

**NORTHWEST COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES OF BUDGET HEARING**

July 10, 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, and MR. DUST SPOMER.
- MEMBERS ABSENT:** Trustee DR. LARRY TODD.
- OTHERS PRESENT:** MS. LISA WATSON, President; MR. DAVE ERICKSON, INTERIM Vice President for Academic Affairs; MR. DEE HAVIG, Interim Vice President for Student Services; MS. JILL ANDERSON; MR. DUSTIN DICKS; MS. TRACY GASAWAY; MR. MARK GRANT; MS. JO ANN HEIMER; MS. MICHAELA JONES; MS. JEN LITTERER-TREVIÑO; MS. CAREY MILLER; MR. CORY OSTERMILLER; MR. DENNIS QUILLEN; MS. LISA SMITH; MR. MARTIN STENSING; 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:** The budget hearing of the Northwest College Board of Trustees convened on Monday, July 10, 2023, at 4:04 p.m. in the Yellowstone Building Conference Center.
- REVIEW THE FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET:** President Watson reminded the Trustees that they approved the Student Center project as part of the FY23 budget. As they review the FY 2024 budget book, she asked that they be mindful that the project is still in construction this year and that carry-over amounts and capital outlays are represented in the annual Budget Summary for the Plant Fund related to the project. There is also a spreadsheet that breaks down the various funding sources for the project, which includes the Foundation's fundraising campaign, existing endowments, surplus from this year due to conservative spending, and reserves.
- In 2023, the College was able to transfer nearly \$3 million into reserves but then had to pay \$700,000 back to the state through the recapture redistribution process. This year, \$2.5 million has been transferred into reserves, keeping in mind that the College may again have to return some of that due to recapture.
- The FY 2024 budget is relatively flat other than some adjustments due to inflationary increases and compensation increases. There is a possibility that revenue will increase due to tuition and fees (enrollment), as well as indications that local levies are up. This surplus has been set aside for institutional use and can be reallocated once local levies are known and the recapture redistribution has occurred.
- In response to a question from Trustee Kuipers, President Watson stated that Park County's estimated levy is valued close to the highest it has ever been. Any money the College receives from the one mil stays within the County, and the College will keep it. However, Northwest College's state appropriations could be diminished through the funding allocation model if other counties' valuations are down. This ensures that all colleges are allocated appropriately to the

model.

Trustee Housel stated that the local valuations had increased astronomically in the last two years. There has been public outcry over the increased property taxes. He feels it will be addressed in the next Legislative Session and that changes related to property tax relief and how assessments and valuations are made will be forthcoming.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that when she first came to Northwest College, the revenue stream was approximately 66% from oil and gas and 33% from property assessment valuations. In 2017, that flipped due to the falling market, and most of the tax revenue came from personal property valuations. The revenue from both sources has been higher for the past two years. She noted that the Legislature is looking at property tax valuation and taxes for citizens and businesses. It will be interesting to see what happens during the upcoming budget session.

President Watson said she had not allocated the projected increased revenue into the budget. Instead, she has placed the projected funds into an institutional contingency account that can be reallocated once the final numbers are known. Depending on the upcoming Legislative session, or the market, the money may become one-time-only funds.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that the Welcome to Wyoming scholarship will be ongoing and will continue to be built upon. The College recently released social media videos targeting both international and domestic audiences. She stated that the College needs to remain thoughtful about where the marketing dollars are spent and what programs it wants to market and recruit to.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that when funding was eliminated from Athletics due to budget cuts, the coaches ceased to recruit internationally and recruited more from WUE states. With the Welcome to Wyoming scholarship, coaches are recruiting internationally again, causing the WUE enrollments to decline. She noted that students are also recruited into the Ag programs from Montana. Those towns are also experiencing smaller graduating classes, which results in lower enrollment numbers from that area.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that the loss of the State appropriation of approximately \$500,000 last year resulted from House Bill 80 and the recalibration process. However, recent legislation has changed the online course weighting to align with in-person classes.

Trustee Housel stated that he feels the College is not in compliance with the Wyoming Uniform Fiscal Procedures Act. It calls for a voucher warrant process used by the cities and counties. Instead, the University and the Colleges use a check register approval process. He wants to see the statutes changed to reflect what is being done. He is pleased with the check register system if the descriptions are

complete.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that the College contracts with Textbook Brokers, a bookstore company that provides bookstore websites. Several colleges in Wyoming use the same vendor. They offer the same services as a live bookstore, except they are online. The company's regional office is in Arkansas, and they have a regional office and warehouse in Cheyenne. They come to campus at the beginning of every semester and bring the books students have pre-ordered and merchandise. They return at the end of each semester for book buy-back and return. The vendor is excellent to work with, and the students are happy with the process.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that the CDL program is included in the Instruction Continuing Education section of the Budget Detail – Total Current Funds Expenditures report on page 20 of the Board packet. Individual programs are not broken down, as the State mandates the structure of this report.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that once the Student Center is open, utilities and operating expenses will be represented in the Budget Detail – Unrestricted Auxiliary Fund Expenditures report. There won't be expenses for the operation of the Student Center until the following fiscal year.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that the bond for Simpson Hall was restructured, and there is currently one lien holder. There is \$2.7 million remaining at 2.56%, and the maturity date is in 2033.

**A ADOPT EXPENDITURE  
AUTHORITY RESOLUTION:**

**A motion was made by Trustee Housel and seconded by Trustee Kuipers to adopt the Expenditure Authority Resolution as presented in the 2023-2024 budget materials. Motion carried.**

**A ADOPT RESOLUTION TO  
PROVIDE INCOME:**

**A motion was made by Trustee Housel and seconded by Trustee Newsome to adopt the Resolution to Provide Income as presented in the 2023-2024 budget materials. Motion carried.**

**A ADOPT RESOLUTION FOR  
ONE MIL LEVY:**

**A motion was made by Trustee Housel and seconded by Trustee Kuipers to adopt the Resolution for One Mil Levy as presented in the 2023-2024 budget materials. Motion carried.**

**A ADJOURNMENT:**

**The Budget Hearing adjourned at 4:53 pm.**

---

TARA KUIPERS, Vice President/Secretary

---

Date