 22nd century. For those of you who cover higher education, you may know if you read any of the literature, higher education is in a major, major change effect. It's going through major changes as an institution, as institutions. Maybe one of the last industries to go through such change. We know that the demographics we once served is changing. We know that technology is changing. We know that state support can be limited. We know that there's more competition for students than ever [audio cuts out] as our, so we in higher education have never seen before. So this truly is a very, very, very unsettling time in higher education. And so I know that the months ahead are going to create, or continue to create, some anxiety, some unrest. I believe that we'll be stronger and better able to serve students as we go through these changes. The college leadership team, the HACC Board of Trustees and I truly stand by our decision to reorganize as One-College to help HACC remain on a path for future success. I also remain committed, very committed and eager to work with faculty and all employees as I have done over my eight and a half, almost nine years to ensure that we work collaboratively, so that we can continue to change the lives, destinies and family trees of those who choose to come to us for an

education. So in closing, I believe that it is important today that we pursue solutions and that is the bottom line. I really want to make sure that all of us are looking at providing solutions and how we can work through an environment that we personally face here in higher ed in general, but that is limited, financially limited, a declining enrollment base. Our business model is very different today than it was when I arrived and even 15, 20, 30 and for sure 56 years ago. So in closing, I'd like to say it is my honor and my privilege to have been chosen by this board to continue to work with this College at least for the next three years. I am hopeful about our future and believe the changes we are making today will make sure that what lies ahead of us is going to be an exciting and keep us relevant in our communities. Because we need, as the name says, community college, we need to understand and be responsive. As I said earlier, the changes incurring today are difficult, they're unsettling, and if we don't make those changes today, we may have greater challenges going forward. So as the leader, I need to have the courage. I have the support of many not only in the college, especially my board of trustees, but so many in our community who are really supportive and strongly urging us to make these enhancements so that we can be and remain the oldest, the largest, and I believe the finest community college in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and beyond.

[The screen switches back to **DR. SKI** and **MR. TOM RICHEY** sitting together at a table facing the camera.]

**DR. SKI:**

So with that I would like to take this opportunity to engage you in questions that you may have of Mr. Tom Richey, the chairman of the board and myself. And if you would please just ask the questions via chat.

**OFFSCREEN FEMALE:**

Mr. President, you talked about reorganization. Any specifics?

**DR. SKI:**

Yes, the specifics for the reorganization have to do with almost every department within the college. If we start first and foremost with our students. Again, taking a look at how can we standardize our processes, our systems, our programs across all five of our campuses, our physical campuses and our virtual learning offerings, how can we do that? And so what we have done is we have taken a look at how or what do we need from an organizational perspective? What are and who are the individuals or the positions that are needed to ensure that that standardization happens across all those entities that I mentioned earlier. In our academic affairs area, we're taking a look at how can we standardize, how can we look at bringing together a lot of different areas under one umbrella so that we are able to provide again the same service at all locations and online. In our finance area, taking a look at ways that we can enhance our systems, our software so that we can be very efficient in what we do as an institution.

**OFFSCREEN FEMALE:**

Mr. President, at this point, is resigning as president under any consideration?

**DR. SKI:**

It is under no consideration.

**OFFSCREEN FEMALE:**

Mr. President, one of the concerns listed by the faculty was declining efficiency of shared governance and violation of shared governance policies as it relates to furlough, retaining, reassignment and tenure. Do you think that is a valid concern and if so do you have any way you hope to improve shared governance?

**DR. SKI:**

The reassignment of duties, there were some employees that are a part of this umbrella comment, and I commented on it, I commented about it when the faculty presented me with part of the statements that they wanted me to review, and one had to do with the shared governance policies and the decision to eliminate some of the positions or furlough some of those positions was made so that we could provide specialized services to our students and reduce costs. It doesn't indicate a decline in the efficiency of self, of shared governance. Shared governance was respected as the steps that were taken were in line with policy in the

handbook. The cabinet respected the decision also of the faculty senate not to make any changes to the faculty furlough policy. And what I want to say is that shared governance is a very active group at the College. It has been something that has occurred in my eight and a half, nine years here. We went through a realignment of it several years ago. Faculty, administrators, classified and students came together and said here's ways we could enhance our shared governance. And so I think shared governance does work and I think we have many examples of shared governance. I know a year ago or so we had issues with pay for our vested adjuncts. We were able to take that, we were able to take care of that in short order. We had some issues in lab pay with our faculty. We came together, we were able to work that out. I think the thing that's critical to know when it comes to shared governance is I really, and I think for eight-and-a-half, nine years people will tell you, I have sought the input of those constituency groups regularly. And the shared governance committee that has representation from all those constituency groups meets monthly and sometimes even more than monthly. The problem with shared governance in higher ed or how it's perceived is that it doesn't work well if a certain group does not get their way, and in shared governance, the model is that I listen, the senior leaders listen to the input from a variety of these, of these groups, the faculty, the staff and the administrators and we then discern what is best for the institution with all the other information that we have, the external issues that at times as well need to be considered and then I have to make the final decision. And I will say that overall, majority of the decisions that I have made have been in support of what have come to me through the shared governance process. So will we look at shared governance in ways that we could enhance the process, the answer is yes, I always think that we can and part of my administration has always been, how can we continue to improve? So it might be a long answer for you, but the answer is yes we can always improve processes and hopefully the context that I gave you in the shared governance helps a little to understand that point.

**OFFSCREEN FEMALE:**

Mr. Chairman, did you know about the vote of no-confidence when Dr. Ski's contract was extended?

**MR. TOM RICHEY:**

We did not. Let me, let me just address the contract extension. The board of trustees reviews the president's contract beginning in October through the various channels that are specified in college policy and that culminates in an action, typically in December at our December 4th trustees meeting and the board unanimously chose to extend Dr. Ski's contract to June of 2023. That was taken again unanimously. We feel we have one of the best college presidents in the country. We want to have him here through this reorganization and through some fundraising that we have and on to him as long as possible.

**OFFSCREEN FEMALE:**

Mr. President, a few of the concerns and requests from the faculty seem to center on them having a seat at the table when it comes to reorganization decisions. Why do you think that is, and do you think your efforts to engage faculty thus far about the reorganization have been enough.

**DR. SKI:**

So, thank you for that question. We have engaged every constituency group over the last year especially and I, I have the numbers documented as far as how many groups. Cindy Doherty, who is our Provost, she's met with faculty two dozen groups of faculty, who provided input. The other leaders who are also part of the the vote with me have engaged their groups and other groups into this conversation. So I would say, yes, we as a College, the senior leadership and myself through forums that I run, focus groups that I run, we have an online form that people submit questions to, ideas to. There is plenty of opportunity in our college to provide those suggestions, recommendations and so I do believe sincerely that over the last year, especially we have engaged our constituency groups. Those who wanted to participate, we had so many engaged in our strategic planning process, we had over a thousand responses from all those constituency groups and our employers into forming the strategic plan. So I would say yes that I do believe we've engaged the proper constituency groups in the decisions that we have made to influence and to inform us in the changes for the reorganization.

**OFFSCREEN FEMALE:**

Mr. President, how do you plan to earn back the trust of those faculty members who voted in favor of the no-confidence resolution?

**DR. SKI:**

Well it is my sincere desire, as I have said all along through four faculty senate organizations that my job is to ensure that we as an institution are growing, that we as an institution are addressing the needs of our communities but it all starts within the institution. And so the ways that I want to rebuild those relations are by bringing the faculty senate leadership together to be able to talk about, identify the issues and address those issues as best we can knowing that our goal together is student success. And so I will continue to engage faculty as I have in nine years by walking around the campuses, by being invited to classrooms, my being invited to meetings that faculty have as well as inviting faculty into my meetings, inviting faculty to converse in ways on the 20 20 committee, if you will, to be able to bring their ideas. The college besides myself, you know the senior leadership who are also part of the no vote is to also take a look at ways that we have historically been engaging faculty. We have various committees through our Human Resources Department, in other areas the faculty have contributed. And so I just want to say to reiterate, I am eager to work with our Faculty Senate leadership as I always have. I have asked over months to ensure that we are engaged in conversation so that we are able to make this institution the best it can for those that we serve. So I'll continue to do what I have done and I will ask that through this 20 and 20 committee, it will add additional opportunities for me to help the faculty, those who voted no to help them understand a little better where we are, where we're going and I need them. I need them to help me, to help the senior leadership ensure that we achieve our strategic planning goals. So that by 2023, we will be able to provide the board with successes in all those areas.

**OFFSCREEN FEMALE:**

Mr. President, how do you plan to make up the close to three million dollar loss in the last fiscal year?

**DR. SKI:**

Well, there's, there's been some things that we have done, we have not provided a salary increase to those who earn more than \$40,000. That was one of the ways that we were able to look at how we were going to work at solving that equation. So that we were able to adjust our budgets for this year. There were some hiring freezes. There were opportunities that we looked at internally, systems purchasing and a variety of areas that were able to, we are able to address that issue. As well as now looking to the future, for this year, a lot of it depends upon enrollment and so we are looking at ways that we will continue to refine our operation and we believe that through this One-College model, we will realize and we will be able to show to our board of trustees, the college community, ways that this One-College model will provide us with the revenues we need to remain sustainable, but also to look at innovation and ways that we can grow in new areas and grow the college. Because one of our values is innovation. Again if you have any questions, you may do that by the chat. We look forward to answering additional questions. Well there, seems, there doesn't seem to be any further questions for myself or for Mr. Tom Richey, so what I'd like to reiterate is that even though this is an unfortunate situation, that we as a college or and the community are going through, I want you to know that I, the senior leaders and the college community is truly committed to our students' success and I am eager to continue to bring all constituency groups together so that we can continue to work at making sure that we are offering the most relevant and current classes to our students and working with our employers in the area to serve their workforce training needs. I also hope that 56 years of outstanding instruction, the successes that we have enjoyed as an institution will continue for many, many more years and in fact it will continue for many more years. HACC is much bigger than any of us, any of what we're going through now. As I said earlier, what we're going through now is what educational institutions are going through nationwide. We are not unique in declining enrollments, technology, competition from a variety of educational competitors are really putting us all on notice and for us to be able to be current and relevant we are going to have to make some major changes in our institutions and as I said earlier, we may be one of the last institutions, last industries, going through this major yet important change. But I do promise you this, I promise that it will be done with great respect and empathy for my colleagues, people who I am very proud of. I've worked at four community colleges and I've worked with some very bright people, but I have to tell you, I have never been more impressed with the excellence that our faculty, our classified, our administrators bring to our students and to our business community. So I hope you, through the means that you have in the media, would be able to let our community know that we are going through a realignment, we're going through some growing pains, if you will, and we're going to be okay. I hope that what we're going through today doesn't leave a blemish for this institution, because it isn't needed. We are fine, we are solid, we're rock solid. And with 19 board of trustee members,

with all of the employees here I know that we are committed and focused to ensuring that our students remain at the center. We are the community's college. We're proud of that fact and we hope and we know that you will going forward as well. So I want to thank you for participating with us today and I wish you well.