

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

November 8, 2021

- MEMBERS PRESENT:** President DR. MARK WURZEL; Vice President/Secretary DR. LARRY TODD; Treasurer MS. CAROLYN DANKO; and Trustees MR. JOHN HOUSEL, MR. BOB NEWSOME, and MR. DUSTY SPOMER
- MEMBERS ABSENT:** Trustee MS. TARA KUIPERS
- OTHERS PRESENT:** MS. LISA WATSON, Interim President; DR. GERRY GIRAUD, Vice President for Academic Affairs; MS. JILL ANDERSON; MS. HOLLY BERRYMAN; MR. BRAD BOWEN; DR. MICHAEL CUDDY; DR. JENNIFER DARE; DR. RENEE DECHERT; MR. DUSTIN DICKS; MR. DAVE ERICKSON; MS. NANCY GILMORE; MR. WAYNE HERR; MS. DEB JACOBS; MR. SCOTT MCBRIDE; MS. NANCY MILLER; MS. ASTRID NORTHRUP; MR. SHANE OGDEN; MS. HALLIE OGDEN; MR. CORY OSTERMILLER; MR. DENNIS QUILLEN; MR. COOPER RANDALL; MS. DELANIE SALZMAN; MS. JEN SCHNEIDER; MS. LINDA SPOMER; MR. MARTIN STENSING; MS. REBECCA THOMAS; 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, November 8, 2021, at 3:33 p.m. in the Meeteetse School cafeteria.
- A APPROVE THE AGENDA:** President Wurzel suggested the agenda be amended to include discussion items related to a nominating committee for new Board officers and the upcoming OSHA mandate regarding vaccine requirements. An item of New Business should also be added to consider the Presidential salary.
- A motion was made by Trustee Todd and seconded by Trustee Newsome to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.**
- WORK SESSION:** Interim President Watson welcomed those present to Meeteetse and introduced Park County School District #16, Superintendent Shane Ogden.
- Superintendent Ogden stated the community is extremely proud of the Meeteetse School and considers it the heart and hub of the community. Many events are held there, and people come to support students in sports and various activities. While the School is small, the ideas are big. He introduced students to highlight a few programs that set Meeteetse School apart from others.
- Hallie Ogden explained the Summer Worker Program, in which students aged 14-18 have an opportunity to work at various jobs in businesses around town. The program teaches many different skills useful in future employment. Superintendent Ogden further explained the program is possible because of the School's excellent community partners. At the end of the summer season, students and employers provide feedback on what was learned and how students grew.
- Cooper Randall, President of the FFA chapter, explained the program focuses on teaching kids leadership skills in the agriculture career setting. There are many events such as competitions and retreats to promote leadership skills, and community involvement is strongly encouraged. Superintendent Ogden added that the local chapter had won many state and national awards for their local work and competitions.

Student Council President Delanie Salzman stated that during her term, the Student Council had chosen five goals to keep in mind in everything they do:

1. Build leadership capacity by welcoming new Council members and allowing them to exercise their leadership skills.
2. Create community and school service opportunities.
3. Increase networking and communication among students.
4. Implement new Student Council programs and activities that increase its effectiveness.
5. Self-evaluation for Student Council effectiveness.

Delanie stated the Student Council is active in many ways, such as planning Homecoming activities, fundraising for the Make a Wish Foundation, and Random Acts Wednesdays, where Council members provide small gifts to students to show appreciation.

Superintendent Ogden stated that these and many other programs are successful because they are a small school with excellent community support. He believes this explains why Meeteetse School and Northwest College are great partners in that both understand the need to rely on their respective communities. He looks forward to continuing the partnership and seeing the many things that can be accomplished moving forward in various adventures.

Superintendent Ogden provided a tour of Meeteetse School to Trustees.

Principal Scott McBride shared that Fridays at the School are spent training students for the future in critical areas such as communication, creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving. This occurs through activities such as Genius Hour, in which small groups of students in all age ranges work together on special projects and classes on leadership skills. The Above and Beyond program runs outside the normal academic classes offering things, such as archery, horse packing, outdoor cooking, etc., in which students can participate.

Superintendent Ogden concluded by expressing his appreciation to the Board for visiting Meeteetse School and allowing them to showcase the facility and, more importantly, the students. He also thanked Northwest College for partnering with the School and allowing their high school students to challenge themselves with college classes.

Interim President Watson stated that in her conversations with Superintendent Ogden, they both desire to grow the relationship between Meeteetse School, the Meeteetse community, and Northwest College.

In response to a question from President Wurzel related to additional ways in which the College could strengthen the partnership with Meeteetse School, Superintendent Ogden stated he would like to see more outreach to younger students for them to begin to identify themselves as Trappers. He also suggested that dual and concurrent enrolled students receive a student ID to encourage them to see themselves as college students, giving them access to the library, etc. Superintendent Ogden expressed a great fondness for Northwest College and would like to grow that sentiment among his students.

A CONSENT AGENDA:

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

In response to a question from Trustee Housel, Interim President Watson stated the Impact307 program is an existing Economic Development Administration program with the University of Wyoming. Recently, UW wrote a grant to expand the outreach and has partnered with the community colleges to bring support to entrepreneurs in their respective areas. Each college will receive \$17,000 to provide workshops and activities that encourage and support entrepreneurial endeavors.

Motion carried, and the consent agenda, including the minutes of the October 11, 2021, regular meeting, the October 13, 2021, special meeting, the October 14, 2021, special meeting, and the October 20, 2021, special meeting were approved.

**DISCUSSION/
INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

Preliminary audit report

Mr. Wayne Herr, CPA and partner in McGee, Hearne, and Paiz, LLP, reviewed the audit criteria and presented the preliminary audit report for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. There were no findings in the financial section of the audit, but one finding related to reporting the CARES Act funding. While the federal government released the funds quickly, they did not release guidelines on reporting until much later. The reporting error has since been rectified. Mr. Herr concluded by extending his appreciation to Finance Director Brad Bowen and his staff for providing timely and accurate information.

Rebranding and Renaming discussion

Interim President Watson stated she wanted to provide an opportunity for Trustees to discuss takeaways from the Rebranding and Renaming Panel Discussion that took place on October 13, 2021.

Trustee Todd stated he feels the process needs to be tied to a longer-term vision. In terms of transformation, he feels the examples presented earlier by Meeteetse School of students break barriers, redefine outcomes, and the innovation to combine different grade levels and allow students to interact and work together could work at the college level. For instance, combining classes across disciplines, such as CAD and welding, is the type of transformation he would like to see. He also feels that rebranding by taking advantage of local resources would attract and engage students. He expressed his appreciation to Superintendent Ogden for sharing the unique programs at Meeteetse School, which allowed him to consider that educational transformation can occur without many bells and whistles but with classroom substance.

Trustee Housel agrees that the analysis should be thoroughly studied before a name change can be considered, which is part of the transformational process. He feels it's important to keep in mind that Northwest College should continue to provide core education to maintain the status of a transfer institution. Northwest College has been known around the state for its strong academics and as a Liberal Arts school, and he would like to see that continue. Regarding the potential name change, he feels it is under consideration because the name has been diluted and is shared by many other educational institutions in the country. He stated the name change has been discussed for quite a few years and further referenced various community and campus input sessions that support a name change to Yellowstone College. While he feels the transformation work needs to be completed first, he feels it's important not to ignore the previous input received regarding the name change.

Interim President Watson stated that transformation is the concept of differentiating ourselves. Individuals have shared their desire to retain our connection with the University of Wyoming and see the value as a transfer institution. While she feels this value can be retained, community listening sessions reflect a desire to provide other programs as well as transfer options. She has also heard concern about the value of a name change related to the financial costs, time, and energy to undertake such an endeavor. Consideration should be given to what the College plans to accomplish and the value expected from a name change.

Trustee Spomer agrees that first, a decision should be made regarding the College's transformation, and then consideration could be given to a potential name change. To Trustee Housel's point, there have been many input sessions, but he isn't as interested in how many are in favor vs. how many are opposed. He feels it's important to use the information to test potential outcomes, such as if alumni dollars will be lost as a result of a name change and how much that might impact the College. He feels it's time to shift from having conversations about transformation and the name change and move into the execution phase.

In relation to the Core Model Options, Trustee Spomer feels the College needs to consider each one and the viability for success. For instance, the Workforce Hub model raises questions about whether there are industries in the area that need programs that haven't been implemented already through the Center for Training and Development. It raises the question for him whether that would be a viable core model to consider. He feels it's time to strongly consider each and make a decision on which direction to take moving forward.

Trustee Todd stated that in reviewing the summary of comments garnered from the Panel Discussion, he realizes that it's biased and a select sample without much meaning. He also feels it's time to move forward. While graduating students who are able to transfer easily is important, it's more important for the College to graduate students who are recruited for transfer to universities.

President Wurzel stated that he also feels transformation must take place before a name change; although, he questions whether it would be better and more appealing to donors if the name changed to Northwest Wyoming College rather than Yellowstone College. He also expressed that when he joined the Board, he felt as if Northwest College was the jewel of the Wyoming college system because it was a Liberal Arts college vs. a trades college. He feels it's the core of the College and doesn't want that to go away. He also feels the College is already doing many of the things described in the Core Models and is already actively engaged in transformation. The data has been collected, and now it's time to decide on which direction the College should focus time and resources.

Trustee Todd suggested that a name change to Northwest Wyoming College coupled with Home of Yellowstone may be more palatable to those opposed to the name change of Yellowstone College.

Trustee Danko agreed that the College is already practicing elements of each of the four Core Models, and she is not in favor of picking one or two.

Trustee Spomer reiterated the need to make a push to concentrate efforts toward one or a hybrid of the Core Models and then debate a name change. Once that's determined, there will need to be a plan that contains a funding structure, forecast of personnel needs, etc. Once that has all been established, then a name change could be considered. The element that CampusWorks stressed more than others is that the market focus needs to change, or the

enrollment will continue to diminish.

Trustee Newsome stated he is slightly opposed to the Yellowstone College name and is very much in favor of the Northwest Wyoming College name. He feels the cost would be more than is expected at the outset for a name change. He also feels the College would lose seventy-five years' worth of name recognition. He also stated that originally, Northwest College was designed to be a two-year transfer institution which has been successful. However, he feels the College should expand existing programs and develop new programs that provide a skill-set for employment. He feels that a slight name change might provide a springboard for the transformation he described.

Trustee Housel reminded Trustees of the Board retreat in which Justin from CampusWorks specified that one Core Model should be chosen for a primary focus moving forward. Trustee Housel stated he disagrees and hopes to be able to agree on a hybrid option from the four models that fit the College's situation best. He stated that historically, the purpose of a community college within the college system was to serve the needs of students in a particular area. He feels at the beginning of the transformational process, it was agreed that the College needs to reach beyond the borders of Wyoming to support enrollment growth. Therefore, a name change to Yellowstone College conveys the transformation from a local to a broader reach model.

Interim President Watson thanked Trustees for their thoughts and stated that she heard a call to action in their comments. She agrees with Trustee Housel in that she feels the College shouldn't limit itself to one Core Model. She feels the College can grow the base in different ways in the region it serves. While traditional-aged students have historically been the largest student population, there is room to grow the non-traditional aged student population from within the area. She reminded Trustees that the College had just developed the BAS degree, which is life-changing for place-bound students. She agrees that workforce programming should be offered to be responsive to the needs of the region. She also agrees with President Wurzel's statement that the College is already transforming in the areas of workforce and economic development. Our students are valued at the University of Wyoming because of our programming. The College should determine if there are a few distinctive programs it wants to invest selective energy and resources. She also feels that one of the distinctive programs could capture the Destination Model category. Part of the transformational effort includes defining how to serve our community while marketing ourselves as a distinctive institution outside of the current service area. There will be more discussion that takes place over the next month and after the retreat. If these occur a rough draft or outline may be available at the December Board meeting.

Trustee Spomer stated he feels that if the College attempts to do too many things, it won't be great at any one of them. He feels the Board needs to be very focused on what was gleaned from the transformation work and make an attempt to have a singular pointed effort, even if it's a hybrid of more than one Core Model. He stated that if the College continues to do the same things, it will net the same results.

Interim President Watson presented an overview memo of the College's facilities along with a detailed spreadsheet showing all major mechanical or interior/exterior improvements needed. The memo's purpose is to allow Trustees to begin thinking about the purpose of each building and what the future needs for that building might be relating to the transformation. While

academic buildings are eligible for State major maintenance support, auxiliary service buildings are excluded. Any repairs or improvements to auxiliary buildings must be paid for by the College. Although academic buildings are eligible for major maintenance funds, there is always a shortfall of funds, and therefore priorities must be set. She stated she would like the Board to consider if they are comfortable with the College's facilities planning or if the Board would like to provide more input.

Trustee Housel stated he appreciates the report Interim President Watson has provided the last few years and that she has grown and expanded it to include more information over the years. It helps put focus on the needs of the College's physical assets and to determine priorities for allocating funds.

In response to a question from Trustee Spomer, Interim President Watson stated the Field Camp is categorized as needing further evaluation regarding long-term utilization before it will be considered for capital improvements. The Trapper Arena is listed as a project on the major maintenance list, and the College is currently waiting on quotes for those improvements.

President Wurzel stated the Board performs a periodic review of the facilities master plan and Residence Life plan and questioned whether that could be referred to the Board Facilities Committee to report back, or if the entire Board should discuss them in-depth during a Work Session.

Interim President Watson stated the restrictions on what can be done are primarily related to resources. The Board, for example, needs to make a decision on the amount of reserves to be utilized for the Student Center. While the Residence Life plan was approved by the Board, it was decided at the time that the College would remain cognizant of the available resources at any given time that repairs or improvements would need to be made. She provided the spreadsheet of major mechanical and improvement needs of all College facilities in order for the Board to remain informed, but the focus at this time is on determining available resources for the Student Center.

Trustee Housel stated he would be in favor of Interim President Watson bringing a recommendation to the Board with enough information for the Board to take action. If further review is needed, it should then be assigned to the Board Facilities Committee. He appreciates having access to the spreadsheet as a point of reference and then having items that are determined to be a priority brought before the Board for approval.

Trustee Spomer stated that there are short-term items to address in addition to a long-term plan to consider. He stated that if a master plan is done thoroughly, it involves the Board, administration, staff, and community input, and an inventory of assessment needs and alternatives, prioritization, and as a result, a ten-year plan. While there are short-term items to consider currently, he feels work needs to be done to create a solid master plan.

President Wurzel stated that he feels Interim President Watson should bring short-term needs to the Board for consideration but that the Facilities Committee should begin working on a long-term master plan.

In response to a question from Trustee Spomer, Interim President Watson confirmed that the development of the master plan would be an administrative effort that requires input and support from the Board. Trustees could utilize the Facilities Committee as a way to work on the details of the plan and then bring it to the Board for input and consideration.

Trustee Spomer stated that if the master plan is to be developed by a third party, the Board should be involved in the visioning. He would like there to be milestone interactions where the plan is brought to the Board at different stages throughout the development process, and then finally for approval as part of the governance function of the Board.

President Wurzel stated his preference would be for the Board Facilities Committee to hold multiple meetings to work through the development of the plan with a robust report each month to the Board as a whole. The Residence Life Plan could possibly be reviewed in a single Board meeting. If a particular area of the plan needs further discussion, it could be decided at that time to assign it to Committee or add it to a future agenda.

Trustee Spomer stated he would support the Facilities Committee reviewing the state requirements for a master plan and come back to the Board with a recommendation on how to proceed.

Interim President Watson stated she would like the Board to discuss all campus spaces and if each is relevant and essential for future use.

A motion was made by Trustee Spomer and seconded by Trustee Danko to refer the discussion of future usage of each facility and if they are essential to the function of the College to the Board Facilities Committee and charge them with bringing a recommendation back to the Board of Trustees. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee

President Wurzel stated he had asked Trustee Spomer to select two additional Trustees to serve on a nominating committee to bring a slate of candidates to the December meeting for consideration in serving as officers and on various sub-committees.

OSHA mandate

Interim President Watson stated the Board needs to be aware that the OSHA vaccine mandate is moving very quickly. The fifth district court has paused the implementation through an injunction. The mandate dictates that employees must be vaccinated by January 4, 2022. However, those individuals who have not been vaccinated must either receive their first shot by December 2, 2021 or be required to wear a mask. If the mandate moves forward, the College will need to put a policy and procedures in place very quickly. There will also need to be a plan in place to require weekly testing of individuals not vaccinated. Interim President Watson stated the Board needs to be cognizant of the fact that the College could lose some employees as a result of this mandate. She also stated that mandates for healthcare workers would also affect the College and its nursing students in relation to clinical sites.

CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM

The Citizens' Open Forum convened at 5:00 p.m. No citizens 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:

Presidential Salary

A motion was made by Trustee Housel and seconded by Trustee Spomer that Board President Wurzel shall work with Human Resources Director Jill Anderson to determine a salary range to be included with the job posting for the position of President of Northwest College.

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

December Upcoming:

- Wyoming Postsecondary Education Options report
- Statewide legislative update
- The annual signing of Ethics Policy
- Other TBD

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Holiday Party December 10, 2021, 5:30 p.m., The Commons
Next meeting December 13, 2021, 3:00 p.m., Yellowstone Building

A ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

LARRY TODD, Vice President/Secretary

Date