

**NORTHWEST COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
June 2, 2014**

MEMBERS PRESENT: President MR. MARK WESTERHOLD; Vice President/Secretary MR. JOHN HOUSEL; Treasurer MR. RICK LAPLANTE; and Trustees MS. CAROLYN DANKO, DR. PAUL FEES, and MR. JIM VOGT.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Trustee Ms. NADA LARSEN.

OTHERS PRESENT: DR. STEFANI HICSWA, President; MR. SHELDON FLOM, Interim Vice President for Administrative Services; DR. GERALD GIRAUD, Vice President for Academic Affairs; MR. MARK KITCHEN, Vice President for College Relations; MS. JILL ANDERSON; MR. TROY HUNT; MR. MARTIN STENSING; MS. VAL HIEB; MS. INGRID EICKSTEDT, MS. ANDREA SHIPLEY; MS. ILENE OLSON, the *Powell Tribune*; and MS. CYNTHIA CICCI, Executive Secretary to the President and Board of Trustees.

CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting of the Northwest College Board of Trustees was held on Monday, June 2, 2014, at 4 p.m. in the Trapper Room of the DeWitt Student Center (DSC).

A APPROVE THE AGENDA: **A motion was made by Trustee Danko and seconded by Trustee Vogt to approve the agenda as presented.** Trustees discussed the new Board agenda format, specifically the consent agenda. Board President Westerhold explained that a consent agenda is a list of routine items that do not require discussion and can be approved as a unit; however, a Board member may request that an item be removed from the consent agenda. The purpose of the consent agenda is to shorten the amount of time spent on normal routine items and allow more time for substantial discussion. Trustee Housel expressed opposition to a consent agenda. **Motion carried.**

A CONSENT AGENDA: Trustee Housel requested that the check register be removed from the consent agenda. **A motion was made by Trustee Fees and seconded by Trustee Danko to approve the consent agenda as amended. Motion carried. The consent agenda was approved including the minutes of the regular meeting and executive session of May 12, 2014, and the fourth quarter budget adjustments for the 2014 fiscal year.**

A CHECK REGISTER: Trustee Vogt requested the check register items related to the Yellowstone Building be marked with a symbol.

Film and Television Instructor Troy Hunt responded to questions regarding purchases for the TV program. President Hicswa reminded Trustees that items listed on the check register have already been budgeted. **A motion was made by Trustee Housel and seconded by Trustee Vogt to approve the check register as presented. Motion carried.**

Constituent Groups: New Faculty Organization (FO) President Martin Stensing introduced himself but had no report. President Hicswa added that she received a petition signed by 61 faculty members to create a Faculty Senate. Vice President Giraud will be working with Mr. Stensing to respond to the petition.

New Professional Staff Organization (PSO) President Andrea Shipley reported that Deb Karst was elected to the Executive

Committee and will serve on College Council. The PSO's first order of business is to review the by-laws.

Classified Staff Organization (CSO) President Val Hieb reported that the previous Executive Committee selected the recipient of the "We Care" scholarship, and the new Executive Committee will meet soon to get organized and make plans for the year.

Board President:

Board President Mark Westerhold reported on last week's Board retreat at which Trustees discussed the College's accomplishments over the past year and priorities for the 2015 fiscal year. The Board also developed a list of goals for itself and for President Hicswa for fiscal year 2015.

Board Committees:

Trustee Vogt reported on the Greybull Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) meeting he recently attended. They are sharing expenses with the high school on a vehicle for driver education. The organization has come a long way in a short time.

Trustee Housel reported on the Lovell BOCES meeting that he and Trustee Vogt participated in by teleconference. The organization spends a good deal of their budget on concurrent enrollment. He agreed that both the Greybull and Lovell BOCES are doing well.

College President:

Due to the condensed time since last month's meeting, as well as the special Board meeting and Board retreat, President Hicswa and the Vice Presidents were allowed to forgo written reports this month.

NWC Foundation:

Foundation Executive Director Shelby Wetzel noted that early summer is a time for catch-up so planning can continue. The Foundation Gala is planned for Saturday, October 25th, in the new Yellowstone Building conference center.

DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

DRAFT BUDGET:

President Hicswa reported that the narrative in the final budget will describe how the budget fits into the *Strategic Plan*, how the current funds are divided.

Interim Vice President Flom reviewed the changes made to the preliminary draft of the budget for the 2015 fiscal year. A decline in Park County's valuation is expected, but Mr. Flom expects an update from the county assessor soon. He also hopes to have a better idea on the recapture/redistribution process from the state for the July meeting.

Changes to the auxiliary budget include projections based on the new food service vendor. Changes were also made to the Bookstore budget now that a year has passed since Follett took over the Bookstore operations. President Hicswa will provide the Board with comparison information from when the College operated it.

Interim Vice President Flom reviewed the major changes in the Plant Fund revenue and expenditures. Other changes may be forthcoming as the details emerge on the \$880,481 supplemental appropriations from the state. Since it appears that NWC no longer needs to seek a \$2 million bank loan for the new

Yellowstone Building, the NWC Foundation has offered to loan the College the \$750,000 it needs for its share of the financial support.

Board President Westerhold asked how far down the list of major maintenance projects the \$880,481 in supplemental appropriations will cover. Interim Vice President Flom responded that a list of major maintenance projects is submitted to the state annually and the list may be reprioritized.

Trustee LaPlante asked about administrative vs. instructional spending, the definition of each, and if it's tracked historically. President Hicswa responded that the data is available and that the National Association of Colleges and University Business Officers (NACUBO) may provide guidelines as to what dollar percentages should be spent on instruction and academic support. Administrative expenses (i.e. utilities, phone, mail) are included in institutional support.

Trustee LaPlante said it would be helpful to include standard metrics when reviewing future budgets, as well as comparisons and trends over a time span. President Hicswa responded that the information the Board is requesting is available, but time and money is needed to gather and analyze the data. Board President Westerhold asked the Finance Committee to discuss what key metrics would be helpful and to report back to the Board after which a decision will be made if it should be done.

President Hicswa reminded Board members they can also authorize funds for initiatives. At the recent Board retreat, Trustees agreed to provide money for Presidential priorities.

Trustee LaPlante suggested that the Board authorize \$20,000 from existing budget reserves plus \$20,000 from the operating budget to use toward new initiatives as seed money to get new programs going. Trustee Vogt added that this would be one-time money, not ongoing. President Hicswa clarified that the funds would not just be used for academic programming but other presidential priorities as well. Trustee Vogt conceded that the President can decide how the funds are used but that he would like to see how they were spent. The budget will be adjusted accordingly to be presented for approval at the July meeting.

CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM:

Citizens' Open Forum convened at 5 p.m. There were no citizens who wished to address the Board and the Citizens' Open Forum was adjourned.

PASS RATES FOR DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES:

Vice President Giraud distributed information on pass rates for developmental courses in math from 2002-2014 and for English from 2007-2014. The data was summarized and a descriptive analysis was conducted by Dr. Giraud and Institutional Researcher Lisa Smith.

Vice President Giraud reviewed the information with the Board explaining that students are placed into one of four math classes based on their Compass test score. The same is true for English. He added that 60% of new students are placed into at least one developmental course. Dr. Giraud listed several significant changes to the developmental math curriculum and grading

standards made in Fall 2008.

In response to a question by Trustee LaPlante, Dr. Giraud reported that the College employs students to provide peer tutoring and that the capacity is available to meet the need.

The Board thanked Dr. Giraud for his report and analysis which points out the importance of academic rigor and standards in instruction.

**REGISTRAR'S OFFICE
REORGANIZATION:**

With the retirement of the Registration and Records Specialist, a staffing change in the Registrar's Office is being proposed. The half-time Enrollment Services Office Assistant position in the front office was added at the peak of our enrollment. The proposal is to combine funds from the half-time position and the Registration and Records Specialist position to create a new higher-level position requiring more education and experience. In order to do this, a Reduction in Force (RIF) for the half-time Office Assistant position must be invoked. President Hicswa responded to questions from Trustees regarding potential need to add the position back when enrollment rises. The recommendation will be presented to College Council on June 3rd and for Board approval at next month's meeting.

**REFINANCING SIMPSON HALL LEASE
REVENUE BONDS:**

President Hicswa reported that in discussing the *Facilities Master Plan* and the need for bonding capacity, the possibility of refinancing the Simpson Hall addition lease revenue bonds was raised. The College has received proposals from two financial institutions to refinance the lease revenue bonds used to finance the addition to Simpson Hall which would save the College a sizable amount of money. Interim Vice President Flom responded to questions regarding interest rates and bond periods. He also explained that Board action may be necessary before a new law takes effect on July 1st that would prohibit the College from partnering directly with the financial institution. After the proposals are analyzed, President Hicswa will let Trustees know if a special meeting before July 1st is necessary.

BOCES BUDGETS:

Trustees Vogt and Housel represent the NWC Board of Trustees on three BOCES boards: Big Horn County School District #2 (Lovell), Big Horn County School District #3 (Greybull) and Park County School District #1 (Powell). Trustees reviewed budget information provided to them in the Board materials. The Lovell and Greybull BOCES budgets have already been approved. Powell BOCES Executive Director Ingrid Eickstedt responded to questions about why Powell BOCES funds aren't used to help pay for concurrent enrollment and plans for the large amount of money in reserves. The Powell BOCES budget will be voted on at its June 11th Board meeting.

A UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

PURCHASE REQUEST:

At last month's special meeting, the Board was presented with a request to purchase a New-Tek Tri-Caster 460 Multi-Camera Production System for the Television and Film Production program at a cost of \$19,495. President Hicswa recommended Board approval of the equipment purchase. Film and Television Instructor Troy Hunt responded to questions regarding the life expectancy of the equipment and the number of students in the

program. **A motion was made by Trustee Vogt and seconded by Trustee Danko to approve purchasing the new video switcher for the Television Production Program as presented. Motion carried.**

FACILITIES MASTER PLAN UPDATE:

The Board reviewed the updated *Facilities Master Plan* (FMP) draft at last month's meeting. Trustees remarked that the use of College facilities is deplorable and the Board would be hard pressed to assume any more buildings are needed except for the Student Center.

Trustee Vogt was adamant that the multi-sports court (and first item on the FMP) be constructed as soon as possible. According to President Hicswa, the construction of the multi-sports court was technically tabled and would need to be untabled and brought forward. President Hicswa will put together an analysis including ways to fund it. **A motion was made by Trustee LaPlante and seconded by Trustee Vogt to approve the *Facilities Master Plan* update as presented at last month's meeting and authorizing President Hicswa to go forward with developing a plan to complete the projects listed in it. Motion carried.**

A NEW BUSINESS:

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE WRITE-OFFS:

Interim Vice President Flom distributed a detailed list of accounts to be written-off totaling \$147,101. All accounts written-off will be maintained in the database for tracking purposes and holds will be continued on the student's transcript. He will continue to work to keep the accounts receivable current.

In response to questions from Trustees, Mr. Flom explained that writing off accounts after one year is a standard business practice. The collection agency used by the College reports uncollectable accounts to the credit bureau. If the account is large enough, the collection agency sometimes request it go to small claims court.

President Hicswa added that one of the primary indicators we see for retention issues is unmet financial need. The Retention Committee is working to identify these at-risk students. Foundation Executive Director Wetzal added that a fund is being created in order to work with students who have financial need.

Trustee LaPlante reluctantly moved to approve the accounts receivable write offs in the amount of \$147,101 as presented. Trustee Danko seconded the motion. Motion carried.

A ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion by Trustee Danko, the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.