

Clatsop Community College
1651 Lexington Avenue * Astoria, Oregon 97103 * www.clatsopcc.edu

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 14, 2023
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Board Meeting

Board Members Present: Ashley Flukinger, Ed Johnson, Tim Lyman, Lloyd Mueller, Jody Stahancyk, Trudy Van Dusen Citovic, Mitra Vazeen

Others Present: Julie Brown, Carolyn Adler, Tina Kotson, Hazel Martinez, Rinda Johansen, Toni Middleton, Emily Falleur, Celeste Petersen, Nichole Warwick, Joe Warwick, TJ Lackner, Brady Leach, John Goodenburger, Kurt Donaldson, Kevin Leahy, Kama O'Connor, Brett Nair, Tim Hoss, Evon Jacobsen, Eldon Russell, Mary Jackson, Tammy Lambert, Ken Ross, Jon Graves, Edie Olsen, Sarah Geleynse, Julie Kovatch, Jim Alegria, Kristi Polus, K. Nasstrom, Quinn Haase, Tony B., Jake Campbell, Pat Schulte, Deac Guidi, Daniel Clark, Eileen Purcell, R. Johnson, Nick Baisley, Kahor, Greg Riehl, Tom Ank, Jiang Fei Koch, Larry Haskell, Tamara Blackford, Devon Weaver, Susan (?), Pat Keefe, Heather Douglas, Kellie Allen, Gabrielle Jones, Vanessa Garner, Margaret Frimoth, Interim President Kevin LaCoste, Recording Secretary Felicity Green

CALL TO ORDER

Trudy Van Dusen Citovic called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Roll was called.

Adoption of Agenda

The Board Chair said she would like to amend the agenda. The presentation has been cancelled; instead, the Interim President will give a brief presentation. He will also be reading a public announcement shortly before the public forum. The Board will not be discussing the announcement today.

Lloyd Mueller moved to adopt the agenda as amended. Ed Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Interim President Kevin LaCoste read the following announcement, which was sent out via email to College staff and faculty earlier today.

*Dear Clatsop Community College Community,
I hope this message finds well. Today, I am writing to share important updates regarding the restructure plans for Clatsop Community College. In response to the evolving landscape and the need for greater efficiency in our operations, we are making changes to our administrative structure that will better align with the challenges and opportunities ahead.*

Effective September 14, 2023, we will be implementing the following changes:

Elimination of Vice President of Academic Affairs and Vice President of Finance and Operations Roles:

We have made the decision to eliminate the positions of Vice President of Academic Affairs and Vice President of Finance and Operations. We recognize the contributions of both Peter Williams and Shari Montazeri during their tenures in these roles and extend our heartfelt gratitude for their dedication and service to Clatsop Community College.

Introduction of Vice President and Provost Role:

To streamline our administrative functions and ensure a more unified approach to our mission, we will be introducing a new leadership role – the Vice President and Provost. This position will report directly to the President (myself) and will be responsible for overseeing both academic affairs and financial operations. This structural change is designed to enhance communication, collaboration, and decision-making within our institution while remaining agile in response to the changing landscape of community colleges.

I want to emphasize that these changes are driven by a commitment to improving the overall effectiveness and responsiveness of Clatsop Community College. We believe that this restructured leadership model will better serve our students, faculty, staff, and the wider community.

Thanking Peter Williams and Shari Montazeri:

I would like to take this moment to express my appreciation to Peter Williams and Shari Montazeri for their service to Clatsop Community College. We wish them both the very best in their future endeavors.

We understand that change can be accompanied by questions and concerns. We are committed to providing transparent communication and ensuring a smooth transition process. If you have any questions or would like to discuss these changes further, please feel free to reach out.

As we move forward with this restructuring, I am confident that Clatsop Community College will emerge stronger and better equipped to fulfill its mission of providing exceptional educational opportunities and support to our students.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to our college community. Your dedication is the cornerstone of our success.

PUBLIC FORUM

Introduction of Guests

Chair Trudy Van Dusen Citovic said that due to the number of attendees, she will not be asking all guests to introduce themselves. She asked that only guests who are not employees of the College introduce themselves. Guests introduced themselves.

Public Comment

Brett Nair, OEA Consultant, and Kurt Donaldson presented a letter which is included in these Minutes. (Addenda A.) They requested that the Board approve the bargaining agreement reached on June 13 and that the Board approve all the contracts for bargaining groups. Kurt Donaldson stated that they stand together with all College employees.

Presentation by the Interim President

Interim President Kevin LaCoste gave a Powerpoint presentation (Addenda B.)

He said that the College spends more than it makes. While the budget is currently balanced, the reserves are quite low. Expenditures must be cut in order to bring the budget back into balance. He is also concerned that money has not been put aside to cover ongoing building maintenance and upkeep expenses. He feels that the personnel cuts that were made today will help balance the budget. The College is expecting a one time \$1.5 million payment for Covid employee retention. Without that income, the situation would be even worse. It has not yet been received.

He intends to hire a consultant to help with the strategic plan. He said that the whole staff, faculty and community will have a voice in that process and that he was looking forward to hearing their input.

Lloyd Mueller asked if there was any other way to save the \$1.5 million besides cutting personnel? Kevin LaCoste answered that while there are one-time cuts that could be made this is the only solution going forward. He said that the \$1.5 million must also be used for maintenance of the College's real estate. Mr. Mueller asked what the College would be doing if they did not receive that money? Board Chair Trudy Van Dusen Citovic responded that the College could take out a tax anticipation loan but that would be borrowing from next year to pay this year, so they did not want to use that option. She also said that the Board is asking the Interim President to look at the entire staffing structure to see if there are other reorganizations that need to be made. She said that they are planning to create a five-year plan that will take care of both employees and buildings. Kevin LaCoste commented that enrollment is looking good but that he recommends adjusting tuition every year.

Jody Stahanczyk said that she felt that the College has hidden its head for too many years, hoping the problems would go away. She thanked Kevin LaCoste and Trudy Van Dusen Citovic for their work and said she and all the other Board members would do everything in their power to make the new structure work.

Lloyd Mueller asked if the 23/24 budget include the COLAs that have not been ratified? Although there was some initial confusion on this matter, those COLAS were in fact included.

Trudy Van Dusen Citovic asked Kevin LaCoste to please explain the contracts that are in front of the Board tonight and to give his recommendation. He explained that the Classified Union is asking for a 9% COLA; part-time faculty is asking for a 6% COLA increase and the full-time faculty union, which had already had a 2% COLA built into the 2023/24 budget, has requested

2% more. All these contracts had been approved by President Breitmeyer, but that approval came too late in the year to include them in the 2023/24 College budget.

Kevin LaCoste said that while it is important that the College not fall out of market rate, he is concerned that the College will not have sufficient funds until they receive the expected \$1.5 million. He said that the increases will be retroactive to July 1.

The Board Chair said that she felt the Board needed to have an Executive Session next week to discuss the contracts and direct the Interim President. She asked the Board if they agreed. The Board agreed unanimously.

The Board Chair said that the Board had not seen the contracts. She said that in a previous Executive Session they were only told that negotiations were ongoing and that they cannot make a decision until all the information is in front of them.

Tim Lyman stated that the bill has come due for a decade of financial irresponsibility. Mitra Vazeen seconded Tim Lyman's statement.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- June 26, 2023 Board Retreat
- July 21, 2023 Special Board Meeting
- August 10, 2023 Regular Board Meeting

Tim Lyman **moved to accept all the Minutes as presented.** Ed Johnson seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

REPORTS / DISCUSSION ITEMS

Trudy Van Dusen Citovic asked for questions and comments on the reports.

Tim Lyman said that he wanted to talk about the 2018 MERTS project. He is concerned about how much money was spent on the project. He feels that too much was spent on the architect, the designers and the capital campaign consultants.

The Chair asked the Board to let the Board Secretary know if they are going to be available on Wednesday, September 20 to help with the new student orientation lunch.

Lloyd Mueller and Ed Johnson reported on the OCCA Board Member Training they attended in Salem on September 9. They said it was very worthwhile and the quality of the presentations and materials were great. Ed Johnson added that he would like Karen Smith's Board presentation, originally planned for September 14, to be rescheduled.

OLD BUSINESS

Review of 2021 Board Goals, Core Focus Areas and Metrics for Success

The Chair said this was covered in the President's report. Tim Lyman reported that in the past the Board set goals and assigned a Board member as a liaison. He doesn't think we need to continue that but thinks it is a good framework for President's report.

NEW BUSINESS

Labor Contracts

This was tabled to be discussed at the Executive Session next week.

Policies and Corresponding Procedures for Review: BP 6340 for First Reading

Jody Stahancyk **moved to hold this over to the next Board meeting.** Lloyd Mueller seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

New Hires

Kama O'Connor, the new writing instructor, introduced herself.

Kevin LaCoste introduced Teena Toyas in her new role as Provost; the Board congratulated her.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Rinda Johansen read a statement on behalf of the Classified Union. She said they would like the Board to realize that the 5% COLA given to S&S this year ended up costing the College over \$140,000 for just the top ten people. Meanwhile, there are 10 Classified employees of this College who are eligible for the food pantry. She said that the reluctance to sign the contract struck at the heart of the classified union, many of whom have waited for years for reclassification. They work hard and are proud of the jobs they do; they need to make a living wage.

Tim Hoss, OSEA Representative, also read a statement: The College and the Association bargained in good faith to get these contracts. This was promised. Other groups have gotten raises but not them. He asked that the Board stand behind the offer that was agreed upon.

TJ Lackner said that he wanted to reiterate that these were good faith contracts. He is nervous that faculty will start work on Monday without this being settled and he had hoped that tonight's meeting would settle the issue. He said he felt that nothing was accomplished tonight.

Board Forum

Tim Lyman said he is of the opinion that the employees bargained in good faith but the college did not. He said that the financial situation of the College was no secret among leadership and the then President. He stated that employees have been told for the last ten years that everything was fine when it was not fine.

Ed Johnson said that life can be messy and the situation we are in right now is a mess. He said we can choose to see it as an opportunity to do things better. His approach to life is to be joyful. He said he thought he was going to miss this meeting because one of his lambs swam across the slough but his neighbor helped him get it.

He said, "We can help each other get things better or we can point fingers and blame others." He said that he looks at this situation like we are all in a lifeboat here: we all need to work

together and make this work. The first thing he attended as a Board member at the College was the Pinning Ceremony. One nurse joined the ceremony via Zoom from the hospital. She has 5 kids and now she's a nurse. Those are the people we are here to help. He was not elected to be the last guy out the door and turn the lights off. He's here to succeed and he will make this happen.

Trudy Van Dusen Citovic said she wanted to respond to what TJ said because it's important. She said that it has taken the last two months for Kevin LaCoste to realize where the College really is financially and what decisions need to be made. She said that the College had to decide to either give raises or cut jobs. She stated that the College needs more students and everyone here should bring in one extra person. However, that won't be enough. She asked people to put themselves in the Board's shoes and decide if they want to approve the raises and then cut jobs or would they prefer to not have the raises. If these raises are approved, Kevin will have to tell someone else that they don't have a job at all.

Kevin LaCoste said that we have to keep going together and we have to bring the expenses down or we are going to crash. He likened the state of the College to that of an airplane crashing towards the ground.

Brett Nair raised his hand and was recognized by the Chair. He said that he wanted the Board to reflect that all three unions negotiated with the then President of this College in good faith. They also reviewed the budget at that time, as did the Board and the President. He said that there is nothing in there that indicates an immediate cash crisis, nor is there anything that would cause them to withdraw what the unions bargained for. He said that this delay is hurting the status of the college in future negotiations as if the Board can revoke the contract randomly, that will change the nature of future discussions. He does not believe, having spent years working with the College and looking at the audits, that approving the contracts will sink the College.

There was a brief discussion of finances between Kevin LaCoste and Brett Nair.

Ed Johnson stated that in the future he would like to see a report from the president about progress on the strategic plan and accreditation. He also asked that Kevin LaCoste put together a weekly update for the Board, as a monthly update is not enough.

Elden Russell raised his hand and was recognized by the Chair. He said that he really trusts this board and trusts the Interim President. As a union member he knows they will make the right decision.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm.