

**NORTHWEST COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**

August 10, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: President MR. DUSTY SPOMER; Vice President/Secretary DR. MARK WURZEL; Treasurer MR. LUKE ANDERSON; and Trustees MS. CAROLYN DANKO, MR. JOHN HOUSEL, MR. BOB NEWSOME, and DR. LARRY TODD.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: DR. STEFANI HICSWA, President; DR. GERRY GIRAUD, Vice President for Academic Affairs; MR. DEE HAVIG, Interim Vice President for Student Services; MS. LISA WATSON, Vice President for Administrative Services and Finance; MR. BRAD BOWEN; MR. DEAN BRUCE; MR. CASEY DEARCORN; MS. ELAINE DEBUHR; MR. DUSTIN DICKS; MS. LAURA GWINN, MS. RACHEL HANAN; MS. ANGELA JOHNSON; MR. MERVIN LARSEN; MS. NADA LARSEN; MS. CAREY MILLER; MS. NANCY MILLER; MR. DENNIS QUILLEN; MR. GREG THOMAS; MR. OSCAR TREVIÑO; MS. SHELBY WETZEL; MR. KEVIN KILLOUGH, *Powell Tribune*; and MS. DIANA GWYNN, Executive Secretary to the President and Board of Trustees.

CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting of the Northwest College Board of Trustees was called to order on Monday, August 10, 2020 at 4:08 p.m. at Meeteetse Schools.

OATH OF OFFICE: The oath of office was administered to Lawrence C. Todd by Notary Public Angela Johnson.

A APPROVE THE AGENDA: **A motion was made by Trustee Danko and seconded by Trustee Todd to approve the agenda.**

Trustee Wurzel requested that the agenda be amended to include a report on the August 5 Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees (WACCT) Board and Presidents Retreat.

Motion carried and the amended agenda was approved.

A CONSENT AGENDA: **A motion was made by Trustee Anderson and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to approve the consent agenda.**

Trustee Wurzel reported that at the August 5 WACCT Board and Presidents Retreat, it was decided to change to the WACCT organizational structure to include the seven community college presidents. It was also decided that the main focus of WACCT will now be advocacy, and given this shift in focus, the organization does not need an executive director in the same form as it has needed one in the past. The group did determine that there is a need for a lobbyist, but that the other functions previously under the purview of the executive director will be taken on by the community colleges.

President Hicswa responded to questions on the check register. She noted that COVID-related expenses are being tracked in the check register so that CARES Act funding can be applied appropriately.

In response to a question regarding the food service contract, President Hicswa responded that the contract was the best that could be negotiated based on the current COVID situation and enrollment projections. She reported that for fall the franchise for Einstein's Bros Bagels could not be maintained financially, but that Sodexo will operate a similar coffee shop, called the HUB, which will offer expanded food options since the Grille will be closed due to COVID.

In response to a question regarding the bookstore contact, President Hicswa responded that Follett has agreed to service NWC through the end of December

while NWC goes out to bid for a new contract for spring 2021.

Motion carried and the consent agenda, including the minutes of the July 6, 2020 regular meeting, the July 6, 2020 budget hearing, and the July 6, 2020 executive session, was approved.

TRUSTEE RECOGNITION:

Board President Spomer recognized out-going Trustee Nada Larsen, who resigned effective July 15, 2020 due to her move from Meeteetse to Cody. He thanked her for her many contributions and outstanding service on the Board and presented her with a gift of a NWC jacket and her Board nameplate.

**DISCUSSION/
INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

COVID Update

President Hicswa reported that NWC received CARES Act funding in the amount of \$732,000 from the federal government. Half of those funds were directed to students, and half to the college. The regulations stipulate that the student portion of the money must be used prior to utilizing the institutional money, and that institutional money can only be used in proportion to student use.

She reminded Trustees that \$54M was requested from the state CARES Act funding by all seven Wyoming community colleges for COVID-related expenses. The state received a total of \$1.25B in CARES Act funding. The colleges still do not know how much of \$54M will be received since some of the submitted requests have been denied by the Attorney General.

President Hicswa reported that last week the request for \$7.5M by the Educational Attainment Executive Council to help adults impacted by COVID attend college was approved; and that last Friday, a request for \$25M for community college students was approved, with the funds to be applied directly to student room and board expenses. President Hicswa then gave an overview of the fall reopening plan.

Campus Reopening

Some campus spaces, like the Grille, will be completely closed because NWC does not have the staff, cleaning supplies, or scheduling capacity to clean every space on campus. Some classrooms will be open only on a limited basis requiring less-frequent cleaning. Classrooms that are open for daily use will be cleaned at the required level.

Classes

Course delivery has been divided into three different modalities: 1) online, 2) face-to-face with social distancing/masking protocols; 3) hybrid class which will be presented via Zoom during scheduled class times. She reported that she is very pleased with faculty creativity and flexibility in designing courses to be delivered in these ways. She noted that faculty feel operating in this way is the best option for preventing the spread of COVID on campus. No classes will be offered live after Thanksgiving because of the risk associated with students going home and then returning to campus.

Residence Halls

Each student living on campus will have their own room. Students will be required to wear masks in the common areas, in live classes, and any time they are indoors on campus. Requirements are the same for employees unless they are in their office alone.

Activities, Clubs and Events

Campus activities and club events will be limited with many held via Zoom. Other activities and community events will be limited as well. Paint the Town Red has been canceled for this year.

Faculty and Staff Return to Campus

Staffing rotations have been implemented to avoid exposure and the need to quarantine. Many employees returned July 26, some on August 3, and some on August 10. New faculty will be on campus August 13 with all other faculty and staff returning August 17.

Athletics

Based on recommendations from the NJCAA, all sports except Rodeo have been moved to spring semester. There will be no division game play this fall, but modified practices will occur. Seasons will likely be shortened.

Dining Services

Students will be required to wear facemasks while getting food. Once seated, they can remove their masks to eat. They will need to put on their masks to get more food and when they are finished. They will be encouraged to social distance with tables and chairs being spaced out. Meal times will be spread out. Sodexo is working on alternative ways to offer food options without having long lines.

President Hicswa reported that while plans for reopening are still being finalized, campus is in good shape for reopening. She reported that communications have been sent out to students to inform and prepare them for reopening under the current protocols and training will be done during orientation.

The Trustees expressed their appreciation for the hard work and effort that has been put into this planning.

CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM:

The Citizens' Open Forum convened at 5:10 p.m.

Elaine DeBuhr addressed the Board as a faculty member regarding proposed revisions to policies 2140 Board Policy Development and 3800 Faculty Employment Policies, specifically the revisions that eliminate the Faculty Employment Policy Review Committee (FEPRC). She explained that she currently serves on FEPRC, which consists of three faculty members, three administrators, and a facilitator. She explained that the mission of FEPRC is to dig in and understand changes to faculty policies while utilizing the experience of the committee members to provide a wider perspective. She explained that the work is not easy nor fast moving because the intention of the committee is to work together towards compromise and ultimately consensus. She referenced a previous handbook committee which found faculty policy revision work to be more intensive than other policy work. FEPRC alleviates that work from an all-encompassing policy committee. Ms. DeBuhr stated that the proposers of the revisions see these revisions as a structural change which encourages efficiency, but the faculty see it as a quality change that may compromise faculty involvement in instructional matters. She then explained that the current FEPRC process requires a faculty vote, which is a built-in system for the Board to hear the faculty voice. She then reported that the faculty vote on these revisions was unanimous in its opposition to these revisions. Ms. DeBuhr expressed her concern regarding the elimination of FEPRC and reduction of the faculty voice. She also expressed that she sees the strength of the current process is that the vote it is required and reported to the

Board. She feels the current process works well. She requested that the Board hear the voice of the faculty when they consider these revisions.

The Citizen's Open Forum adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

**DISCUSSION/
INFORMATIONAL ITEMS
(CONTINUED):**

Trapper Chatbot Launch Debrief	Computing Services Director Casey Dearcorn presented an overview of the newly acquired Trapper Chatbot, which is an artificial intelligence designed to answer questions for those visiting the NWC website. He explained that this chatbot is specifically designed for higher education and that the team supporting the chatbot focuses solely on higher education issues. He reviewed some of the features of the chatbot, the process for continuously improving the its functionality, the success that NWC has already realized through use, and plans for expanding usage.
Vendor Contracts Review	<p>The Board performed an annual review of vendor contracts. President Hicswa and, at the request of President Hicswa, Vice President Watson and Director Miller also responded to questions regarding several of the vendor contracts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CWC houses PBS for the state, and NWC has a MOU with CWC for educational services. The MOU relates to the radio licensing and PBS services, but there is no cost associated with it.• There are two charges for the Cody Center lease – one is a charge for the rental and one is for the extension, which are combined on check register.• The charge to Spectrum is for marketing campaign advertising through Spectrum streaming which replaces Google advertising. In addition, advertising is done separately through Facebook and Instagram.• BOCES contracts are coming up for renewal. Trustee Wurzel reported that the Powell BOCES contract is currently awaiting signatures.
Citizens' Open Forum Procedure Review	The Board of Trustees reviewed the guidelines and request form for the Citizens' Open Forum, as part of their annual review of this procedure. It was noted that the process for signing up seems a little clunky, but that both forms are made available to anyone who wishes to address the Board.
Board Policy Manual Access Review	Diana Gwynn reviewed the procedure for Trustee access to the online Board Policy Manual. The Board discussed the advantages and disadvantages of having the Board Policy manual outward facing rather than available only through the College's portal requiring log in credentials and password.
Board Committee Appointment Update	Board President Spomer appointed Trustee Todd to serve on the Board Policy and Student Success Committee and the Big Horn County School District #3 (Greybull) BOCES. He appointed Trustee Danko to serve on the Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees (WACCT) Board.

A UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A NEW BUSINESS:

Vision 2025	President Hicswa reviewed the work that was done to develop Vision 2025. Last fall, NWC hosted several community listening sessions which resulted in 743 raw data points. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee sorted and analyzed the data which resulted in four main categories as follows: 1) Educational Programming; 2) Recruiting and Marketing; 3) Facilities; 4)
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Student Retention and Success. Those four categories were then refined by the 2019 Summer Leadership Institute graduates and the Communications and Marketing office into Vision 2025, which will serve as the strategic initiatives for the next five years: 1) Champion Student Success; 2) Innovate Academic Programming; 3) Attract New Students; and 4) Revitalize Facilities. Upon approval of Vision 2025, key performance indicators will be developed and operational goals will be set.



A motion was made by Trustee Danko and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to approve the strategic initiatives for Vision 2025 as presented.

The Trustees discussed the idea of rebranding as part of the strategic vision, the work of institutional transformation currently being initiated by CampusWorks, the ramifications of the current financial crisis in Wyoming, and the work still needed in order to determine the future direction of NWC.

President Hicswa reported that her conversations with Liz Murphy, CEO of CampusWorks, resulted in the conclusion that a name change may be the end result of the transformational process, but that more analysis and work is required prior to making that type of decision.

Trustee Housel noted that revisiting these ideas is important. These issues have been discussed by the Board for years, but through the changing times, the objectives remain the same – being student-centered, recruiting and retaining students, and student success.

Board President Spomer noted that this Vision 2025 is a product of both community and campus input.

Motion carried.

Board Self-Evaluation
Instrument

Trustee Wurzel reported that the Board Policy and Student Success Committee reviewed the Board self-evaluation instrument. The committee determined that many of the questions were ambiguous, but decided to leave them as listed with only a few minor revisions.

A motion was made by Trustee Wurzel and seconded by Trustee Danko to approve the revisions to the Board Self-Evaluation instrument as presented. Motion carried.

Board Retreat Date

After discussion on scheduling, a motion was made by Trustee Anderson and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to set the date for the Board Retreat as Tuesday, September 22. Motion carried.

Recommended Policy Revisions:
5700 Sexual Misconduct

President Hicswa explained that the recommended revisions to policy 5700 have been made to maintain compliance with recent changes to federal Title IX regulations. She reported that the proposed revisions have been through the college's shared governance process.

Trustee Wurzel, chair of the Board Policy and Student Success Committee, reported that the committee has reviewed these revisions and recommends approval of them as presented. He noted that the majority of the revisions are required by law.

A motion was made by Trustee Wurzel and seconded by Trustee Danko to approve the revisions to policy 5700 Sexual Misconduct as presented.

Trustee Housel commended Laura Gwinn for her diligent work on these policy revisions.

Motion carried.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS &
FOLLOW-UP ON CITIZENS'
OPEN FORUM TOPICS:**

Board President Spomer officially welcomed Trustee Todd to Board and expressed appreciation for his willingness to serve in this role.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

State of the College Address, August 17, 2020, 8:30 a.m., Zoom
Board of Trustees election filing deadline, August 24, 2020
WCCC Meeting, August 28, 2020, Casper/Zoom
Residence Life Master Plan Town Hall Meeting, September 1, 2020, 7:00 p.m.
Futures Summit, September 10, 2020, Time TBD
Next meeting, September 14, 2020, 4:00 p.m., Yellowstone Building
ACCT Leadership Congress, October 5-8, 2020, Online
WCCC Meeting, October 8, 2020, Powell/Zoom

A ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

MARK WURZEL, Vice President/Secretary

Date