

# Whatcom

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MINUTES

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Wednesday, December 13, 2020

2:00 p.m.

- **CALL TO ORDER** Chair Rebecca Johnson officially called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Present in addition to the chair were trustees Wendy Bohlke, Steve Adelstein, John Pedlow, and Teresa Taylor, constituting a quorum. Others present included President Hiyane-Brown; Nate Langstraat, Vice President for Administrative Services; Ed Harri, Vice President for Instruction; Luca Lewis, Vice President for Student Services; Eva Schulte, Executive Director for Institutional Advancement; Terri Thayer, Interim College Equity Officer; Kerena Higgins, Assistant Attorney General; and Rafeeka Kloke, Special Assistant to the President.

## ACTION TO ACCEPT AGENDA

- Trustee Pedlow moved to accept the agenda. It was seconded by Trustee Taylor and the **motion was approved.**
- Chair Johnson announced that there is a designated time for public comment on the agenda.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

- Chair Johnson called for public comment.
  - Ian Stacy, faculty member, said he believed the information shared in spring 2020 that the College was in an “existential financial crisis.” He expressed that many of his colleagues have contributed significantly to maintain operations and the budget process by cutting departmental budgets. He was disappointed to see class sections being cut and the impact on adjunct faculty. He shared that he had to dismantle the only textbook he has for scanning to share with students. He felt that the college is not in a financial crisis as what he was told and felt the trust he has in the College has been broken.
  - Tommaso Vannelli, faculty member and WCCFT president, shared disappointment with the Board’s response to their letter. He stated that the response from the board after executive session at the November meeting was dismissive and did not address questions in the letter. He asked the board to consider adopting future actions that demonstrate a

commitment to inclusivity and transparency in decision-making process.

- Kaatje Kraft, faculty member, shared her concern with the recent continuation of contract for the president without feedback from faculty and staff, specifically related to the inclusion of a sabbatical. She was frustrated with the lack of transparency.
- Anna Wolff, faculty member, cited the importance of feedback for improvement and innovation and was disappointed that the board did not provide information or share their decision making process as requested by the union. She concluded that the board does not value faculty and staff of this institution.
- Ines Poblet, faculty member questioned the board's decision in providing administration including the college president raises, vacation payouts, sabbatical at a time when the college is experiencing declining enrollment, class cancellations, and budget cuts.
- Cynthia Kuhn, adjunct faculty, shared information about the A Friend fund which was created in September of 2020, as a joint effort between the WCC Foundation and WCCFT as a source of emergency funding for adjuncts who have been affected by the global pandemic, reduction in state funding and declining enrollments. She said the need is great. She thanked those who have contributed and asked others to consider contributing to help the fund reach its goal of raising \$20,000 (currently at \$5,000). Donation can be given through WCC Foundation website.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### ➤ **Consent Agenda**

- a. Minutes of the November 20, 2020 Board of Trustees meeting.
- b. Proposed Summer quarter graduates

Chair Johnson stated: "If there are no objections, these will be adopted." As there were no objections, these item were adopted.

Chair Johnson shared a letter from the League of Women Voters of Bellingham/Whatcom County expressing appreciation to the college for its support of ASWCC's civic engagement and Get-Out-The-Vote efforts during the challenging election cycle. Whatcom County had one of the highest rates of voter turnout in Washington and ASWCC's innovative voter engagement work contributed to this high turnout rate.

## ACTION ITEM

### ➤ Proposed Title IX Emergency Rules Extension

Trustee Adelstein moved to approve the proposed Title IX Emergency Rules Extension. It was seconded by Trustee Pedlow and the motion passed unanimously.

## BREAK

➤ The meeting was adjourned for a five-minute break at 2:20 p.m.

➤ The meeting reconvened into open session at 2:25 p.m.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

➤ At 2:25 p.m. the meeting was adjourned for a closed Executive Session of the Board for approximately forty minutes to review the performance of a public employee..., and as provided in RCW 42.30.140 (4)(a), to discuss collective bargaining...and ...to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency matters relating to Litigation or legal risks of a proposed action or current practice that the agency has identified when public discussion of the litigation.

Chair Johnson announced that action was not anticipated. Guests included President Kathi Hiyane-Brown, and Assistant Attorney General Kerena Higgins.

At 3:05 p.m. the Executive Session was extended for another 25 minutes.

The Executive Session adjourned at 3:30 p.m. and the Board reconvened into open session at 3:30 p.m.

## ADJOURNMENT

➤ There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30p.m.



1/13/2021

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Chair of the Board

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Date

*Kurti Myjaneh*

1/13/2021

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President and Secretary of the Board

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Date