

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

October 12, 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, MR. BOB NEWSOME, and DR. LARRY TODD.

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; MS. DIEDRE ASAY; MS. BOBBIE BELL; MS. LESLIE BIGHAM; MR. BRAD BOWEN; MS. KAREN BOWEN; MS. ANNA CRAGOE; DR. JENNIFER DARE; MR. DUSTIN DICKS; MS. KAREN ELTON; MS. AMANDA ENRIQUEZ; MR. DAVE ERICKSON; DR. RACHEL HANAN; MS. CINDY JACOBS; DR. WALT JATKOWSKI; MS. JENNIFER LITTERER-TREVIÑO; MS. CAREY MILLER; MS. NANCY MILLER; MR. DICK NELSON; MR. DENNIS QUILLEN; MR. SHAMAN QUINN; MS. LAURA RILEY; MS. LISA SMITH; MR. GREG THOMAS; MR. OSCAR TREVIÑO; MS. SHELBY WETZEL; 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, October 12, 2020 at 4:01 p.m.in the Yellowstone Building Conference Center.

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

MISSION MOMENT: Upon invitation from President Hicswa, the members of the NWC Incident Command System (ICS) team introduced themselves to the Board of Trustees.

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

President Hicswa responded to questions on various reports included in the consent agenda.

Board President Spomer made a point to have the Trustees ensure that the minutes accurately reflected the discussion from the previous meeting on policies 2140 Board Policy Development and 3800 Faculty Employment Policies.

Board President Spomer gave updated verbal report from the Board Facilities Committee. He wanted to clarify that the approval of the Residence Life Master Plan did not set into motion any actual decisions. The committee has determined that there is no urgency to any of the recommendations, including selling Trapper Village West, in the plan and that any future decisions would be evaluated one at a time with further study, information, and discussion.

Motion carried and the consent agenda, including the minutes of the September 9, 2020 special meeting, the September 10, 2020 special meeting/Future Summit, the September 14, 2020 regular meeting, and the September 22, 2020 special meeting/retreat, was approved.

**DISCUSSION/
INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

Longitudinal Enrollment Report Institutional Researcher Lisa Smith presented a summary of the 2020 Longitudinal Enrollment Report, which included:

- Preliminary Fall 2020 enrollment numbers of 1377 Headcount and 1179 FTE.
- The comparison of fall and spring enrollment indicates a gradual decline of both over the course of several years.
- Fall 2020 marks the first year where full-time and part-time enrollment are about equal, with the largest groups being the number of full-time "all other degree-seeking students" (returning and transfer students) and part-time non-degree-seeking students (primarily concurrent and dual students).
- In Fall 2010, full-time students accounted for 65% of total headcount. In Fall 2020, fulltime and part-time students both make up 50% of enrollment. Students are enrolling in fewer credits than they did ten years ago. Some of the increase in part-time enrollment is due to an increase in concurrent and dual enrollment over this time.
- Enrollment in courses scheduled to be delivered online has remained fairly steady since Fall 2010, with an uptick since Fall 2018. Online enrollment has not seen the declines that face-to-face enrollment has seen. In Fall 2020, enrollment in courses originally scheduled to be offered online made up 26% of total enrollment, compared to 12% in Fall 2010.
- In Fall 2020, concurrent and dual enrollment headcount makes up 24% of total headcount, compared to 6% in Fall 2010. Concurrent and dual credits make up 13% of Fall 2020 credits, compared to 2% in Fall 2010.
- Enrollment at the Cody Center has increased in recent years, due to increased program offerings in Cody. NWC has been developing non-credit programs in Cody and transitioning them to credit programs, particularly in allied health areas. Cody Center FTE has increased by a greater percentage than headcount since Fall 2018.
- Preliminary results show that 57% of the 269 full-time, first-time, degree-seeking students in Fall 2019 returned to NWC or graduated by Fall 2020. Of Fall 2019 full-time, first-time, degree-seeking students, 81% returned in Spring 2020. The full-time fall-to-spring retention rate has been in the 80%-range since NWC has been tracking it.
- For five of the most recent six cohorts, NWC's graduation rate has been the highest since the college has been tracking it, at 37% (Fall 2011, 2013), 39% (Fall 2014, 2015), and 44% (Fall 2016). National graduation rates for the most recent ten years at public, two-year institutions ranged from 21% to 29%.

CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM:

The Citizens' Open Forum convened at 5:01 p.m. There were no citizens who requested to address the Board, so the Citizen's Open Forum adjourned.

Marketing Campaign Report

Marketing and Communications Director Carey Miller presented an update on the Enrollment Marketing Campaign. She reviewed the two target audiences, four key messages, target programs, primary generations targeted, and the types and timing of the media used. She reported that:

- From July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020, the various paid social media ads were seen 1.5 million times, clicked on 29k times. That's a click-through rate of 1.9% (the national average is 0.73%).
- The paid search ads (Google and Bing) were discontinued in February 2020 in favor of a cable and streaming television campaign. The Spectrum Reach

campaign has been seen 455,940 times, clicked on 13,198 times. For the streaming part of the campaign, that is a click-through rate of 2.89% (the national average is 0.16%).

- For FY20, out of 416 who filled out the inquiry form, 323 indicated they were looking to enroll within one year (14.5% were looking to enroll in Fall 2021 or later; 13.8% did not indicate an intended start semester/year).

Academic Program Development Update

Vice President Giraud gave a brief overview the new programs and certificates which were developed or implemented during the 2019-2020 academic year. He noted that most were developed through the Extended Campus & Workforce office or collaboration between Extended Campus & Workforce and Allied Health.

In response to a question regarding the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree program, Vice President Giraud reported that the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) visit which was scheduled last spring was delayed due to the COVID pandemic. He explained that HLC has reviewed the documentation previously submitted by NWC, has sent a list of questions to be addressed, and has just recently requested a meeting with key staff members to finalize the process. Vice President Giraud indicated that he is hopeful that NWC will be able to launch the BAS degree program by Fall 2021.

President Hicswa reported that, though there has been interest, NWC is not able to promote the program until it is approved by HLC. She noted that LCCC has 40 students enrolled in two new BAS programs and CWC has 60 new students in a new BAS program.

In response to a question about other partnerships, similar to the Technical Studies By Western Hands degree program, Vice President Giraud explained that the aviation flight school in Cody is very similar. The flight school provides ground school and flight training while NWC provides the academic courses. President Hicswa reported that she has been recently approached by a meat packing entity which may be able to offer a future partnership opportunity.

Future Summit Preliminary Results

President Hicswa reviewed the preliminary results from the Future Summit which include five areas of focus: (1) Renaming and Rebranding the College; (2) Academic Programs and Delivery Redesign; (3) Workforce and Community Partnerships; (4) Experiential/Applied/Hands-On Learning; (5) Visibility, Awareness, and Community Engagement.

President Hicswa explained that though there will be further data analysis from the results, she is very pleased with the Phase I work done by CampusWorks. She also explained that, though well-qualified, NWC does not have the personnel resources to complete the institutional transformation work.

FY21 Estimated Budget Revenue and Expenditures

President Hicswa explained that NWC is facing severe budget challenges. She referred to the report outlining revenue and expenditures for the FY21 budget which projects a shortfall of approximately \$2.9M. She reminded the Board that this summer when the community colleges were asked to cut their budgets by 10%, the Board approved using carryover to shore up the FY20 budget which has allowed them the time to be thoughtful and strategic in making budget reduction decisions.

President Hicswa reported that in conversations with employees, they are supportive of the Board doing a thorough and strategic job, but request that the

decisions be made as soon as possible so, if necessary, employees can find jobs during the prime hiring season.

President Hicswa noted that she will be addressing the Joint Appropriation Committee in late October and plans to emphasize that additional cuts would be catastrophic to community colleges and should not be recommended to the legislature.

Board President Spomer agreed that the impending budget decisions are a very serious matter, and one which needs regular study and attention in order to accomplish what needs to be done. He recommended that this matter be referred to the Board Finance Committee so that the committee can do the work and then bring its recommendations to the Board.

Trustee Anderson agreed that referring the matter to committee was a good idea.

A motion was made by Trustee Wurzel and seconded by Trustee Todd to refer the budget work to the Board Finance Committee.

Trustee Housel, requested that there be a monthly report from the committee to the Board.

Motion carried.

NWC Foundation Board
Assignment

Board President Spomer explained that a representative from the NWC Board of Trustees needs to attend the NWC Foundation Board meetings. He recommended that a volunteer be selected for the upcoming October 28 meeting, but that a permanent appointment not be made until December when the Board renews their committee/board assignments. Trustee Danko volunteered and was selected to attend the October Foundation Board meeting.

A UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

CampusWorks Extended Contract

President Hicswa reviewed the three phases of the CampusWorks contract: Phase I: Community Engagement; Phase II: Internal & External Scanning; and Phase III: Business Case. She explained that Phase I is concluding, so the contract needs to be extended if the work of institutional transformation is going to continue. She also explained that though NWC has very qualified personnel, they are all too busy to accomplish this work.

President Hicswa shared that during a recent meeting with constituent group presidents, they voiced concern that the cost of this contract extension (Phase II \$43K; Phase III \$17K) could fund a position for a year. President Hicswa explained that while that is true, the recommendation to extend the contract includes utilizing savings from this year's budget which are being actualized from fewer events and less travel due to COVID. She recommended approval of the contract extension to engage CampusWorks to continue the work of institutional transformation.

A motion was made by Trustee Danko and seconded by Trustee Wurzel to approve the CampusWorks contract extension.

Trustee Housel expressed his concerns about incurring the expense of the contract extension at this time, given that NWC may be looking at the expense of a presidential search and given the budget decisions to be made. He also suggested that the information gathered at the listening sessions last fall and the work that has already been done by CampusWorks seems to indicate that NWC should change its name. He recommended that rather than extending the

CampusWorks contract, funds be used to begin the name change process.

Trustee Todd explained that one of the things that attracted him to the CampusWorks project is the potential to have multiple viable options on the table to think about during the strategic budgeting process. He agreed that there could be potential benefits to beginning the name change process sooner rather than later. He inquired about the completion timeline for the CampusWorks project. President Hicswa responded that Phases II and III would be completed by the end of the academic year.

Trustee Newsome suggested that perhaps the CampusWorks project is not the most urgent need, but perhaps a name change is. He then indicated that NWC needs to assess the cost of the name change before proceeding.

In response to concerns about the budget reduction decisions which will include Reductions in Force, President Hicswa reminded the Board that the Board Finance Committee will bring forward budget recommendations; that policies and procedures will need be followed regarding the RIF process; and that recommended program elimination, if any, require 6-months' notice and the ability to teach out the program. She noted that this will be an ongoing process throughout the coming year, and that CampusWorks could help with some of the process. She also reminded the Board that the Phase II work of internal and external scanning would help with a name change decision. She reiterated that the college does not have the resources, time, or expertise to do the work.

Trustee Danko suggested that continuing with the CampusWorks project could actually save the college money in the long run. She concurred that NWC would not be as effective doing this work on its own.

Trustee Anderson noted that the Board is only at the start of the strategic budgeting process. He also explained that CampusWorks has worked with several other institutions and that could be beneficial for NWC. He suggested that jumping into a name change without more research was unwise – that a name change should be part of the overall plan, not the only plan. He expressed that this strategic planning will help the college in the long run. He also noted that he is seeing an urgent need to figure out the budget and enrollment issues and that CampusWorks could help direct the college into a plan of action.

Trustee Wurzel suggested that the college will do the institutional transformation work anyway, and that over time, the college will recoup the cost of the contract. He also noted that the college was planning to continue the work before President Hicswa announced she may be leaving. He suggested that the Board could defer a decision until the next meeting, but sees NWC needing CampusWorks expertise to accomplish the work.

Board President Spomer expressed his agreement with a many of the points previously made. He concurred that the college has at least two, and possibly three major issues on its plate – budget and transformation, and possibly a presidential transition. He suggested that perhaps the college does not have the luxury of waiting until a new president is in place to address these issues. He also suggested that because of the impact on it, the community cannot wait either. He did not recommend killing the initiative because none of the urgent items can wait.

President Hicswa explained that the institutional transformation work is necessary regardless of whether or not she remains the President at NWC.

President Hicswa also noted that Carey Miller has been the Steering Committee Chair since NWC began working with CampusWorks in June, and Ms. Miller has worked more closely with CampusWorks than she.

Trustee Housel noted that during previous conversations CampusWorks indicated that they would not help with the name change process.

President Hicswa clarified that though CampusWorks would not help with developing a logo or marketing materials, they would conduct analysis on options for a new name, build the business case, provide a return on investment analysis, and outline the name change process.

Motion carried with Trustee House voting against.

A NEW BUSINESS:

Bookstore Vendor Memo

President Hicswa presented an overview of the selection process for the two recommended bookstore vendors. She explained that NWC received proposals from five vendors, none of which were interested in providing onsite services. Two of the five vendors were selected to give presentations to campus. All employees were invited to attend the presentations and complete a follow-up survey. President Hicswa noted that both vendors are very acceptable and recommended that the motion to approve allow for a provision that if the college is not able to reach an acceptable contract agreement with Vendor A, the college may pursue a contract with Vendor B.

A motion was made by Trustee Wurzel and seconded by Trustee Newsome to approve the initiation of contract negotiations with Vendor A, but to allow contract negotiations to be pursued with Vendor B, if an agreement cannot be reached with Vendor A.

In response to questions regarding merchandise which is normally available for sale to students in the on-campus bookstore, President Hicswa explained that other vendors may be able to carry merchandise, but that there may be an exclusivity clause in the contract which prevents this being an option. She further explained that this option will be pursued during contract negotiations, but if the online bookstore vendor is unable to meet the need, there may be community merchants who can fill the need.

Motion carried.

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

On behalf of the Board, Board President Spomer wished President Hicswa the best in her pursuit of the MSU-Billings Chancellor position. He noted that the loss of Dr. Hicswa would be felt both at college and in community.

Trustee Housel offered his appreciation for how long-time faculty member Dennis Brophy, who recently passed away, was remembered in the Powell Tribune. Trustee Danko added that she was able to speak briefly with Mr. Brophy's family, and they were also appreciative of everything the college has done and how he was remembered.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Next meeting, November 9, 2020, 3:00 p.m., Yellowstone Building

A ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:14 p.m.