

**NORTHWEST COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
April 11, 2016**

MEMBERS PRESENT: President MR. JOHN HOUSEL; Vice President/Secretary MS. NADA LARSEN; Treasurer DR. PAUL FEES; and Trustees MS. CAROLYN DANKO, MR. DUSTY SPOMER, MR. MARK WESTERHOLD and DR. MARK WURZEL.

OTHERS PRESENT: DR. STEFANI HICSWA, President; DR. GERALD GIRAUD, Vice President for Academic Affairs/Interim Vice President for Student Services; MR. MARK KITCHEN, Vice President for College Relations; MS. LISA WATSON, Vice President of Administrative Services; MS. SHELBY WETZEL; MS. JILL ANDERSON; MS. ELAINE DEBUHR; MS. AMANDA ENRIQUEZ; MR. SAM JONES; MS. DEB KARST; MS. SUSANNE SUTTON; MR. STEVE THULIN MS. KRISTINE WALKER; MR. BRETT WILLIAMS; MS. ILENE OLSON, *Powell Tribune*; and MS. CYNTHIA CICCI, Executive Assistant to the President and Board of Trustees.

CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting of the Northwest College Board of Trustees was held on Monday, April 11, 2016, at 3 p.m. in the DSC Student Center Trapper Room.

A APPROVE THE AGENDA: **A motion was made by Trustee Westerhold and seconded by Trustee Larsen to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.**

A EXECUTIVE SESSION: **A motion was made by Trustee Danko and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to move into executive session to conduct President Hicswa's annual evaluation. Motion carried.**

The executive session adjourned and after a short break, the business meeting began at 4:15 p.m.

Model United Nations Team introduction:

Model UN Advisor Steve Walker reported on this year's NWC delegation to the National Model United Nations Conference in New York City and its global impact. Dr. Walker spoke briefly on his plans to expand the program. Each of the four students who participated in Model UN gave a brief self-introduction.

A PRESIDENT'S EVALUATION: **A motion was made by Trustee Westerhold and seconded by Trustee Larsen to have Board Chair Housel enter into contract negotiations with Dr. Hicswa. Motion carried.**

A CONSENT AGENDA: Trustee Spomer reported briefly on a recent Powell Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) meeting at which the Board decided to discontinue the current staffing structure and is investigating new structures to continue programming at an enhanced level. In the interim, NWC is assisting by offering operational support. BOCES looks forward to having a new structure in place in a few weeks.

Trustee Westerhold reported on the Board Finance Committee meeting which included a discussion of policies, the budget, student fees, and financial exigency. After a teleconference with NWC's liaison to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), the Finance Committee decided against recommending the Board declare financial exigency. The Committee also discussed the early retirement incentive offer and other budget considerations.

A motion was made by Trustee Westerhold and seconded by Trustee Spomer to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried and the consent agenda was approved which included the minutes of the regular meeting of March 14, 2016.

A FINANCIAL REPORTS:

President Hicswa responded to several questions on the check register after which **a motion was made by Trustee Wurzel and seconded by Trustee Danko to approve the financial reports as presented. Motion carried.**

DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

Reduction In Force (Policies 3.5.4 and 1.13.8)

President Hicswa reviewed with the Board the Reduction In Force (RIF) policies 3.5.4 and 1.13.8 which were included in the Board materials. At its May 3rd meeting, the College Council will review positions that are being recommended for RIF. The Board of Trustees will be asked to take action on the RIF recommendations at its May meeting.

NWC Foundation Memorandum of Understanding

Trustee Larsen, President Hicswa, NWC Foundation Executive Director Wetzel and NWC Foundation Board Chair Nickles have been working over the last several months to revise and update the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the College and the NWC Foundation. A draft of the MOU was included in the Board materials for review. The draft MOU has been reviewed by the President's Advisory Council and legal counsel. Trustees were asked to review the document and be prepared to take action on the MOU at its May meeting.

CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM:

Citizens' Open Forum convened at 5 p.m. Student Senate President Sam Jones reported that in his efforts to find a better way to effectively allocate funds, the Student Senate decided to hold budget hearings at the beginning of fall and spring semester at which club presidents can present budget requests for consideration. He also introduced Student Senate President-elect Susanne Sutton. The Citizens' Open Forum adjourned at 5:09 p.m.

A NEW BUSINESS:

Mandatory student fees

Based on analysis of student fees and Board discussion at last month's meeting, President Hicswa recommended an increase in student fees. The Board Finance Committee reviewed the proposed rate increase which is also supported by the Student Senate in order to maintain services. **A motion was made by Trustee Fees and seconded by Trustee Larson to approve an increase of four dollars to the student mandatory fees and to raise the cap from twelve to fifteen credit hours (with the exception of the facilities fee that has no cap). Motion carried.**

Yellowstone Building generator purchase (Purchasing Policy 3.9.12)

When the Yellowstone Building capital construction project was designed, an emergency generator was identified as a critical element to support redundancy needs for the College. However, Administration and Information, Construction Management Division (AICM) did not fund the generator but, instead, included the design work for the pad location and underground conduits to facilitate the installation at a future time. Subsequent

to the building completion, AICM reassessed the project design and approved \$125,000 of major maintenance monies for its purchase and installation, which is uncommon in post construction review. President Hicswa recommended approval of the generator purchase.

A motion was made by Trustee Danko and seconded by Trustee Larsen to waive the requirement for the competitive bidding process due to a sole source proprietor and approve up to \$98,000 for the purchase of a 200Kw generator to be fully integrated into existing NWC networks. Motion carried.

Early retirement policy exemption

Two years ago the Board discussed maintaining early retirement programs for faculty and staff: the Faculty Early Retirement Incentive Program (FERIP) and the Voluntary Early Retirement Program (VERP). In February 2016, the Board approved early retirement applications for three staff; no faculty applied for early retirement.

The College has determined that anticipated expenditures for personnel will exceed anticipated revenues for the upcoming biennium and beyond. In order to reduce expenditures, the College seeks to provide opportunities to its faculty and staff to participate in a voluntary retirement special offering as part of its overall budget reduction planning.

The Finance Committee supports providing the early retirement exemption special offering. The proposed Faculty Early Retirement Incentive Program SPECIAL OFFERING (FERIPSO) and the Staff Voluntary Early Retirement Program SPECIAL OFFERING (VERPSO) have been vetted by the College Council and the Academic Advisory Council, and there is good support for it on campus. President Hicswa gave an overview of the special offering. Trustee Larsen added that the Policy Committee also discussed the policy exemption and supports it. This is a special offering and not a change in policy.

A motion was made by Trustee Fees and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to approve the implementation of an early retirement exception to the existing early retirement policy.

In further discussion, President Hicswa stated that the College has final approval of applications and that the policy excludes employees who are critical to operations. **Motion carried.**

Higher Learning Commission (HLC) standards on faculty qualifications

In June 2015, the HLC Board of Trustees adopted a policy revision to Assumed Practice B.2 regarding faculty qualifications which will become effective September 1, 2017. In October 2015, the HLC issued guidelines for institutions with regard to determining minimal faculty qualifications. The HLC issued more explicit guidelines in March 2016 as to how HLC intends to review institutions and how peer reviewers will examine faculty qualifications. President Hicswa summarized the qualifications and expertise that faculty are expected to have in the subjects they teach. She hopes to seek more clarification at the HLC Conference in Chicago, IL on April 16-18.

The College's legal counsel recommended the Board pass a resolution affirming the policy revision to Assumed Practice B.2 regarding faculty qualifications and that the College maintain HLC's expectations and timeline for compliance.

There was a brief discussion regarding the meaning of "should" vs. "shall" or "must" in the policy. President Hicswa noted that approval of the resolution affirms that the Board has read the guidelines and understands them.

A motion was made by Trustee Larsen and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to adopt the following resolution:

Whereas Northwest College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission;

Whereas the Higher Learning Commission's Board of Trustees adopted a policy revision to Assumed Practice B.2 regarding faculty qualifications on June 26, 2015;

Whereas the Higher Learning Commission issued guidelines in October 2015 for institutions regarding determining minimal faculty qualifications;

Whereas the Higher Learning Commission issued more explicit guidelines in March 2016 regarding how HLC intends to review institutions and how peer reviewers will examine faculty qualifications;

Be it therefore resolved that the Northwest College Board of Trustees affirm the policy revision to Assumed Practice B.2 regarding faculty qualifications and agree that Northwest College shall maintain the highest standards of faculty qualification as articulated by College policy and the assumed practices of the Higher Learning Commission. Furthermore, the College shall maintain HLC's expectations and timeline for compliance.

Motion carried.

Trustee Larsen will participate in the Wyoming Community College Commission and Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees meetings via teleconference.

The Spring Board Retreat is scheduled for May 11th at Sleeping Giant Resort. Transportation will be provided.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for May 9, 2016 at 3 p.m.

A ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion by Trustee Westerhold which was seconded by Trustee Fees, the meeting adjourned at 5:51 p.m.