

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

February 5, 2024

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**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. CHRISTI GREAHAM, MS. JEN LITTERER-TREVIÑO, 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:** President Tara Kuipers called the regular meeting of the Northwest College Board of Trustees to order on Monday, February 5, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. in the Yellowstone Building.

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

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

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that enrollment is steady and final enrollment numbers will be known once registration is complete for the second eight-week classes.

Trustee Housel expressed his appreciation to the Facilities and Maintenance staff who have kept the buildings in good working order during the cold weather.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated the hybrid Nursing program in Cody has outgrown its space. The program is designed for students to do coursework at home during the week, meet on weekends for instructional lab work, and do clinical work at one of the area hospitals or clinics. The space in Cody is insufficient for the number of students in the program; therefore, the lab work is being done on campus in Powell.

The construction project at the Courthouse in Cody has displaced County offices, which resulted in requests regarding the availability of the space to which the College obliged. The Paramedic and EMT programming continues at the Cody Center, and CTD utilizes two additional classrooms.

Trustee Housel expressed his appreciation for the summary of IT expenses included in the Board packet. President Watson stated the summary will be provided annually.

Trustee Housel expressed his appreciation to Interim Vice President Dave Erickson for including the data related to the CDL program in his report. It provides a more focused view of how well the program is doing and how it continues to grow.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated that the expense related to the emergency phones on campus was to upgrade the existing system. The electrical and telephone lines had been decomposing and needed to be replaced.

In response to a question from Trustee Wurzel, President Watson stated that the State gives the colleges different pools of money for specific uses. There is a specific pool of money that the State funds the colleges for health insurance reimbursement. When Gillette College became independent, their employees came off health insurance, freeing up cash within that pool.

The Governor did not include funds for the statutorily required information technology requested by the colleges in his budget. The Joint Appropriations Committee determined that instead of requesting additional funds for technology, they would approve an amendment that would utilize the savings in the health insurance pool to fund the technology needs. This pool is subject to reversion if not used.

In response to a question from Trustee Wurzel, President Watson stated that scholarships or financial aid funds are sent directly to the College on behalf of the student. Once tuition and fees are covered, any excess money is applied or refunded to the students to be used for books, housing, food, etc.

In response to a question from President Kuipers, President Watson stated that many of the College's adjunct instructors are Wyoming residents. Occasionally, it is necessary to utilize an adjunct who resides out-of-state. In those instances, the College has contracted with NextSource to navigate and comply with their respective state laws.

**Motion carried, and the consent agenda, including the minutes of the January 8, 2024, regular meeting and the January 8, 2024, Executive Session, was approved.**

## **DISCUSSION/ INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

### Completions and Transfer Summary

Lisa Smith stated that the Completions and Transfer Summary is an annual report on the number of students who have either graduated or transferred from the past year's attendees. This year's report includes links to the Strategic Plan, which states that tracking completions and transfers is essential in the College's retention and completion efforts.

As an overview of the report, Lisa stated there were 248 total graduates in the 2022-23 year, of which 224 were degrees and 31 were certificates, for a total of 273 degrees and certificates awarded.

Lisa explained that the programs with the most completers have been mostly stable over the last few years, with a few fluctuations. During the reporting year, the top ten are Nursing, General Studies, Agriculture, Computer Science, BAS Professional Studies, Education, Biological Sciences, Psychology, and Business.

Lisa stated that of the degree-seeking students who did not return the following year, approximately 25% transferred to another institution, consistent with previous years. Of those, three-fourths go to 4-year institutions, and one-fourth transfer to another 2-year institution, which is also a continuing trend. The top five transfer institutions are the University of Wyoming, Western Governors University, Brigham Young University-Idaho, Montana State University-Billings, and the University of Montana. The highest number of students transfer to the University of Wyoming consistently, with the other four fluctuating over the years.

In response to a question from Trustee Laursen, Lisa stated that the dual and concurrent students are not included in the report as they are not considered

Workforce Development  
Activities Report

degree or certificate-seeking.

Christi Greaham explained that the CDL program is open enrollment, and students may join any time, making tracking enrollment more difficult. Some students may be in the program briefly to add certifications to an existing CDL, while others may be in the program for nine months.

Christi explained that in the beginning, most participants were students looking to obtain their CDL license. There has been a shift, and most participants come from employers sending their employees through the program. Construction companies, cities, county roads and bridge departments, etc., hire and promote employees within and pay them to complete the program.

Christi stated that the State of Wyoming hired approximately seventy-three snowplow drivers. CTD purchased an upgrade to provide the only training available in the state. The snowplow simulator was sent to all five regions in the state and will also be displayed at the April WYDOT safety meeting.

Although the College's CDL program is currently the most affordable in the state, funding is one of the biggest challenges for students. Wyoming Works provides some funding, and the NWC Foundation is also working hard to get student scholarships.

Students can obtain Class A (full truck and trailer), Class B (tractors only, such as garbage, utility, and boom trucks), and bus, passenger, and HAZMAT endorsements.

Christi stated that many area high schools, such as Greybull, Burlington, and Lovell, are sending some of their seniors through the CDL program. Powell and Lovell BOCES provide funds for their students to participate in various CTD programs, such as the heavy equipment simulator and outdoor adventure programming through DELTA. Christi stated that providing positive experiences for high school students is an excellent recruiting tool.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, Christi explained that the Police Department utilizes the CTD for training such as Crisis Intervention, Human Trafficking, and Scam Awareness. These trainings can either be for police officers and/or community members.

President Watson stated that various grants help students with financial assistance for training, such as TANF, BOCES, and the Workforce Development Training fund, that can be utilized towards tuition for CDL students. CTD has also received a Virtual Reality grant that will be used to purchase programs and equipment to add VR to DELTA/Outdoor programming, as well as a WIP grant that will be used to create a mobile construction trailer utilized to teach basic construction skills.

President Kuipers stated she was pleased to see the report on the number of students and participants served and noted that this type of growth does not happen by accident. It happens by targeting a need, being responsive, having the needed facilities and technology, and having willing students and employers.

President Watson said the College will conduct a community needs survey this spring. A regional needs assessment will also be conducted by the consultant Hanover Research, which will consider industry areas slotted for growth within the next few years. This information will be used to develop a programmatic portfolio analysis to determine how the current offerings align with area needs and to help inform future program development.

**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:**

Designation of Depositories

**A motion was made by Trustee Housel and seconded by Trustee Kost to approve the Designation of Depositories as presented.**

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, President Watson stated the majority of the College's funds are with First Bank of Wyoming, and some funds are held with Bank of Powell.

**Motion carried.**

FY2025 Proposed Mandatory Student Fees

President Watson stated that the current rate of \$53.00 per credit hour keeps pace with costs, student service needs, and continuing support requested. Therefore, the proposal before the Board is to maintain the current rate for FY2025.

**A motion was made by Trustee Kost and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to approve the FY2025 mandatory student fees as presented. Motion carried.**

FY2025 Proposed Residence Hall Rates

President Watson stated that the College would generally bring the proposed meal plan rates for the Board's consideration at the same time as the residence hall rates; however, it is taking more time to find a dining model that will work well with the timing of continued operations in the temporary space and the conversion into the Student Center. It has been challenging considering the rising cost of food, the continued use of consumables, and the cost of transporting the food while the temporary space is still needed. The FY2025 Proposed Meal Plan rates will be forthcoming at a future meeting.

President Watson explained that the College considered the inflationary increases, projected occupancy levels, operating and maintenance costs, other colleges and community comparisons, and affordability when considering the housing rates. The College proposes increases of approximately 4% on most units, equating to under \$100.

**A motion was made by Trustee Wurzel and seconded by Trustee Newsome to approve the FY2025 residence hall rates as presented. Motion carried.**

**DISTRIBUTION OF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST FORMS**

President Kuipers asked Trustees to complete the Disclosure of Interest Forms distributed at the beginning of the meeting.

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

March 2024, upcoming - Cody:

- Quarterly budget adjustments
- State performance indicators report
- Schedule Spring Board retreat date
- Other TBD

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Curriculum Without Borders, February 6, 2024, 4-6 p.m., YB, Powell  
2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Photo Contest Exhibit, February 6, 2024, 7-8:30 p.m., ORB  
MBB/WBB vs. LCCC, February 9, 2024, Cheyenne, WY

MBB/WBB vs. EWC, February 10, 2024, Torrington, WY  
DELTA High Ropes Course, February 10, 2024, 10-1 p.m., Cabre  
DELTA Snowshoeing, February 11, 2024, 8:30 a.m., FAB Annex  
WACCT Student Awards, February 12, 2024, 6-8 p.m., Cheyenne, WY  
WACCT Meeting, February 15, 2024, 4-6 p.m., LCCC, Cheyenne, WY  
WACCT Leg. Reception, February 15, 2024, 6-8 p.m., Cheyenne, WY  
WCCC Meeting, February 16, 2024, LCCC, Cheyenne, WY  
Western States Communication Tournament, February 16-18, 2024, NV  
DELTA Ski Bus, February 17, 2024, 7:30 a.m., TBD  
Wrestling Plains Tournament, February 17, 2024, Cabre Gym  
MBB/WBB vs. Central, February 17, 2024, Riverton, WY  
Jazz Fest 2024, February 20, 2024, All day, NPA  
MBB/WBB vs. Casper, February 21, 2024, Powell, WY  
MBB/WBB vs. Western, February 24, Powell, WY  
DELTA Cross Country Skiing, February 24, 2024, FAB Annex  
Wrestling Nationals, March 1-2, 2024, Council Bluffs, IA  
MBB/WBB vs. Gillette College, March 2, 2024, Gillette, WY  
March Board meeting, March 4, 2024, Cody Center  
Last day of Legislative session, March 8, 2024, Cheyenne  
NWC Spring Break March 13-17, 2024

**A ADJOURNMENT:**

**The meeting adjourned at 5:12 p.m.**

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DENISE LAURSEN, Vice President/Secretary

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Date