

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

June 14, 2021

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** President DR. MARK WURZEL; Vice President/Secretary DR. LARRY TODD; Treasurer MS. CAROLYN DANKO; and Trustees MS. TARA KUIPERS, MR. BOB NEWSOME, and MR. DUSTY SPOMER.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Trustee MR. JOHN HOUSEL

**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. LESLIE BIGHAM; MR. BRAD BOWEN; DR. MARNEÉ CRAWFORD; MR. DUSTIN DICKS; MS. TRACY GASAWAY; MS. LAURA GWINN; MS. JOANN HEIMER; MS. DEB JACOBS; MS. MICHAELA JONES; MS. CAREY MILLER; MR. CORY OSTERMILLER; MS. LISA SMITH; MS. LINDA SPOMER; MR. OSCAR TREVIÑO; MS. SHELBY WETZEL; MR. KEVIN KILLOUGH, *Powell Tribune*; and MS. KELI BORDERS, Interim 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, June 14, 2021 at 3:04 p.m.in the Yellowstone Building Conference Center.

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

**WORK SESSION:** Interim President Watson stated as a follow-up to the May 27, 2021 retreat in which there was an Enrollment and Communications and Marketing presentation, she has asked Carey Miller to discuss the monthly analytics report. Interim President Watson stated the information is meant to provide a baseline of current practices related to enrollment and marketing and a future presentation will focus on efforts going forward as a result of transformational change.

Carey Miller stated the Communications and Marketing report is made up of screenshots of dashboards the department utilizes to measure success and provide benchmarking.

Carey explained that in the Facebook and Instagram Advertising Report, there are more social platforms included with each of those such as the Facebook display network that includes video games, articles in various websites, etc. The report indicates the various ads and target audience for each as well as how well individual ads are performing. When looking at the columns representing impressions, link clicks and link click-through rate, it's important to understand that "impressions" indicate the number of times an ad was in front of an individual and the "link clicks" column records the number of times someone clicked on the link that took them to a Northwest College webpage. The "CTR" (click-through rate) indicates the percentage of times an "impression" results in a "link click". While the percentages seem small in the "CTR", they are actually much higher than the national average of .05%.

Interim President Watson pointed out the different ad campaigns taking place at once for traditional aged and non-traditional aged students. Within those targeted groups, they are also receiving four different messages related to experience, affordability, location and quality. It's important to understand the ads that are seen on social media are specific to the demographics of the individual seeing the ad. The particular report Carey has been referencing indicates a total of over 450k impressions; meaning that during the month of May, Northwest College ads have been "seen" over 450k times.

Carey stated there are two types of social media presence. The paid advertising

already discussed, as well as “organic” content that is posted by Northwest College to its various social media pages such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The Social Media Report tracks engagement on those pages and results will fluctuate depending on times of year and what may be happening on campus during a specific period, such as graduation.

The website traffic report compares data from the previous year, as opposed to monthly comparisons as in the reports discussed previously. This timeline is more useful in analyzing data from one academic year to another. The report shows results such as the number of users, user sessions, number of pages visited, etc. The traffic source is also documented such as google search, direct (typing in web address), paid ads, Facebook, etc. Carey stated she also tracks the top pages visited each month as well as user demographics. The last page of the report reveals “search terms”, which is useful in determining what users are interested in learning more about.

Carey stated the analytics in these reports are useful in determining if strategies are useful and where there may be gaps. The Communications and Marketing department remains flexible and fluid in responding to the data in order to remain effective and relevant in their efforts.

In response to an inquiry from Trustee Danko regarding utilizing Facebook Messenger for advertising, Carey responded Messenger ads are included in the Facebook suite for each campaign.

In response to a question from Trustee Kuipers, Carey stated the four messages utilized in the current advertising campaign (experience, affordability, location and quality) are the result of efforts by the Strategic Enrollment Management team (SEM) and reflect the Northwest College brand. The academic programs where advertising efforts may be focused are also a result of analysis performed by SEM in determining which programs the College is known for. These program highlights may change at any given time; however, the brand messaging remains the same.

In response to a question from Trustee Kuipers related to non-degree programs such as those offered by the Center for Training and Development, Carey stated that while the Communications and Marketing department is spread thin, it supports all areas on campus for advertising as well as publications.

In referencing the demographics of targeted audiences, Trustee Spomer feels potential students are making decisions about college in ninth and tenth grade and inquired about marketing efforts to younger individuals. Carey stated she would be interested in gaining West Hernandez’s thoughts on marketing and recruiting efforts to a younger demographic and feels the idea is worth further exploration.

In reference to Carey’s comment about being “spread thin”, Trustee Spomer inquired if the marketing budget needed to be increased and to what amount. Interim President Watson stated national benchmarks as well as findings from CampusWorks will be utilized in determining resource allocation in relation to transformational change.

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

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

Interim President Watson directed Trustees to the annual Accounts receivable write-offs memo contained within the consent agenda. She explained the College was able to recapture a large portion of bad debt expense through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) that students received

and then paid toward their account balances. She explained that when looking at the bad debt trends in the future, the 2020-21 academic year will be an anomaly because of the pandemic relief funds. These funds were of great benefit to the students in that they were able to pay toward their debt in instances where they didn't have other resources to do so and also benefits the College by receiving the payments, reducing bad debt, and increasing operational funds.

Trustee Kuipers expressed her appreciation of the College's efforts to assist students with their unpaid balances and that while it's a fiscal management process, it's also very student-centric as outlined in the bad debt memo.

**Motion carried and the consent agenda, including the minutes of the May 10, 2021 regular meeting, as well as the minutes of the May 27, 2021 special meeting/retreat, was approved.**

**DISCUSSION/  
INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

BOCES budgets

In response to a question from Trustee Kuipers, Interim President Watson stated the BOCES budgets are developed by the individual BOCES Boards and presented as an informational item. The Park County School District #1 BOCES budget has a more direct impact on the College as it relates to PVCE.

Trustee Danko stated some of the BOCES budgets include funds for dual and concurrent enrollment, although Park County School District #1 (PCSD#1) does not.

Chair Wurzel stated the BOCES Board on which he serves, PCSD#1, utilized excess reserve funds to provide one-time funding for dual and concurrent enrollment as well as Driver's Education and MakerSpace. There has been discussion about continuing efforts to offset costs to the College of dual and concurrent enrollment and conversations regarding funding are expected to continue in the fall.

**CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM**

The Citizens' Open Forum convened at 4:59 p.m. There were no citizens who 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:**

Preliminary FY22 budget

Interim President Watson invited Finance Director Brad Bowen to present the preliminary FY22 budget. She stated that while most of the figures are known at this time, the statewide mil valuations have yet to be received so state allocations could still vary.

Brad Bowen expressed his appreciation to everyone who worked on the budget this year. It has been a difficult year, but he feels the groundwork has been set for transformational work going forward. He also noted that 267 students applied for graduation this spring compared to 284 last year. In spite of the pandemic, the College has been moving forward with a strong student-centered focus.

Brad stated economic decline is a concern, as is the state and local economy. Northwest College continues to offer high-quality and cost-effective programs in an effort to maintain and grow enrollment.

Current local levy projections have declined 11% and is driven by the mineral extraction industry. The budget book was prepared using a mil valuation for the county of \$629 million; however, final valuations have since been released and

is now at \$626 million. This will reduce the College's fund 10 by approximately \$12,000 and the one mil fund by \$3,000. The restricted funds in the FY22 budget are significantly lower than the FY21 budget because final grant funds have yet to be awarded. The FY21 budget includes state Coronavirus relief funds as well.

Brad stated when looking at the breakdown of revenue on page 84 of the budget memo, it's notable that when comparing it to the June budget book from FY21, the percent allocation for state and local revenue remains relatively similar. He also noted that the FY22 budget was prepared without a reserve utilization. Due to the unknown of state valuations, a reserve utilization could be requested at a later date.

Interim President Watson further explained that once the state-wide local levy valuations are determined, the funding allocation will be recalculated and budgets may be adjusted if necessary.

Brad referenced page 86 in the Board packet, which outlines the changes in the FY22 proposed budget compared to the FY21 budget. Tuition and fees have increased in relation to the 6% increase in tuition set by the WCCC and also the increase in student fixed fees approved by the Board of Trustees. There is a decrease in state appropriations as discussed previously, a small increase in local appropriations, the loss of the previous reserve utilization and a slight change in other sources. Those changes are reflected in the sub-categories listed below as the decrease in salaries and benefits through RIF's, attrition and vacancies as well as the other reductions the Board has previously approved. There is also an increase to the Student Services Program which is a result of transferring the Student Health fee (Johnson Fitness Center and Student Success Center employees and corresponding budgets and fees) from the auxiliary fund to the unrestricted operating fund. There is also a slight increase in the Plant Administration Program salary and benefits as a shift was made in a custodial position in DSC in relation to Dining Services.

Brad directed Trustees' attention to page 87, which includes a breakdown of the one mil fund as well as the auxiliary fund. The one mil fund reduction is reflected in approximately \$50,000 in vehicle expense reductions. The auxiliary reduction is related to a reduction in expected number of students staying in residence halls and purchasing meal plans, the removal of the Children's Learning and Care Center and the transfer of the Student Health budget to the Student Services Program.

Trustee Spomer inquired about the level of reserves at this time, to which Brad directed Trustees to the Schedule of Reserves on page 73 of the Board packet. Brad stated that fund 10 reserves are not to exceed 15% of revenue. He went on to say that the actuals for FY21 are listed in the budget book and as it stands, reserves will not be significantly increased this year.

In response to a question from Trustee Spomer related to the third round of Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF), Interim President Watson stated there have been three tranches of funds received: the first was utilized for pandemic related expenses incurred (PPE, technology, etc.); the second tranche was more flexible and allowed institutions to claim lost revenue resulting from the pandemic; the third tranche has even more flexibility and allows usage for transformational change such as program development that will benefit the community in economic recovery. Regulations have yet to be finalized regarding the third tranche.

In response to a question from Trustee Spomer regarding freezing of capital expenditures, Interim President Watson stated that except for a couple of buses, and major maintenance work, capital expenditures have been frozen in the last few years. She is hopeful the WIN initiative will also support transformational change. Those programs developed will be analyzed to ensure they are serving the community and students successfully and are self-sustaining over time.

In response to a question from Trustee Spomer on the legislative process, Interim President Watson explained the community colleges as well as the University of Wyoming were not specifically assigned to a committee but often presented before the Joint Appropriations Committee with funding requests. At the end of the spring '21 Legislative Session, the colleges were assigned to the Joint Education Committee going forward.

Recommended policy revisions  
Student Policies – Phase II

Interim President Watson stated the Student Handbook Committee, under the direction of Interim Vice President Dee Havig, extracted the existing policy that was contained within the Student Handbook to be formally included in the Board Policy Manual. The student policies before the Board are a result of the second and final phase of that process.

**A motion was made by Trustee Kuipers on behalf of the Board Policy and Student Success Committee to approve the student policies as presented.**

**Motion carried.**

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

July Upcoming:

- WACCT annual dues
- Year-end budget adjustments
- Budget hearing
- Annual hearing for the Mil levy approval
- Policy update review for previous academic year
- Other TBD

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

College Rodeo National Finals, June 13-19, 2021, Casper  
Next meeting July 12, 2021, 3:00 p.m., Yellowstone Building  
Reminder: August Board meeting date moved to August 16, 2021

**A ADJOURNMENT:**

Chair Wurzel stated there is professional development funding available for Trustees who may wish to attend the national ACCT Conference which will take place October 13-17, in San Diego, CA. He encouraged new members, Trustee Kuipers and Trustee Todd, to consider attending this valuable event.  
**The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.**

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LARRY TODD, Vice President/Secretary

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Date