

## College of San Mateo – Finance Committee

March 12, 2025 2pm-3pm

Building 18 Room 206

### Attendees

Name	Representation/Position	In Attendance
Gerardo Ramirez	Vice President of Administrative Services/Chair	Y
David Crafts	Dean of Enrollment and Student Support/ At-Large Member of IPC	Y
Dianne Fernandez	Detail Buyer, General Services/Classified Staff Member selected by Classified Senate (approved by CSEA)	Y
Stephen Heath	Professor, Accounting Executive Committee Member/Officer selected by Academic Senate	N
Diana Kunze	ASCSM Finance Director/Student Representative	N
David Lau	Interim Dean of Language Arts/At-Large Administrator selected by Management Council	N
Kohya Lu	Ombudsperson/At-Large Member of Management Council	Y

### Support Staff/Ex Officio

Name	Representation/Position	In Attendance
Kim Lantz	Executive Assistant, V.P. of Administrative Services Office	Y
Victoria Lin	Chief Business Officer	Y
Kim Aviles	Interim Business Operations Analyst	N

Action Items	Lead Responsible	Due Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Add January minutes to Finance Committee website</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Kim Lantz</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>3/20/2025</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Follow up on timeline for student housing capital project</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Gerardo Ramirez</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>By next Committee meeting</li></ul>

## Minutes

Review and approval of January meeting minutes.

Committee uses the February agenda since that meeting had been cancelled due to campus-wide power outage.

Since sending out the roadshow-presentation email to the Committee on 2/7/25, many of the campus roadshows have been scheduled and completed.

The College-wide Budget Forum held on February 21<sup>st</sup> had good attendance in-person and online; the recording and slides from that day are on the Finance Committee website. Highlights from that forum are as follow:

1. Clarifying for all that we are not cutting across the board, but rather discuss on a program-by-program basis where we might be able to cut back or scale down
2. Emphasis that this deficit is a cumulation of years of spending increases
3. Cabinet is aiming for a 4-7% decrease in expenses which, as an ideal, would put the College in a good spot financially; this requires a multi-year plan to phase this in due to the College's academic planning cycle
  - a. For example, academics divisions have to schedule classes in advance, so decisions *now* affect the budget in the year to come

Kohya Lu expresses concern for equity between different departments (such as academic counseling versus administrative services) in these decisions to scale down funding.

Gerardo maintains that instruction is the primary goal of the College—therefore in order to maintain our overall goal of educating, we have to look for decreases in spending in non-instructional areas as well as instructional. Such courses of action could include:

1. Booking conferences in advance for early-bird discount, and better hotel & airfare pricing
2. Unfilled positions older than 2 years may not be filled in order to return the money to the District for rainy-day funding

Kohya asks if hiring freezes could happen at CSM, as they have at other local institutions. Gerardo explains that any finding saved by cutting positions now doesn't go back to the College, that these cuts need to be planned in advance with the District Office in order for the funds to be reallocated to the College.

Gerardo clarifies that equity programs will they be maintained in light of the recent Dear Colleague letter issued by the Department of Education on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025. SMCCD will continue to support diversity and equity programs, as the definition by the judiciary has not changed in light of the Dear Colleague letter. Federal grants and contracts only make up 5% of SMCCD funding (75% of this is Financial Aid, 25% is DEI programs like HSI programming) so even if cut, we will still have resources. Of course, this would worsen our deficit, and require looking further for solutions. State and local governments are allies to the College, and are preparing for legal battles against any executive orders that may threaten federal funding. The District Office also has legal counsel that advises SMCCD and will keep us aligned with state and federal laws (none of which have been changed yet)

The Committee discusses specific analyses to see where we might be able to reduce expenses. Victoria Lin suggests that the Committee treat every department individually because each has a different situation and to account for differences in spending by semester (fall vs spring vs. summer).

Gerardo Ramirez says that we want to encourage a dialogue, but taking action now will prevent stronger actions in the future when things are more dire—we can maintain a sense of urgency to prevent bigger problems

The Committee discusses the rainy-day fund and its role in the budget calculations:

1. In the past, surplus funds were put into Fund 4; used for Capital Project fund matching, usually
2. Some has been earmarked for projects already (clubhouse renovation for athletics teams)
3. Some earmarked for essential HVAC updates across campus
4. District Office has kept a portion in reserve (about \$10 million/college)
  - a. If we go over budget this year, we would need District Office and Board approval to use these funds

Committee discusses the status of the student housing project and if there is sufficient funding.

1. This project is funded by our District reserves and State funding match
2. Board reduced housing unit number and scope to keep project in budget
3. Even if we cancelled the project, the State would take the money back
4. Gerardo will follow up on student housing project timeline

The Committee discusses new revenue sources for the College, and the question of how to not ostracize any one area of the College (student services, instruction, extracurriculars), as each department helps to keep our educational mission on-track. Given recent program cuts to Athletics at San Francisco State University, and the common narrative about athletics program funding (swag, capital projects), how do we address this question? Gerardo explains that our District has one of the strongest athletics programs in the State, with competent winning teams, which does bring in support and funding from alumni, so this may be more of a priority to maintain for our College than for other institutions, and calls for further discussion in a holistic manner.

Program Review schedule in the works with PRIE—there are likely opportunities to review going forward because not every program can keep growing

1. Examples: Business-Tech eliminated electrical programs; so this is possible and hopefully based in program review and our EMP/strategic plan
2. Program Review is seen a bit more as a marketing opportunity for programs instead of an evaluation—room for improvement and maybe adding more objectivity
  - a. This can also lead to creating new avenues of funding or creating efficiency, not just eliminating inefficiencies

The Committee discusses parking meters/collections, partnering with the Foundation to fundraise, and looking at student retention and how we use resources to retain students or potentially consulting outside entities to evaluate effective use of funding.