

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

March 8, 2021

- MEMBERS PRESENT:** President DR. MARK WURZEL; Vice President/Secretary DR. LARRY TODD; Treasurer Ms. CAROLYN DANKO; and Trustees MR. JOHN HOUSEL, MS. TARA KUIPERS, MR. BOB NEWSOME, and MR. DUSTY SPOMER.
- MEMBERS ABSENT:**
- OTHERS PRESENT:** MS. LISA WATSON, Interim President; DR. GERRY GIRAUD, Vice President for Academic Affairs; MR. DEE HAVIG, Interim Vice President for Student Services; MS. JILL ANDERSON; MS. STACY BEAR; MS. LESLIE BIGHAM; MR. BRAD BOWEN; MR. DEAN BRUCE; MS. JENNIFER DARE; MS. ELAINE DEBUHR; MS. AMANDA ENRIQUEZ; MR. BRIAN ERICKSON; MS. JENY GARDNER; MS. TRACY GASAWAY; MR. RICHARD GHIDELLA; MS. CHRISTI GREAHAM; MS. LAURA GWINN; MS. RACHEL HANAN; MS. JOANN HEIMER; MS. CINDY JACOBS; MS. DEB JACOBS; MR. MAX LEWIS; MS. JENNIFER LITTERER-TREVIÑO; MS. AUTOURINA MAINS; MR. MICHAEL MCDANIEL; MS. CAREY MILLER; MS. NANCY MILLER; MR. DICK NELSON; MR. CORY OSTERMILLER; MS. CASEY PATE; MS. TAWNYA PETERSON; MR. DENNIS QUILLEN; MS. LAURA RILEY; MS. MALLORY RILEY; MS. LISA SMITH; MR. GREG THOMAS; MR. OSCAR TREVIÑO; MS. SHELBY WETZEL; MS. MARSHA WILSON; MR. JOSHUA LEACH, *Cody Enterprise*; MR. KEVIN KILLOUGH, *Powell Tribune*; and MS. KELI BORDERS, Interim Executive Secretary to the President and Board of Trustees; CampusWorks guests MS. CHRISSY COLEY, MS. LIZ MURPHY, MR. JUSTIN NORRIS.
- CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Northwest College Board of Trustees was called to order on Monday, March 8, 2021 at 3:04 p.m.in the Yellowstone Building Conference Center.
- A APPROVE THE AGENDA:** **Board President Wurzel entertained a motion to amend the agenda to move the Executive Session to take place after the Citizen’s Open Forum. A motion was made by Trustee Danko and seconded by Trustee Newsome to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.**
- WORK SESSION:** Interim President Watson welcomed CampusWorks representatives Liz Murphy, Justin Norris and Chrissy Coley and invited them to update the Board on their efforts to date.
- Justin Norris began by stating CampusWorks has been working with various individuals and departments on campus to gather information and data. Today’s presentation will focus on the Enrollment Competitive Overview and Strategic Enrollment Management.
- Justin explained that initial feedback from Trustees and the Advisory Committee on the Core Models (Destination, Pathways, Distinctive Program, Workforce Hub) indicates that participants felt there could be interplay between the core models (as opposed to being independent of each other) and question how they can be arranged to best benefit Northwest College. Examples of competitive forces in this marketplace are: workforce and labor market; corporate and on-the-job training; MOOCS and workforce accelerators; online higher education; as well as other 2- and 4-year colleges. Justin stated Northwest College has the ability to compete in this marketplace. An example would be to establish partnerships with MOOCS to assist students in obtaining a degree or credential.
- Justin stated that while enrollments have declined in part due to the decline in birthrates, there is also increased pressure on the market from competitors such as online institutions that are targeting community college students. While the

University of Wyoming has seen a decline in enrollment as well, they have also been able to increase enrollments through online and distance education. Out-of-state online enrollments have seen the most growth; therefore, CampusWorks sees this as an opportunity for Northwest College to use online education to reach more students.

Chrissy Coley stated CampusWorks has conducted several student focus groups over the past two weeks. What they heard, especially from adult learners, is that they value the online learning options. They also place great value on having the opportunity to take their online courses from their local college that they were familiar with.

Justin shared additional data which shows that traditional-aged Wyoming students are more likely to consider attending a community college compared to the national trend. Wyoming students are also more likely to consider online options. They also consider small town and a small campus to be more important than do students nationally. Justin stated that Northwest College needs to consider how it is communicating and marketing those assets to potential students. Justin also stated that community college students in the Mountain West region are more likely to consider multiple institutions as evidenced by multiple inquiries and applications submitted. This information indicates that Northwest College's competition likely includes other community colleges as well as 4-year institutions. Chrissy added that the focus groups indicated that students chose Northwest College because they like being close to home and a small campus. Justin went on to state that Admissions' ability to engage and build relationships with prospective students is key in the recruiting process.

Justin defined Strategic Enrollment Management as a plan that helps foster a culture of enrollment that is a shared responsibility across the institution.

Components of strategic enrollment management are:

- Comprehensive Goal Setting – number and types of students to fulfill institutional mission. Setting metrics and KPI's to monitor.
- Promoting Student Success – Improving access, transition, persistence and graduation. Balancing new and returning students.
- Strategic & Financial Planning – enabling effective planning, forecasting, implementation and plan monitoring.
- Data Informed Decision Making – creating data-rich environment to inform decisions and evaluate strategies.
- Strengthen Communications & Marketing – ensuring appropriate engagement of internal and external stakeholders.
- Increase Collaboration Across Campus – supporting the enrollment program by making connections from existing roles and processes to enrollment.

Justin stated that Enrollment Management has evolved over time and there is a need to focus on integration between academic program planning and recruiting strategies. It engages all major organizational units of the college to collaborate and make decisions that align with the institution's enrollment objectives. Many key factors that impact a student's decision to attend an institution lie outside of the Admissions office itself.

Justin stated the role of the Board in strategic enrollment management is to add a "lens" to existing governance responsibilities such as strategic visioning, plan progress monitoring, academic policies, tuition and fee payment policies, and admissions, financial aid and marketing policies. Also, asking the right questions to help inform existing decision making as well as continuing to

understand trends and how institutional data connects to the work of the Board, and how the Board can advocate and champion strategic enrollment management. Liz Murphy added that when the Board is engaged in strategic and annual planning as well as budget planning, it needs to be educated about all things that impact enrollment in order to set wise targets and goals for the institution. Having the information necessary to agree to high level strategies within the institution that support the President in the decision making and the recommendations that are coming from the institution going forward.

CampusWorks' assessment of Northwest College's enrollment management indicates that during peak enrollment periods that began in 2008, the college had to effectively deal with increased enrollments with limited resources. While the work became more manageable as there was a drop in adult student populations around 2014, there was also a decrease in appropriations from reduced oil and gas prices. At the same time, Northwest College began to manage resources and invest in student success initiatives as part of the Mission, which is very significant. As the state began to experience additional cuts, the institution began working on strategies to build enrollments, deal with staffing reductions and invest in technology to make up for those staffing reductions. While focusing on how to make the job more efficient, thought was also put into how to deliver an experience to students from a service perspective.

In moving forward with enrollment management, now the institution needs to focus on how to take those efficiencies and demonstrate effectiveness. The college is investing in the CRM (Constituent Relationship Management tool), which is absolutely crucial in allowing more clarity in data. It allows tracking of new students and what's happening with them and also expands the capability to use marketing and communications as well. It allows an assessment of how effective the college is in its enrollment work. The Board will be able to understand how the institution is able to assess its effectiveness across all components that make up strategic enrollment management.

MISSION MOMENT:

Shelby Wetzel stated that the Northwest College Foundation will be conducting its first ever annual Giving Day on March 25th, which will be a 24-hour giving blitz. The concept started nationally with giving Tuesday, which falls after Thanksgiving each year. Many organizations have joined that effort and therefore it's hard to find a space and be recognized. This is a new model for annual giving in the higher education industry and allows the institution to create its own buzz and enthusiasm. The most important goal of this event is to drive participation by rallying supporters and creating peer-to-peer fundraising through networking and social media. The Foundation is hoping to attract a new generation of supporters by utilizing electronic giving such as with Venmo, PayPal, etc. that will likely appeal to younger alumni.

The Foundation is approaching the project with a 5 x 5 concept in which donors can select from five specific categories for their donation to be applied to:

- Scholarships
- Instructional Technology
- Career and Technical Education
- Student Center
- Athletic Scholarships

Cory Ostermiller stated the goal is to secure 250 donations, which will trigger up to \$25,000 in bonus dollars. In addition to the amount of money raised by participants that day, the Foundation has secured gifts of \$5000 each from five

donors; Clay and Lynn Cummins; Richard Walsh and Jennifer DeWitt Walsh; Powell Community Foundation; Paul Stock Foundation; and Yellowstone Motors. Every fifty donations received on Giving Day will unlock one of the \$5000 bonuses. The Foundation is providing five \$1000 incentive prizes to Northwest College departments and has developed challenges for them to garner support from their alumni for the chance to earn incentive money. There will also be a raffle that gives students an opportunity to participate in the campaign as well.

Tawnya Peterson stated the Foundation has been working with Communications and Marketing to develop a multi-media campaign and marketing strategies to encourage alumni, students, faculty and staff as well as community supporters to show their Trapper pride by giving to NWC. There will be advertising in newspapers throughout the Big Horn Basin as well as on social media to promote Giving Day. The Foundation would like employees and Board members to become ambassadors by sharing social media content to promote the event as well. A toolkit has been developed that will make sharing to individual's networks simple and fun. Tawnya will be sending the toolkits with instructions out via email on March 15th.

A CONSENT AGENDA:

A motion was made by Trustee Spomer and seconded by Trustee Todd to approve the consent agenda.

Trustee Housel expressed his appreciation for the analytics reports included with the Communications and Marketing report. The data is important in analyzing the effectiveness of the marketing campaign and various components of social media. He feels this type of analysis is critical.

Trustee Kuipers stated that the recommendation to delay the Presidential Search was in part because of the feedback received during the various panels conducted during the initial search process. The conversations included community and campus needs, as well as challenges and opportunities. She hopes the rich feedback that was received will be utilized by CampusWorks in their analysis.

Motion carried and the consent agenda, including the minutes of the February 8, 2021 regular meeting, the minutes of the February 9, 2021 special meeting, and the minutes of the February 23, 202 special meeting was approved.

**DISCUSSION/
INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

CampusWorks

Interim President Watson stated the challenge of the CampusWorks presentations is that a lot of rich and complex information is received all at once. She hopes to provide an opportunity on the agenda for Trustees to ask questions and discuss the presentation.

Board President Wurzel stated he found it interesting and questions why Wyoming students are more apt to consider community college than other students do nationally.

Trustee Danko stated Northwest College has very valuable and varied programs to choose from and she feels that potential students/community members are unaware of all that is available.

Trustee Newsome stated he is concerned by the number of students who feel the need to leave the state for a valuable education. He feels marketing efforts should stress the value and rate of return on attending Northwest College.

Trustee Todd stated he found it interesting that Wyoming and Mountain West students in general submit more applications to colleges than other students do nationally. He feels they are possibly looking for more choices and feels this could be an opportunity for Northwest College.

Trustee Kuipers stated she finds that students who prefer small campuses and the small-town atmosphere are also looking for the “experience” and relationships that maybe aren’t available with an online education.

Trustee Housel stated he feels the most important part of the CampusWorks presentation was regarding the competitive comparisons. He feels the majority of Northwest College’s focus going forward should be on marketing.

Trustee Spomer stated that in relation to an interplay between the core models, he questions whether we can be all of them successfully. He feels they somewhat contradict each other and appeal to different audiences. He also questions the role of Trustees in Enrollment Management. Trustees have a role in Policy and visioning, but should they also be involved in strategy?

Workforce Development activities report

Dean Bruce introduced Christi Greaham, Training and Development Program Specialist, and Carri Dobbins, Senior Office Assistant for Training and Development and stated their role is vital to the success of Workforce Development.

Dean chose to begin his report by addressing questions that arose in a previous Board meeting. Career Step is an internet-based program in which Northwest College acts as an intermediary and facilitator. Examples of programs being offered are Medical Coding, Vet Tech, Contact Tracing, etc.

Another question Dean addressed is the number of classes being offered in Cody. This semester, there are four general education classes with 24 students; six aeronautics classes with 19 students; Eleven allied health classes with 103 students; and four concurrent classes at the high school with 64 students. The Cody Center is currently offering a total of 21 courses with 150 students compared to last year’s 24 courses with 136 students.

Dean stated Workforce Development provides training programs for the community and enhances economic activity through education. While there have been challenges with COVID, Dean expressed his appreciation to the ICS Team for developing protocols that allowed them to be open and ensure the safety of students. Some of the hands-on curriculum was converted to online coursework with students coming in one day/week for the hands-on work. Courses are being added as restrictions are lifted.

Dean referenced the Key Performance Indicators Report in the Board Book that shows a statistical trend analysis of the CTD which indicates a downward trend in the number of individuals served. He went on to state that statistically that is true; however, he explained the statistics are impacted by COVID, but also, there have been many programs that were started at CTD and because of their success, they become credit programs that are then not included in the numbers. In closing, while the statistics appear to be trending down, there are success stories that contribute to that trend.

In response to a question from Trustee Spomer regarding the aviation program, Dean stated the aeronautics program is listed as an AAS degree program.

Vision 2020 final KPI’s

Interim President Watson stated that as Vision 2020 wraps up and we begin work on Vision 2025, she has asked Lisa Smith to present on the final KPI’s and asks the Board to consider those results in moving forward with

CampusWorks and transformational change. The College will also review these and their effectiveness in building KPI's for Vision 2025.

Lisa Smith stated that in looking at changes from year one to year five, she tried to highlight items that consistently stayed high or had a fairly large change. Some of the information comes from the employee climate survey or the student engagement survey. Lisa pointed out that while these surveys are conducted every two years, they reflect employee and student perceptions at that point in time.

Successes that remained consistently high over the five years were students reported high levels of satisfaction with their learning outcome achievement; a high rate of satisfaction with offerings and services and their overall experience. Employee satisfaction with the benefit package remained high over the course of five years and both employee and students reported a high level of satisfaction with technology and facilities. Completion rates have continued to increase throughout and have reached or maintained record highs for five years. Northwest College is regularly top in the state for the number of degree completions per full-time student. There has also never been a material audit finding throughout these five years. There was an increase in employee satisfaction with the extent to which information is shared.

Some of the reported challenges experienced within those five years include the level of student engagement. In year one, students reported being more engaged than the average student across the country and by year five, they reported average engagement. The retention rate fell in the fall 2019 to fall 2020 reporting year, which was likely impacted by COVID. Staff salaries also lost ground related to market value. Employee satisfaction with professional development and training opportunities decreased as did pride in institution.

Lisa stated that some of the indicators that were chosen did not turn out to be as useful as the college had hoped. They either didn't measure what was wanted or they were difficult to measure and enough information wasn't provided to make meaningful conclusions. Those will be looked at in the next round of determining KPI's for Vision 2025 to hopefully provide more meaningful measurements.

State Performance Indicators report

Lisa Smith stated that she will be reporting on the retention and completion rates from the 2018-19 Wyoming Community Colleges Performance Indicators Report.

Lisa reported that Northwest College has been fairly stable over the last few years with a mid-60% retention rate. Other than a couple of dips in 2010 and 2012, the college has seen retention rates above the average of other Wyoming community colleges. Northwest College's retention rates are also comparable to national averages.

Lisa also reported that with the exception of one year, Northwest College has been equal to or higher than the statewide average for completion rates within the last ten years. Due to the efforts of everyone on campus, there has been a steady progression upward of our students completing at a higher rate than state averages and well above national averages. The combined completion and transfer rate (within a three-year time frame) has been right around 59% for the last four years.

Completion and Transfer report

Lisa stated that in the 2019-20 academic year, there were 261 students who graduated with a degree and 34 students graduated with a certificate from Northwest College. Some students graduate with numerous degrees and

certificates; 291 degrees and 55 certificates were awarded in total. Other than a large increase two years ago, the college remains fairly consistent with graduation numbers within the last six years. In looking at degree-seeking students who did not re-enroll, 28% transferred to another institution. Consistently, of those that transfer, approximately 75% transfer to a 4-year school while 25% transfer to another 2-year school. The top institutions that our students transfer to is University of Wyoming and Montana State University-Billings, followed by Montana State University and Black Hills State University. Lisa's report also shows the number of degrees or certificates awarded by each program.

Trustee Housel stated he sometimes hears frustration from parents who feel their child's credits from Wyoming community colleges only transfer to the University of Wyoming and don't transfer well outside of Wyoming.

In response, Vice President Giraud stated the Universities listed in Lisa's report will accept an associate's degree and general education courses. The issue is mostly related to specialized courses specific to the degree a student is seeking. Dr. Giraud stated that it is always up to the receiving institution to agree to accept those credits. Northwest College has stronger agreements with the University of Wyoming and slightly more influence to resolve issues on a case-by-case basis than it has with out-of-state institutions. The credits will almost always count as electives, but not necessarily toward the desired degree. He went on to state that the issue is not necessarily with the administration of the receiving institution, but with the faculty of the program with which they are enrolling.

Interim President Watson stated that Northwest College is constantly working on articulation agreements with universities, and as an example, the college has been working with Valley State to ensure that classes in Northwest College's education program courses are accepted.

Lisa Smith stated that while only the top four transfer institutions are listed in the report, there were many other institutions that Northwest College students transferred to. There are currently 35 institutions with which Northwest College has articulation agreements.

E-Sports

Board President Wurzel distributed an article from the news magazine, *The Week*, that shared the story of a celebrity video gamer who makes \$500,000 per month, has 14 million followers on Instagram, 6 million on Twitter and 24 million on YouTube. While this person is the exception, gaming is big business.

Athletic Director, Brian Erickson stated that when compared to professional sports, E-gaming has taken over the NFL and the NFL is now number two in revenue earned.

Brian explained the E-Sports facility, which includes 12 gaming stations, is located in the Fagerberg Annex and is in the last stages of preparedness. Physical Plant and Computing Services staff have done an amazing job of getting everything ready. Brian is hopeful it will be ready in April for current students' use, as well as a visual tool in recruiting for fall.

Brian stated each game is played with a team of 2, 4 or 6 players and he is hoping to recruit 40 student athletes into the E-Sports program. While students currently game in their room, this is an opportunity for them to be part of a group. Student athletes will grow critical thinking skills, life skills, teamwork and academically through the completion of their coursework. Each student

will be required to take at least 12 credits and maintain a 2.0 GPA to be able to participate on the team. Facility access will be limited and practice time will vary. Student assistants will be utilized to supervise practices.

Brian stated that the cost to continue the program will consist mainly of equipment upkeep, and there are not typically travel expenses associated with an E-Sports team. TCT West ran the internet through their sponsorship and also provided \$17,000 toward an endowment to help support yearly costs. Brian stated the team will also be fundraising to keep the program self-sustainable.

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, Brian stated that colleges place E-Sports under their Athletics program, some in IT, others in Student Activities. Northwest College chose to include E-Sports with its Athletics department. Additionally, there will be a limited amount of scholarship money for E-Sports student athletes.

CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM

The Citizens' Open Forum convened at 5:05 p.m. Two requests to address the Board were submitted.

Jenny Gardner stated she is a former adjunct instructor at Northwest College and would like to speak to the Board as a parent regarding the closing of the Children's Learning and Care Center. As an adjunct instructor, she had limited income and the Center allowed access to a great preschool for her son and also provided the flexibility needed for her schedule. The Children's Learning and Care Center played an important role during that time in her family's life. She is also aware of many students who worked at the Center and gained their education there. Jenny stated the Children's Learning and Care Center is invaluable to students and families who need it.

Mallory Riley stated she is speaking to the Board as a community member. She would like to thank the Board and Interim President Watson for taking action regarding an item she spoke of at an earlier Citizen's Open Forum. She is now offering a program through CTD for a paralegal certificate. Mallory went on to state that in reference to the presentation and the competitive market, she does not feel that an online format is the best option for Northwest College. The institution has been a traditional center for learning and students appreciate and prefer in-person learning. She doesn't feel the college should focus on beating the competition by becoming the competition and that focus should be on becoming better at what it's already good at. Mallory also feels Northwest needs to put the "community" back in the college. Another point she wished to make was that in talking to prospective students and trying to assist them with registering, she had difficulty finding the information needed on the website. She believes focus needs to be put on informing staff to the point they are able to assist students in getting the information they need. Northwest College needs to be honest about its problems and address them.

A UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There were no unfinished business items on the agenda.

A EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Trustee Kuipers and seconded by Trustee Todd to move into executive session. Motion carried and the executive session convened at 6:05 p.m.

A motion was made by Trustee Spomer and seconded by Trustee Housel to adjourn executive session. Motion carried, the executive session adjourned at 6:13 p.m., and the regular session resumed.

A NEW BUSINESS:

NWC Interim President's contract

A motion was made by Trustee Kuipers and seconded by Trustee Spomer to approve the contract extension through June 30, 2022, with Interim President Lisa Watson, that includes the agreed upon parameters as discussed in Executive Session. Motion carried.

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

Board President Wurzel state there was a request during the February 23, 2021 Board Retreat to hold another retreat in May. With CampusWorks completing their work in June and the budget reduction recommendation decision forthcoming, it is felt Trustees would benefit from a full-day retreat in May.

Trustee Housel stated he would be agreeable to a May retreat in lieu of the typical August retreat.

Trustee Spomer stated he would be in favor of a May retreat if it is in support of CampusWorks or budget work.

Interim President Watson will work with Trustees to schedule a date as soon as possible to work within everyone's schedules.

Interim President Watson distributed copies of the book, "Trusteeship in Community Colleges: A Guide for Effective Governance" to Trustees. The book is a publication from the Association of Community College Trustees on best practices for governance and the role of the Trustee. Trustees are welcome to read the book on their own, or if interested, Interim President Watson is in favor of starting a book club to discuss the book in detail.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ACCT Virtual Governance Leadership Institute, March 30 – April 1, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

WCCC Meeting, April 15, 2021, Casper

Juried Student Art & Design Exhibition, April 13 – May 8, 2021

Commencement Exercises, May 8, 2021, 10:30 a.m., Cabre Gym

Next meeting April 12, 2021, 4 p.m., Yellowstone Building

A ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

LARRY TODD, Vice President/Secretary

Date