

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

October 16, 2023

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Trustee MS. TARA KUIPERS

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; MS. NANCY GILMORE; MR. MARK GRANT; MS. JEN LITTERER-TREVIÑO; MS. CAREY MILLER; MR. DENNIS QUILLEN; MR. MIKE ROWEDIC; 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: President Dr. Mark Wurzel called the regular meeting of the Northwest College Board of Trustees to order on Monday, October 16, 2023, at 4:01 p.m. in the Center for Training and Development, Trapper Village West.

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

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

President Watson referenced the Board Committee Report and stated the Facilities Committee met last month to discuss the City of Powell's proposed retention basin. Discussion continues regarding the agreement and ensuring it meets the interests of Northwest College and the City of Powell. She expects the final document will be brought to the Board for consideration soon.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson clarified that the University of Wyoming is rewriting the grant to perform the gap analysis. Currently, the community colleges are unclear if they will be directly or indirectly involved in the research outside of collecting and providing local data.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that Forward Cody is involved in complex lease agreements with Lannette for the old Cody Labs facilities. They are working on a profitable exit agreement with a company in order to be removed from the lease. Their goal is to bring in an operating business that will create jobs for the community.

In her President's Report, President Watson stated that she attended the ribbon cutting for the new Mobility Plus business that moved to Cody. She clarified that the company moved to Powell, not Cody.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that the Gainful Employment/GE Financial Value Transparency requirement mentioned in the Financial Aid report is part of new regulations coming down from the federal government.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that the MOU between the Powell Police Department and Northwest College is reviewed periodically. Because Joshua Buhman is newly employed as Security Coordinator, he and the Powell Police Chief met to review the MOU to ensure it meets everyone's needs and expectations. She does not anticipate any significant changes will be necessary.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that there will be a phased approach to bring electronic access control systems to all campus buildings. A few buildings on campus currently have electronic access, such as Moyer Building and Simpson Hall. Phase I calls for an electronic system in the new Student Center and Yellowstone Building and to convert Simpson Hall to a College standard. Other buildings will be completed through different phases.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated the College has an Incident Command team that regularly participates in tabletop training exercises for different emergency scenarios on campus. Pre-pandemic, the College conducted a full exercise with an active shooter scenario.

Motion carried, and the consent agenda, including the minutes of the September 11, 2023, regular meeting, was approved.

**DISCUSSION/
INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

NWC Strategic Plan Update

President Watson reminded Trustees that the Board approved the NWC 2022-2030 Strategic Plan in November 2023. She provided an update in the Board packet on the tactics developed and the work that has transpired by the campus community since the Plan was implemented. Northwest College has many excellent employees working on the various tactics, and she is very encouraged that movement is taking place in multiple areas.

Trustee Laursen expressed her excitement to see all the work and that tasks are being completed on this ambitious plan. She commends all those doing the work and feels it will advance the College in many ways.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated the benefit of converting the EMT program to a credit program is that it enables students to access financial aid. There is also discussion at the State level on whether a higher level of credentialing for EMTs should be legislated, which would also bring higher wages for those individuals.

President Wurzel stated he was impressed with the breadth of the Strategic Plan and inquired if there had been work being done this comprehensively in the history of Northwest College. He is amazed that so many different items are being focused on for improvement by so many people.

President Watson replied that many good people have led the College through many different phases of its life. She is sure there has been a lot of comprehensive work done over the years.

Shelby Wetzel added that strategic plans are generally developed and put on a shelf. She feels President Watson's report indicates that the College analyzes, makes decisions, and directs work via the 2022-2030 Strategic Plan. She feels the College is more focused on the work and feedback to the Board than in the past. The Plan guides the College to a greater extent than before.

President Watson stated there is more work to be done, but by reporting the progress to date, she can see the progress being made, plan, and prioritize future work. She expressed her gratitude to all who have contributed to the work thus far.

Trustee Spomer stated that it's a testament to President Watson's leadership, and it's evident there's good leadership at numerous levels. He feels it signifies unity on campus.

President Wurzel stated that he is pleased there is a Plan that everyone can get behind. He realizes the work will be done over time, and is an ongoing process. This concrete Plan resulted from many discussions over the past few years.

President Watson stated that as tactics are completed over time, ideas regarding additional work needed will surface. She views the Strategic Plan as a living document that will continue to evolve.

Longitudinal Enrollment Report

Lisa Smith stated the Longitudinal Enrollment Report looks at enrollment over a 10-year cycle with various breakdowns. This data informs the College when determining strategic enrollment efforts to recruit and retain students.

Preliminary data indicates that as of September 27, 2023, the Headcount is at 1,368, and FTE is 1,133. She noted that 47% of Northwest College students are full-time and 53% part-time. Twenty percent of students are first-time degree-seeking students, 41% are all other degree-seeking students (students who transferred or may have attended before and returned), and 39% are non-degree-seeking, which includes dual and concurrent students.

Lisa noted the program areas with the ten highest numbers of degree/certificate majors are General Studies, Health Science (non-nursing), Business, Agriculture, Nursing, Criminal Justice, Biology (including Pre-Professional Sciences), Education, Art/Graphic Design, and Welding Technology. Most of these program areas are consistently in the top ten, with the bottom programs fluctuating slightly each year.

Lisa displayed a chart that shows Northwest College's fall enrollment over time. She noted that the College's enrollment trajectory closely follows the national public, 2-year institution enrollment trend. The noticeable difference is that national enrollment dipped dramatically during the pandemic, while Northwest College's enrollment remained mostly flat.

The next chart illustrates that headcount remains very close from fall to spring in any given year. However, FTE is typically 7% lower because students take fewer credits during the spring semester.

Lisa explained that historically, full-time students and all other degree-seeking students were the largest category of students. Fall 2020 was the first year where part-time enrollment was larger than full-time enrollment. In Fall 2023, the largest group of students are part-time non-degree-seeking students (37%), which is made up of primarily concurrent and dual students.

Lisa said that for many years, enrollment primarily consisted of full-time students. Part-time students became the majority population starting in Fall 2020. In Fall 2023, full-time students make up 47% of enrollment. However, Northwest College still has the largest percentage of full-time students of all community colleges in Wyoming.

The Enrollment by Credit Hour Load chart indicates that over the past decade, the largest number of students enrolled in 3 to 5.5 credits, 12 to 14.5 credits, and 15 to 17.5 credits. In the Fall of 2023, there has been an increase in students taking 15 to 20.5 credits and a decrease in part-time ranges. This has led to an increase in the average credits enrolled per student compared to Fall 2022.

Not surprisingly, the College's service area provides the largest number of students (71%). Next are WUE students (12%) and other out-of-state students (10%). The latter includes international and athletic students and has increased

recently, likely due to the Welcome to Wyoming Scholarship and athletic recruiting.

Lisa stated that the largest group of students are aged 18 to 21, which has decreased in recent years. Also decreasing is the number of students who are 30 years and older. The number of students under 18 has increased over the past ten years due to the increase in concurrent and dual enrollment.

Face-to-face classes have decreased, while online enrollment has increased 24% over the past ten years. Much of this is due to dual and concurrent students taking advantage of online course delivery.

Lisa stated that preliminary numbers for Fall 2023 indicate that there are 429 dual and concurrent students, the highest number over the past ten years. There has been growth in concurrent enrollment due to an increase in the number of high school faculty approved to teach concurrent classes on high school campuses. Most dual and concurrent students come from Powell, Cody, Lovell, and Burlington high schools.

In response to a question from Trustee Laursen, Interim Vice President Erickson stated most classes taken by high school students meet General Education requirements.

Lisa explained that over the past five years, 23% of service area high school graduates have enrolled at NWC within a year of graduation. Using this percentage in addition to projected class sizes from the Wyoming Department of Education to forecast future enrollment, Northwest College may see an increase in enrollment from service area high schools through 2025 and then a gradual decrease through 2035.

In Fall 2023, Northwest College received 21% of all high school graduates from the service area. Most graduates came from Powell, Lovell, and Rocky Mountain. The lowest rate comes from Ten Sleep, Meeteetse, and Worland.

Enrollment at the Cody Center has decreased over the past several years. However, since 2019, FTE has been greater than the headcount, indicating that students are taking larger credit loads primarily from new healthcare programs.

Compared to all other Wyoming Community Colleges, Northwest College is typically in the bottom three, with Central and Eastern in terms of enrollment numbers. However, NWC students tend to take larger credit loads than other colleges. All the colleges have experienced an overall enrollment decline.

Preliminary numbers indicate that 58% of full-time, first-time, degree-seeking students who enrolled in Fall 2022 returned or graduated by Fall 2023. Northwest College typically has retention rates in the upper fifties and lower sixties, which is comparable to national rates. The part-time retention rate for Fall 2022 is 22%. This cohort comprises a small group of students (36), so just a few students either way significantly impact retention rate percentages. The full-time fall-to-spring retention rate is 79% for first-time, degree-seeking students for the 2022 cohort, which has been typical over the years.

Lisa concluded her report by stating that the graduation rate (completion rate) is determined by the percentage of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students who enter a fall term and graduate with a degree or certificate within three years. Northwest College's graduation rate has increased over the past ten years, reaching the highest on record several times. The Fall 2019 cohort graduated by Summer 2022 at a rate of 42%. This rate is somewhat lower than the previous three cohorts and is likely due to the pandemic. Northwest

College's graduation rate is typically higher than the state average and well above the national average yearly.

Schedule Winter Board Retreat

President Watson stated that Keli Borders will send a Doodle poll to determine the Winter Board Retreat date.

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:

Major Maintenance Project Adjustments

President Watson reviewed the Major maintenance memo discussing some of the modifications to the projects.

A motion was made by Trustee Laursen and seconded by Trustee Spomer to approve the Major Maintenance project adjustments as presented. Motion carried.

Course/Lab Fee Proposal

A motion was made by Trustee Laursen and seconded by Trustee Spomer to approve the proposed course fees. Motion carried.

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

November 13, 2023, upcoming:

- Wyoming Postsecondary Education Options
- Marketing Update – FY23
- Review Board Self-Assessment
- Distribute the President's Evaluation
- Academic Calendars
- Preliminary Audit Report
- Statewide Legislative Update
- Nomination Committee for Board Officers
- Winter Board Professional Development/Retreat Reminder
- Holiday Party
- Other TBD

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Second Half-term classes, October 17, 2023
Men's & Women's Region IX Tournament, Oct. 21, 2023, TBA
Volleyball vs. CWC, October 24, 2023, 6:00 p.m., Cabre Gym
Men's & Women's Soccer Region IX Semi-Finals, October 27, 2023
Volleyball vs. Gillette, October 27, 2023, 6:00 p.m., Cabre Gym
J. "Al" Johnson Forensics Tournament, October 28-29, 2023, Powell
Volleyball Region IX Tournament, November 1-4, 2023, TBA
Concert Band, Choir, & Percussion, November 6, 2023, NPA
Advising Day November 7, 2023, ORB building & various
Jazz Expo w/combos, November 11, 2023, NPA
Men's & Women's Soccer National Tournament November 12-18, 2023
Next meeting, November 13, 2023, 3:30 p.m., Meeteetse

A ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 5:12 p.m.