

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

July 6, 2020

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**OTHERS PRESENT:** DR. STEFANI HICSWA, President; DR. GERRY GIRAUD, Vice President for Academic Affairs; MR. DEE HAVIG, Interim Vice President for Student Services; MS. LISA WATSON, Vice President for Administrative Services and Finance; MS. JILL ANDERSON; MR. MILO ASAY; DR. DAVID AUSTIN; MR. BRAD BOWEN; MS. KAREN BOWEN; MR. DEAN BRUCE; DR. LOGAN BURNS; MS. JENNIFER CANNIZZARO; DR. JENNIFER DARE; MR. CASEY DEARCORN; MS. ELAINE DEBUHR; DR. JAY DICKERSON, MR. DUSTIN DICKS; MR. CHRIS DUGGER; MR. DAVE ERICKSON; MS. AMANDA ENRIQUEZ; MS. RACHEL HANAN; MS. JOANN HEIMER; MR. WEST HERNANDEZ; MR. JASON HORTON; MS. CINDY JACOBS; DR. WALT JATKOWSKI; MR. SCOTT KEISTER; MS. LESLIE KINNEY; MR. CAMDEN LEVITT; MS. JENNIFER LITTERER-TREVIÑO; MS. CAREY MILLER; MS. NANCY MILLER; MS. KIM MOORE; MR. CORY OSTERMILLER; MR. DENNIS QUILLEN; MR. SHAMAN QUINN; MS. HALEY SORENSEN; MR. GREG THOMAS; DR. LAWRENCE TODD; MR. OSCAR TREVIÑO; MS. SHELBY WETZEL; MR. LEO WOLFSON; MR. KEVIN KILLOUGH, *Powell Tribune*; and MS. DIANA GWYNN, Executive Secretary to the President and Board of Trustees.

**CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Northwest College Board of Trustees was called to order on Monday, July 6, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom.

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

**A BUDGET HEARING:** The regular meeting recessed at 4:01 p.m. for the Budget Hearing. After the budget business was conducted, the Budget Hearing adjourned at 4:09 p.m. and the regular meeting resumed.

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

Trustee Danko requested an amendment to the June 8, 2020 minutes to add her name to the "Members Absent" section of the minutes.

President Hicswa responded to questions on the check register.

**Motion carried and the consent agenda, including the amended minutes of the June 8, 2020 regular meeting, was approved.**

**DISCUSSION/  
INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

2019-2020 Policy Update Review Trustee Wurzel explained that the Board had requested an annual summary of all policy updates. He also explained that there will be major revisions to policy 5700 Sexual Misconduct due to the recent changes to the Title IX regulations. The Board Policy and Student Success Committee was pleased to note how much policy work has been done this past year.

Bookstore Update President Hicswa explained that the contract with the current bookstore vendor has expired. Follett has presented two different model options for future service. Vice President Giraud has worked with the Division Chairs and has

determined that it would be most prudent to solicit bids from other bookstore vendors. President Hicswa hopes to have a new bookstore contract proposal for the Board to review at a future meeting.

In response to a question about coordinating this service with another college, President Hicswa explained that sharing service with another college would not be possible, but that NWC has been having conversations with bookstore vendors in our region to explore different options for how bookstore service is provided to students.

#### Board Member Training

Board President Spomer asked Trustee Wurzel to share his ideas for training of new board members. Trustee Wurzel recommended that in addition to the training done by President Hicswa, each new board member be paired with a more experienced board member mentor. He recommended that they meet several times to review and discuss the meeting materials prior to board meetings. He recommended the mentor also cover topics such as:

- Calendaring – meetings, retreats, budget hearings, etc.
- Board Committees and meetings
- Open meeting laws
- Board member behavior
- Introductions to constituent group presidents
- Lobbying

Trustee Danko recommended using a Trustee orientation notebook which she received from Walter Wragge as a model for the NWC board member training.

Trustee Housel recommended covering different aspects of board member roles and responsibilities as well as the board policies. He also recommended that members of the Board Executive Committee serve as the mentors to new board members.

President Hicswa expressed that this type of training would complement the training she does with new trustees which mainly covers the operational areas of the College including the budget.

Trustee Newsome agreed that having an outline for a mentoring process which includes input from all the trustees would be very beneficial.

Trustee Wurzel explained that he envisioned having a small manual with a checklist of all items to be covered. He initially thought the Executive Committee would do the training, but now feels that the other board members who have a longer tenure on the board have valuable experience to offer, so he recommended each new board member be paired with a mentor based which trustee might be best suited and have availability to do the training.

Board President Spomer recommended that the booklet be coordinated with the information presented by President Hicswa. He proposed that Trustee Wurzel head up the compilation of a training booklet. Trustee Danko volunteered to assist with this project.

#### **CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM:**

The Citizens' Open Forum convened at 5:26 p.m. There were no citizens that wished to address the Board, so the Citizen's Open Forum adjourned.

#### **A UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

#### **A NEW BUSINESS:**

Reopening Plan

President Hicswa presented the Northwest College COVID-19 Operations Plan

which was drafted by the Incident Command Planning Response Team. The plan represents many hours of work, discussion, and planning. She commended the Incident Command Planning Response Team, under the leadership of Shaman Quinn, for their amazing work on this plan. She then invited Dean Greg Thomas, Enrolment Services Director West Hernandez, and Financial Director Brad Bowen to present an overview of the plan.

Dean Thomas explained that the Incident Command team has been working since March to develop and implement response objectives to guide institutional operations. They identified six objectives and five response levels as follows:

Objectives:

1. Protect employees' and students' health and safety.
2. Communicate regularly and clearly.
3. Maintain continuity and integrity of services, when/where possible.
4. Limit or reduce financial or legal impacts, when/where possible.
5. Establish and maintain contacts and connections with Federal/State or Local Officials.
6. Restore regular College operations partially or entirely, when/where possible.

Response levels:

- Level 1: Confirmed case in the United States.
- Level 2: Confirmed case within 100 +/- miles of NWC or CDC/WHO declaration of a pandemic.
- Level 3: Confirmed case within 50 +/- miles of NWC or federal/state/local directive.
- Level 4: Widespread employee illness or regulatory directive to CLOSE.
- Level 5: Prepare to resume operations/resume operations (partial or full).

When considering the response levels, NWC must also consider the federal, state, and community college system-wide 3-phase system. NWC has not experienced Level 4, and is currently considering how to move forward in Level 5. Under Level 5 there are three Operating Conditions:

- Operating Condition 1: Dramatic restriction to operating conditions (similar to mid-spring 2020).
- Operating Condition 2: Marginal(A) or Partial(B) soft reopening to permit face-to-face/gatherings in targeted/strategic areas with enforced health & safety requirements (including custodial & PPE mandates).
- Operating Condition 3: Normal campus operations/removal of all restrictions to fully reopen the campus.

IC recommends the implementation of Operating Condition 2B at this point in time; however, the following limitations exist when operating under condition 2B:

- Health & Safety Risk Mitigation
- Custodial Capacity & Cost
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Availability, Utilization, & Cost
- Semester Disruption Prevention/Student Satisfaction Enhancement

Additionally, situational flexibility plays a large role in planning. NWC needs to be prepared to shift its operating model mid-semester. The IC Planning Group determined the amount of operational restriction and relaxation

flexibility for each area of focus – Academics, Student Services, Administrative Offices/Services, and Campus Events & Community Services. They also identified challenges in each of these areas as well as strategies to mitigate the challenges. Dean Thomas, Director Hernandez and Director Bowen then reviewed the challenges and strategies for each area of focus:

### **ACADEMICS**

*Challenge:* Volume & frequency of classroom/academic space usage exceeds the custodial capacity to meet health orders.

*Strategies:*

1. Reduce custodial volume by adjusting the academic delivery model & course capacity. Deliver coursework in a hybrid model (online, distance synchronous, or face-to-face delivery). Base delivery method on Wyoming Community College Commission's defined Levels of Instruction (LOI). Implement PPE in constrained academic areas.
2. Increase custodial volume with additional temporary staff using CARES funds but still modify academic delivery model and course capacity as noted in strategy #1 to meet or allow for changing health orders and conditions. Implement PPE in constrained academic areas.

### **STUDENT SERVICES**

*Challenge:* Sustained, close proximity to other individuals elevates transmission risk if someone is sick.

*Strategies – Reduce risk by:*

- Residence Life – Implement single room occupancy in traditional halls (no changes to Simpson Hall occupancy).
- Dining Hall – Implement best practices for foodservice and restrict seating capacity. Limit seating options to create individual table seating zones to maintain social distancing. Sanitize hands prior to entry.
- Athletics & Competitive Teams (Forensics, Livestock Judging, and Equine Judging) – Implement and enforce social distancing protocols in conjunction with health orders and PPE requirements during practice and event travel.
- Student Activities & Programming: Permit within the residence halls, but limit participation to hall residents only. Permit campus-wide student activities & programming in a face-to face-format if social distancing & PPE measures can be implemented. If not, limit activities & programming to distance/online methods only.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES/SERVICES**

*Challenge:* Balance safety protocols against required customer service afforded to walk-in traffic.

*Strategies:* Implement social distance designs, rotate staffing patterns, control building traffic flow, and utilize health & safety signage. Utilize building density, social distancing, and custodial support availability to determine individual office plans. Provide refresher training on COVID-19 prevention, proper cleaning techniques, and monitor employees and student health through pre-reporting process.

### **CAMPUS EVENTS & COMMUNITY SERVICES**

*Challenge:* Balance safety protocols against public institution access expectations.

*Strategies:* Assess events on a case by case basis for determining the ability to maintain distancing, PPE usage, and safety for participants. Events in which social distancing and safety cannot be maintained shall be denied/canceled. Evaluation & approval by area Vice President and College President required. Must comply with current state directives.

Director Bowen explained that the CARES Act funding is a critical component of the operating plan. CARES Act money is needed to provide support for students, instructional technology support for faculty, information technology support for campus users, and procuring appropriate cleaning supplies and PPE for campus users. At this time, the total amount NWC will receive is unknown.

President Hicswa explained that compliance with current federal, state, and local directives is key. NWC must be prepared for three different phases – Phase 1 (red): closed; Phase 2 (yellow): partially open; and Phase 3 (green): mostly open with precautions. While it is uncertain what the directives will be in the fall, this plan gives the flexibility for moving forward with fall opening. President Hicswa recommended to the Board approval of the plan.

In response to a question about PPE provisions for students, President Hicswa explained that what NWC provides for students will depend on CARES Act funding received.

Board President Spomer commended the administration, staff, and faculty for getting NWC through the spring semester and continuing to move forward despite the unknowns. He asked for input from the Trustees on how this plan meets the direction given to the administration to manage the health risk aspects, delivery of education, and economic situation.

**A motion was made by Trustee Larsen and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to approve the Northwest College COVID-19 Operations Plan as presented.**

Trustee Housel inquired how this information will be communicated to students and how non-compliance will be handled. President Hicswa explained that multiple modalities are being used to get information out to students and that discussions on enforcing compliance are currently taking place, but the plan needs to be approved before compliance can be enforced.

Trustee Wurzel stated that the proposed plan is flexible enough to allow NWC to move in whatever direction is required

Trustee Danko commended the team for very comprehensive work.

President Hicswa reported that the State Health Officer has reviewed the plan and feels it was well done and addresses all aspects required.

Board President Spomer expressed that the plan is well-positioned to be responsive, but the Board needs to be prepared to be flexible to changes as needed. He also noted that the plan is cautious about the health and safety of employees and students, but not overly restrictive – that it meets the guidelines, but does not overreach.

**Motion carried.**

WACCT Annual Dues

Trustees Wurzel and Larsen reported that the WACCT Board is not implementing any change to the annual dues, which are \$20,500, for the 2020-2021 academic year.

**A motion was made by Trustee Danko and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to approve payment of the Wyoming Association of Community College**

**Trustees annual dues for the 2020-2021 academic year.**

Trustee Housel recommended consideration of these fees in the future depending on the direction of the budget.

Trustee Danko expressed that the value of the service received by WACCT Executive Director Erin Taylor is well worth the dues amount.

Board President Spomer concurred that the community colleges receive tremendous amount of value, but feels like the Board could better utilize the services of ED Taylor.

President Hicswa reported that the WACCT Board has already approved ED Taylor's contract pending approval of the dues by the community college boards.

**Motion carried.**

**A EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**A motion was made by Trustee Anderson and seconded by Trustee Danko to move into executive session. Motion carried. Executive session convened at 5:34 p.m.**

**A motion was made by Trustee Wurzel and seconded by Trustee Danko to adjourn executive session. Motion carried, the executive session adjourned, and the regular business meeting resumed at 5:42 p.m.**

**A NEW BUSINESS (CONTINUED):**

Board Vacancy

**A motion was made by Trustee Housel and seconded by Trustee Danko to appoint Dr. Larry C. Todd, as successor trustee, to fill the unexpired term of Nada Larsen on the Northwest College Board of Trustees, the term to end November 2020. Motion carried.**

Trustee Larsen expressed her gratitude for Dr. Todd's willingness to undertake this position. She offered her support of his serving as a Trustee.

Board President Spomer welcomed Dr. Todd to the Board of Trustees. He then thanked Trustee Larsen for her wisdom and service on the Board.

President Hicswa invited Trustee Larsen to attend the August Board meeting in Meeteetse. She then presented to Trustee Larsen a gift of a jacket with the NWC logo.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS &  
FOLLOW-UP ON CITIZENS'  
OPEN FORUM TOPICS:**

None.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Next meeting, August 10, 2020, 4:00 p.m., Meeteetse Schools  
ACCT Leadership Congress, September 30-October 3, 2019, Chicago, IL

**A ADJOURNMENT:**

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:48 p.m.**