

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

August 16, 2021

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**OTHERS PRESENT:** MS. LISA WATSON, Interim President; DR. GERRY GIRAUD, Vice President for Academic Affairs; MR. DEE HAVIG, Interim Vice President for Student Services; MS. JILL ANDERSON; MS. HOLLY BERRYMAN; MS. LESLIE BIGHAM; MR. BRAD BOWEN; MS. JENNIFER CANNIZZARO; MS. ANNA CRAGOE; DR. MARNEÉ CRAWFORD; DR. RENEE DECHERT; MR. DUSTIN DICKS; MR. DAVE ERICKSON; MS. TRACY GASAWAY; MS. NANCY GILMORE; MS. CHRISTI GREAHAM; MR. WEST HERNANDEZ; MS. MICHAELA JONES; MS. NANCY MILLER; MS. CAREY MILLER; MR. CORY OSTERMILLER; MR. DENNIS QUILLEN; MS. LISA SMITH; MR. MARTIN STENSING; MR. OSCAR TREVIÑO; MS. SHELBY WETZEL; MR. KEVIN KILLOUGH, *Powell Tribune*; and MS. KELI BORDERS, Interim 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 16, 2021, at 4:00 p.m.in the Yellowstone Building Conference Center.

**A APPROVE THE AGENDA:** **A motion was made by Trustee Kuipers and seconded by Trustee Spomer to approve the agenda. Motion carried.**

**A CONSENT AGENDA:** **A motion was made by Trustee Spomer and seconded by Trustee Newsome to approve the consent agenda.**  
**Motion carried and the consent agenda, including the July 12, 2021, regular meeting minutes, and the minutes of July 12, 2021, budget hearing was approved.**

**DISCUSSION/  
INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

Big Horn Basin High School report

Upon invitation from Interim President Lisa Watson, Institutional Research Manager Lisa Smith shared the Big Horn Basin High School Report. The report is an annual summary of student enrollment, retention, and performance for students from Northwest College's service area high schools who enrolled at NWC the academic year following high school graduation.

Based on a three-year average, Lisa stated that of the 515 students who graduated from area high schools, 139 students (27% of graduating class) enrolled at NWC in the year following high school graduation. Of those, 98 students (19%) had previously been concurrent or dual-enrolled during high school. The schools from which the largest percentage of students attended Northwest College are Powell, Lovell, Cody, and the Shoshone Learning Center. Ten Sleep, Meeteetse and Worland sent the smallest percentage of their graduating class.

The report indicates that the average incoming high school GPA from area high schools is 3.23. After completing the first semester (based on the fall 2020 semester), the average NWC GPA for those same students is 2.46. While this is a slight decrease from the previous two years, it could be attributed to COVID and the online course delivery model and may not be an overall trend.

Lisa stated that in Fall 2020, 18% of NWC first-time students were placed into developmental writing, compared to 14% of Big Horn Basin graduates and 10% of Big Horn Basin concurrent or dual-enrolled graduates. Over half (51%)

of NWC first-time students placed into developmental math compared to 50% of Big Horn Basin graduates and 4% of Big Horn Basin concurrent or dual-enrolled graduates.

In response to a question from Board President Wurzel, Lisa explained that the total number of all Northwest College students needing developmental classes could also include students who have been out of high school for several years.

Lisa stated that while Northwest College had a decrease in the retention rate for 19/FA students returning in 20/FA (as did many colleges nationally due to COVID), NWC's retention rate of 57% was slightly higher than the average Wyoming community college rate of 56%. However, only 52% of 2019 Big Horn Basin graduates were retained during the same time frame.

Based on 2017 graduation rates (the most recent year for which four years of graduation data are available for all cohorts), 48% of Big Horn Basin students graduated within three years compared to 44% of all Northwest College students. Also of positive note, of the dual and concurrent enrolled Big Horn Basin students, 64% graduated within three years.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel regarding efforts to enroll more Cody High School students, Interim President Watson stated she has met with the new Interim Superintendent in Cody to develop relationships and connections. She stated she has been working with him and others regarding leasing lab and classroom space at the high school. Northwest College faculty members will also be meeting with Cody High School teachers in August to discuss programming, collaboration, and outreach efforts with Cody's high school and middle school students.

In response to a question from President Wurzel regarding the number of area high school graduates who don't attend a college or university, Lisa Smith stated Northwest College does not have access to that information from the high schools.

Trustee Housel stated that while Northwest College is not privy to all of the information, the trends can be followed, and he appreciates the report and information provided.

In response to a question from Trustee Spomer regarding the concerning number of students needing developmental course work, Interim President Watson invited Vice President Giraud to speak to the changes that have been made to Northwest College's model.

A few years ago, Vice President Giraud stated that Northwest College researched best practices for developmental programs in English and Math. This research showed that students attending developmental courses don't typically have a better success rate than students who go right into College level courses. It was also decided that the College would not charge for developmental courses in which students do not receive college credits. Instead, students who test into developmental math and English are referred to the Adult Education program grant, whose mission is to prepare students for college with no charge for those services. The exception is pre-algebra since NWC faculty felt that students need structured time in the classroom to prepare students for algebra. Another approach the College is taking is offering sections of courses filled with students who tested lower on their entrance scores and receive college-level instruction and extra hours of instruction and supplemental support. Lisa Smith stated the performance indicators report

## COVID update

shows very positive results as students are getting to their college-level coursework and passing it much more quickly than they did before.

Interim President Watson stated fall classes would begin September 1, and Kick-Off Weekend takes place the weekend prior, with students moving into the Residence Halls at that time. Seven of the eight colleges in the State are beginning the school year with no mask mandate. All are following the Wyoming Department of Health guidelines, which differ from the CDC guidelines. The key message from the State is prevention and taking responsibility for keeping oneself safe and healthy. The University of Wyoming approved an indoor mask mandate just last week, and it was reported that several students withdrew from classes. She also noted she had received calls asking about mask mandates and stating that they will not come if mandates are required.

As a reminder, Interim President Watson noted that the Board passed plan 2C on April 12. The plan does not call for a mask mandate but does recommend social distancing. New furniture and fixtures were purchased last year to allow for social distancing and allow more space between individuals, but the classrooms are not generally large enough to allow for six feet between all students as has been recommended by the CDC.

Interim President Watson stated the Incident Command team is very cognizant of the current situation and is monitoring the level of sickness in the area. They are diligently working on completing protocols. One thing that will be much different this year than last is the decrease in support from Park County Public Health and the hospital in terms of contact tracing, the COVID hotline, testing sites, etc. The College will be instructing students to stay home when sick and talk to their medical provider as needed. Students will be offered the same level of support from the College in terms of their classes, tutoring, meals (if in residence halls), etc., as was provided last year.

Interim President Watson stated Public Health is predicting another year of concern regarding COVID. The College will continue to provide a safe environment in which students, faculty, and staff feel comfortable while continuing live instruction. The prevailing recommendation is to get vaccinated.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, Interim President Watson stated the Nursing Department would be conducting another vaccination clinic on campus during Kick-Off Weekend. The College will also assist any student who wishes to get vaccinated by referring them to the many places in the area offering vaccines and will also provide transportation to vaccination sites if need be.

Trustee Spomer stated he feels the CDC guidelines are ambiguous and confusing. He voiced concern about a full adaptation of the recommendations and would like the discussion to come before the Board on what it means for the College and the role of the Trustees to the constituents before the decision is made to fully adopt the CDC guidelines. In response, Interim President Watson stated that health conditions could change quickly. As Incident Commander, she will need to remain fluid and respond accordingly within boundaries determined by the Board if need be. Board President Wurzel suggested a review of the plan to refresh Trustees' memory, to which Interim President Watson agreed to email plan 2C for their review.

#### WIP update

Interim President Watson reminded Trustees that WIP (Wyoming Innovative Partnership) is a collaboration of the State's eight colleges to create a proposal to present to Governor Gordon related to the American Rescue Plan plan funds received by the State of Wyoming. The Governor has suggested these proposals should fall into one of three phases: Survive, Drive, and Thrive. Interim President Watson traveled to Casper last week for an Executive Council meeting to discuss the draft proposals from each of the colleges. The Presidents learned the Governor has asked that these initial requests be one-year initiatives that have measurable objectives by January 1, 2022 (Survive phase). These requests are due next week. To clarify, Interim President Watson explained that of the \$1.2 billion ARPA funds, the Governor has been authorized to distribute \$50 million in emergency relief beginning September 1. Of the remaining funds, \$500 million is slated to be used for revenue replacement for the State. The other \$500 million could be distributed among all agencies as part of the Thrive or Drive phase. A portion may be allocated to the colleges; however, the Legislature will be making these determinations during its spring session.

Interim President Watson stated that WIP would be submitting their proposal before September 1, as the Governor will be announcing his recommendations for the \$50 million shortly after. WIP will then continue work on the Thrive and Drive proposals to be submitted to the Legislature as part of the Governor's budget plan. The Governor has expressed several areas of priority, such as Agriculture, Technology, Business, Tourism, and Allied Health-related to economic growth and development.

#### WACCT Association bylaws

Interim President Watson stated she requested the funds for the WACCT dues to be paid by the Northwest College Foundation. This request stemmed from some comments received by Legislators expressing concern that State funds were being used for Trustee Association expenditures and lobbying. No College had been using State funds, but in order to eliminate any confusion, our membership will be paid by the NWC Foundation. Interim President Watson included the WACCT bylaws to refresh and inform Trustees of the service and support provided to the colleges by WACCT.

#### Vendor contract review

Interim President Watson referred Trustees to the annual vendor contract statement in the Board book. She stated the report hadn't changed significantly from last year, except for the Element 451 software, which replaced the Ellucian software for that service. For a similar cost, it was felt that Element 451 was a much more user-friendly and student-focused program that would have higher utilization.

In response to a question from Trustee Danko, Interim President Watson stated the Wyoming Office of Tourism contract for \$17,500 is money the College receives for clothing, rodeos, and scholarships as part of the College Cowboy Marketing program. She also pointed out several contracts on the report in which the College receives revenue, such as the Ag Workers Health Services, BOCES, etc.

In response to a question from Trustee Kuipers, Interim President Watson stated the College reduced the square footage of leased space at the Cody Center, which went from \$13,000/month to \$5,200/month as part of the budget cuts. The space that was kept will be utilized for Allied Health, Adult Education, and career and technical classes. Interim President Watson is still working on lease details for the use of the Cody High School for evening classes.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, Interim President Watson stated that while the change is new, Northwest College is not currently facing any challenges associated with the reduced space at the Cody Center. Northwest College still has the same amount of space for Allied Health, plus the two classrooms; therefore, Northwest College maintains a solid presence in the building. By having space at the high school, the College is also serving other areas of interest.

Trustee Housel expressed his appreciation for the annual report as he finds it very helpful. He stated he would be interested in going through the contracts in more detail during the next retreat. Interim President Watson suggested that in preparation for that discussion, the report could be sorted to indicate the type of service, incoming money vs. expenditures, etc.

Citizens' Open Forum procedure review

Interim President Watson referred the Board to the Citizens' Open Forum procedure for its annual review.

In response to a question from Trustee Kuipers, Interim President Watson stated the option of citizens to participate and listen to Board meetings via Zoom was a result of COVID and was not an option prior to COVID.

## **CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM**

The Citizens' Open Forum convened at 5:04 p.m. No citizens requested to address the Board; therefore, the Citizen's Open Forum adjourned.

### **A UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

There were no unfinished business items on the agenda.

### **A NEW BUSINESS:**

Transcript Notation Policy

Interim President Watson noted the Transcript Notation Policy included in the Board packet was not the latest version showing minor modifications. She presented a hard copy for Trustees to review for approval and noted that this is a new policy related to transcript notations. The project results from three years of work by the Wyoming community college Registrars to implement the practice across the State as a result of new statutes related to Title IX.

**A motion was made by Trustee Kuipers on behalf of the Board Policy and Student Success Committee to approve the Transcript Notation Policy as presented in hard copy. Motion carried.**

Interim President Watson noted that this is the last policy before the Board that used the previous EPRC/FPRC process. Once everyone returns to campus, the new Policy Review Committee will convene and follow the new process.

## **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & FEEDBACK TO CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM TOPICS:**

September Upcoming:

- Quarterly budget adjustments
- CCSSE report
- New employee introductions
- Course/lab fee proposals
- Reserve overview
- Discuss compensation
- Other TBD

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Next meeting, Sept.13, 2021, 3:00 p.m., Yellowstone Building  
WCCC Commission (special) Aug. 27, 2021, 8:30 a.m., Casper or Virtual  
State of the College Address and Luncheon, August 30, 2021, 12:00 p.m.,  
Yellowstone Building  
Paint the Town Red September 10, 2021, 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., Downtown  
WCCC Commission meeting October 7, 2021, 8:30 a.m., Sheridan  
ACCT Leadership Congress, Oct. 13-16, 2021, San Diego, CA  
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**A ADJOURNMENT:**

**The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.**

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LARRY TODD, Vice President/Secretary

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Date