

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

March 13, 2023

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

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: MS. LISA WATSON, President; DR. GERRY GIRAUD, Vice President for Academic Affairs; MR. DEE HAVIG, Interim Vice President for Student Services; MS. JILL ANDERSON; MS. CHRISTI GREAHAM; MS. JO ANN HEIMER; MS. CAREY MILLER; MR. CORY OSTERMILLER; MS. LISA SMITH; MS. LINDA SPOMER; MR. OSCAR TREVIÑO; MS. SHELBY WETZEL; MR. ZAC TAYLOR, *Powell Tribune*; and MS. KELI BORDERS, Executive Secretary to the President and Board of Trustees.

CALL TO ORDER: President Dr. Mark Wurzel joined the meeting via Zoom. In his physical absence, Trustee Dusty Spomer called the regular meeting of the Northwest College Board of Trustees to order on Monday, March 13, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. in the Cody Center, Room 2201.

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

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

In response to a previously submitted question from President Wurzel, President Watson stated that House Bill 0028 increased capital construction WCCC approval thresholds from \$100,000 to \$250,000. This does not affect projects that fall under major maintenance or deferred maintenance.

In response to a previously submitted question from President Wurzel related to the funding formula and the changes in the value of an online class, President Watson reminded Trustees that HB0080 reduced the weight of an online course a few years ago. However, recently passed HB0029 increased the value of online classes from .8 per credit to one. When the formula is recalculated, this will result in a loss to Northwest College since it offers fewer online classes than the other community colleges.

Trustee Housel stated he is pleased to learn that the Higher Learning Commission approved the BAS in Criminal Justice Studies and that the College will begin offering the program in the fall of 2023.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, Vice President Giraud stated that a limit has yet to be determined regarding the number of students who could enroll at any given time. Unlike the BAS in Professional Studies, which is a cohort, the Criminal Justice program will be open enrollment in which students may enroll at any time.

President Watson stated that the enrollment process is being established, and a social media marketing campaign is also being developed.

Trustee Housel stated he is pleased that faculty are working with the University of Wyoming to ensure the long-term success of the College's students who transfer to the University of Wyoming.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, Vice President Giraud stated there had been several iterations of the transfer agreement between the University of Wyoming and Northwest College. Currently, the arrangement is a block transfer by each degree program. There is an internet site that students

can utilize to see what courses would transfer into the degree program they are interested in. Dr. Giraud stated he believes the current model is working well as he hasn't heard of any instances where courses didn't transfer.

Dr. Giraud added that Northwest College's Academic and Career Advising Coordinator, Kelly McArdle, works closely with students in planning their courses and with the transferring institutions in Wyoming and Montana.

In response to a previously submitted question from President Wurzel, President Watson stated that HB 0031 allows BOCES to act as a local education agency for the purpose of applying for and receiving state and federal grants. Technically, BOCES does not have a staff nor an operating budget for this work. Through an MOU with the College, Leslie Bigham, Community Education Program Specialist, was hired by the College to run PVCE. She is unsure who will be responsible for applying for and subsequently managing future grants for BOCES.

In response to a question from Trustee Spomer, President Watson explained that as part of the WIP initiative, Northwest College will collaborate with the University of Wyoming on a grant to expand mobile maker spaces. The collaboration would provide a mobile maker space trailer that would align with a program the College is currently or planning to offer, such as construction trades. Unfortunately, all of the combined requests for the WIP funds far exceed the available dollar amount, so it is unknown if the College will receive funding to procure the trailer. The announcement regarding which proposals will receive grant funding is expected to be made the last week in March.

Motion carried, and the consent agenda, including the minutes of February 13, 2023, regular meeting, was approved.

**DISCUSSION/
INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

State Performance Indicators
Report

Lisa Smith shared a summary of the Performance Indicators report that goes to the Wyoming Community College Commission, specifically highlighting retention and completion rates.

Two hundred fifty-seven first-time, full-time degree-seeking students began in the fall of 2021. Of those, 61% returned in the fall of 2022, while 72% either returned or transferred to another institution. The College was slightly under the state average (63%) for returners and slightly above the state average (70%) for returners or transferring students. During the same time frame, 52% of 27 part-time students returned to Northwest College in fall 2022, well above the state average of 33%. Lisa noted that Northwest College has remained comparable to the national averages over the past ten years.

Lisa stated that Northwest College had the highest completion rate on record for the most recent cohort; first-time, full-time students who started in the fall of 2018 and graduated within three years. This was the state's highest completion rate, averaging 39%. Northwest College's completion rates have been higher or equal to the state average and well above the national average for nine of the past ten cohorts.

Lisa explained that by combining completion and transfer rates for the past five years, 59-60% of students completed or transferred within three years of starting at Northwest College. While there have been higher completion rates, fewer students transfer without earning a degree. This indicates that the College is seeing success in its efforts to assist students in completing a

Workforce Development
Activities Report

credential whether they plan to go to work or continue their education.

Christi Greaham stated that the heavy equipment simulators were purchased with grants from Wyoming Works and the Foundation. The simulators will be placed in trailers, allowing for mobile classrooms. The program will run similarly to the CDL program, which became so successful that it was necessary to move to an open enrollment model where students could begin at any time. It will also consist of stackable credentials such as safety certification, simulator time, employer training, or other on-the-job training through employers working with CTD. Students could then earn their CDL Class A license, which allows them to haul equipment with a truck and trailer.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, Christi stated that the older simulators located at CTD are outdated and not useable for instruction. The new simulators utilize VR (Virtual Reality) technology. For instance, when a student is using the simulator and turns to look, everything moves with them and makes them feel like they are actually in the machine. The simulators can also be switched from John Deer to Caterpillar controls.

In response to a question from Trustee Spomer, Christi stated that CTD responds to industry needs and employer requests by offering one-on-one or classroom training, depending on the need. Trainers will also travel to the place of business to work with employees. She stated they can design a program pretty quickly to meet the demand. The program could be offered to the public, which brings the cost down for the employer, or provided privately to the organization making the request.

Christi stated that the CDL program was so successful that it became necessary to lease a second truck. They have also brought on a third-party tester to test students on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, so waiting three to four weeks for the state to test is no longer necessary.

President Watson stated that in addition to the original simulator for the CDL program, the College had added the snow plow and school bus addition to increase its functionality. A school bus was also purchased to accommodate school districts' training needs at any time.

Christi stated that Northwest College and other community colleges in the state are working with the WCCC to get more funding for the CDL programs. Northwest College and LCCC are the two largest CDL programs in the state, and both are running close to capacity. It may be necessary to purchase additional equipment to accommodate the demand. While individuals continue to sign up for the program, employers are the largest group to utilize the training.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, Christi stated that the Wyoming Works scholarship is available to Wyoming residents to help alleviate the costs of the CDL program. Northwest College's program is the cheapest in the state at \$3,975, while LCCC is \$5,100.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, Christi stated that CTD is part of the Park County Outdoor Coalition, and she sits on the Board. She will be going to Laramie within the next month to learn about different programs and potential funding available from the recent approval by the Legislature allocating \$20 million to an endowment. The revenue generated from the endowment is meant to enhance outdoor recreation in the state.

President Watson stated that Northwest College submitted a Phase II WIP grant request to fund a Program Coordinator, which would enhance DELTA programming and the Outdoor Recreation academic program.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, Christi stated that the Outdoor Recreation classes offered through DELTA remain extremely popular. Many people are moving in from outside of the area who want to learn how and where to recreate and how to recreate safely. Hiking, downhill skiing, river rafting, and historical site visits are courses that remain popular with newcomers to the area. Very few of the classes offered are canceled due to low enrollment. DELTA programming is geared toward learning the activity, while Keith McCallister's Outdoor Recreation academic program is geared toward individuals seeking employment in the industry.

In response to a question from Trustee Laursen, Christi stated that she feels the outdoor recreation programming will continue to grow. As a result of COVID, people are moving to the area because of outdoor recreational opportunities in the area.

Schedule Spring Board Retreat

President Watson stated the need to schedule the spring Board retreat. A Doodle poll will be sent to find available dates within everyone's schedule.

CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM

The Citizens' Open Forum convened at 5:00 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:

Policy 2500 – Board Meetings
Section IV

A motion was made by Trustee Kuipers and seconded by Trustee Newsome to approve the proposed changes to Policy 2500 – Board Meetings as presented. Motion carried.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS FEEDBACK TO CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM TOPICS:

April 12, 2023, upcoming - Meeteetse:

- State Fall Enrollment Report
- Major Maintenance projects update
- Spring Board meeting reminder
- Other TBD

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Spring Recess April 7-10, 2023
April Board meeting, April 12, 2023, Meeteetse School, Meeteetse

A ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

TARA KUIPERS, Vice President/Secretary

Date