

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

August 14, 2017

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Trustee MR. LUKE ANDERSON.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** DR. STEFANI HICSWA, President; DR. LOURRA BARTHULY, Vice President for Student Services; DR. GERALD GIRAUD, Vice President for Academic Affairs; MR. MARK KITCHEN, Vice President for College Relations; MS. LISA WATSON, Vice President of Administrative Services and Finance; MS. SHELBY WETZEL; DR. GREG THOMAS; MR. DON COGGER, the *Powell Tribune*; and MS. CYNTHIA CICCI, Executive Assistant to the President and Board of Trustees.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Board President Larsen called to order the regular meeting of the Northwest College Board of Trustees on Monday, August 14, 2017, at 3 p.m. at the Meeteetse School cafeteria.

**A APPROVE THE AGENDA:** **A motion was made by Trustee Danko and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.**

**STUDY SESSION:**  
HLC assumed practices and criteria

With the upcoming accreditation visit September 11-12, Vice President Giraud presented an overview of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) assumed practices and criteria. He distributed NWC's "Institutional Status and Requirements Report" which includes a history timeline of the College's relationship with the HLC and its accreditation status. NWC has been required to submit Monitoring Reports and have Focused Visits in between comprehensive visits since 1962.

The last accreditation visit was in 2010. Actions taken by the HLC included a Focused Visit on student learning assessment, governance, planning and budgeting processes. The accreditation team will be looking at these issues again during this visit.

The *Criteria for Accreditation* are the standards by which HLC determines whether an institution merits accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation. Through its evaluation process, the HLC reviews the institution against a list of five Criteria and their Components, which Dr. Giraud reviewed with the Board.

Vice President Giraud and his team have been working on the Assurance Argument for over two years. The comprehensive document shows evidence that the College has met each of the criteria and core components. The final document will be submitted to the HLC today and will be available online later this week. President Hicswa will send Trustees a link to the document.

Based on their visit, the Accreditation team members will review

NWC's Assurance Argument and study each core component to determine whether the institution has met the criteria with no concerns, met with concerns, or not met.

Vice President Giraud reviewed the list of HLC Assumed Practices, which are included in the Board materials. He called attention to a revised Assumed Practice related to faculty roles and qualifications, which takes effect September 1, 2017.

HLC has three pathways for reaffirmation of accreditation: Standard, AQIP, and Open. Dean Greg Thomas explained that NWC is in the Standard Pathway which follows a ten-year cycle and requires two comprehensive evaluations: once in year four and again in year ten. NWC is going into the tenth year. The tenth year visit is also the time to request to be moved to one of the other pathways: AQUIP or Open Pathway. President Hicswa is confident the College will be re-accredited and she will request that NWC be moved to the Open Pathway.

#### **A CONSENT AGENDA:**

**A motion was made by Trustee Wurzel and seconded by Trustee Spomer to approve the consent agenda as presented.** In further discussion, Trustee Housel made a correction to the minutes of the July 10<sup>th</sup> Budget Hearing.

President Hicswa updated the Board on NWC's situation with Legend Towers regarding the radio tower. She also explained the need to update the College's Master Plan in order to get back on the State's cycle. Trustee Housel requested that a future Board study session be devoted to future capital projects listed in the Facilities Project Report.

President Hicswa and the Vice Presidents responded to questions on their written reports in the Board materials.

There was a brief discussion about which classes tend to fill and require additional sections. President Hicswa explained that due to budget constraints, the College can no longer afford to offer a class with three people unless it is required for graduation. Work on predictive scheduling continues.

President Hicswa responded to Trustee Housel's concern regarding enrollment. She explained that while headcount is down slightly, students are not taking many extra credits due to improved advising. Demographics indicate there are fewer students to recruit so the College must focus on retention.

Board President Larsen reported on the Interim Joint Revenue Committee meeting that she and President Hicswa attended in Thermopolis on August 2, 2017.

**A vote was called and the motion to approve the consent agenda passed.**

**DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL  
ITEMS:**

Update on Athletic and Colter Hall  
fundraising campaigns

In an update on the current fundraising efforts for Colter Hall and Athletic Scholarships, Foundation Executive Director Wetzel reported they are struggling to find traction with the Colter Hall campaign. Unfortunately, the water damage in Cody Hall may interfere with the College's ability to help the Foundation with the project. To date, they have raised \$150,000 of the \$600,000 estimated to renovate the entrance, lobby and study areas. Trustees will receive a link to a video created by students to bring attention to the project, which shows why the hall needs to be updated. The College has asked its architect to consider if some sort of phasing approach is possible to help jump-start activity. Money raised at last year's Foundation Gala went toward the Colter Hall project. In addition, several naming opportunities have been created at varying amounts. The Foundation has also tried crowd funding online for the project.

Athletic Scholarship solicitations have had better results, raising over \$470,000 to date. The Foundation has also secured a challenge match from the Paul Stock Foundation which will provide up to \$100,000 as incentive funds for endowed gifts to support Wyoming Student Athletes. The Foundation has already secured \$30,000 toward this challenge and has until December to secure qualifying pledges. The Trapper Booster Club has come under the umbrella of the Foundation and money raised through memberships and special promotions will also go toward funding athletic scholarships.

The Foundation is also working on many facets to promote athletics including a consistent presentation of teams with a new event program design, development of a monthly email newsletter and game-day sponsorships to promote NWC's athletic events and steward donors.

**CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM:**

Citizens' Open Forum convened at 4:45 p.m. There were no citizens who wished to address the Board and the Citizens' Open Forum was adjourned.

**A UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Residence hall water damage repair  
and remediation project approval

President Hicswa reported that an analysis of the Cody Hall water damage repair and remediation project is taking longer than expected because the damage is more extensive than we originally thought and the discovery process will take longer. She requested Board approval for \$100,000 in additional funding from auxiliary reserves in order to allow work to continue on the assessment and planning for the remediation and renovation of Cody Hall.

Vice President Watson described the status of the discovery process as they try to determine how much more discovery to do. The costs to date are listed in the Board materials. She explained the implications of the College's three options. If the remediation costs are more than expected, the first option would be to eliminate Cody hall. What effects the elimination would have on the College would need to be examined.

The second option is to repair the building to its original design with some minor upgrades. Vice President Watson has requested the State Construction Department to be included in this evaluation and assessment.

The last option is full renovation: repairs and improvements as well as mechanical systems. The building is not air-conditioned, and the efficiency of the heating system would have to be evaluated.

President Hicswa explained that she wants to get a sense from the Board on this project to see if it is okay to go forward with more discovery work before going beyond the \$100,000 that was approved. Hopefully, not all of the money will be spent for discovery and some of it can be used for repairs.

In response to an inquiry by Trustee Housel, President Hicswa explained that the water damage cannot be attributed to a specific instance; for now, we believe it occurred over time.

Vice President Watson believes the State is respectful of the work that has been done and could possibly support an emergency repair funding request, but a dollar amount has not yet been determined. President Hicswa added that we do not want this project to replace the two projects being campaigned for.

Trustee Spomer asked if the reports from Plan One and Engineering Associates are independent or if they are tied together since they overlap. The College would benefit more from a collaborative report than by comparing two reports.

Trustee Spomer also questioned the need for the structure. He would like to hear a strong case for keeping the residence hall since eliminating it is certainly a consideration.

**Trustee Wurzel moved to approve an additional up to \$100,000 to continue the assessment of damages in Cody Hall. Trustee Danko seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

President Hicswa will provide the Board with a facilities needs analysis comparing the available options at the September meeting. Trustee Spomer responded that he is looking for a firm recommendation on “need” to have vs. “want” to have. This situation comes at tough time and we have to prioritize. He needs to hear loud and clear that we need the building. President Hicswa will have that assessment for the Board at its next meeting, which will include the consequences of tearing the building down, of having it off line, and some break-even numbers for staffing, dining services, etc. rather than a broad economic analysis. Board President Larsen added that the Board also needs to consider what the students will buy rather than what brings us the most money.

## **A NEW BUSINESS:**

Northwest College/NWC Foundation  
Memorandum of Understanding

At a meeting with other Wyoming Community College Foundation Executive Directors, Shelby Wetzel learned that several of the foundations have shifted all their employees under the college so they may receive full access to state benefits. The College was

already supporting a fixed amount of salaries and a reallocation of these costs would allow for coverage without additional costs. This change opens up additional monies for the Foundation to support the campus and maintain a viable Foundation. President Hicswa reviewed the proposed adjustments to the agreement that reflect these changes and requested Board approval. The NWC Foundation approved the revised agreement at its July meeting. **A motion was made by Trustee Spomer and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to approve the changes to the Agreement for Exchange of Services between Northwest College and the NWC Foundation. Motion carried.**

September Board of Trustees meeting  
date change to September 18, 2017

Due to the Higher Learning Commission visit on September 11-12, President Hicswa requested the Board change the date of its next meeting to September 18, 2017. **A motion was made by Trustee Danko and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to change the date of next month's Board of Trustees meeting to September 18, 2017. Motion carried.**

**A ADJOURNMENT:**

**On a motion by Trustee Newsome and seconded by Trustee Housel, the meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m.**

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DUSTY SPOMER, Vice President/Secretary

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Date