

MINUTES OF THE RETREAT MEETING
ALPENA COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Monday, January 18, 2016, 12:00 p.m.
Community Foundation of Northeast Michigan Conference Room
100 N. Ripley, Alpena, MI 49707

The Alpena Community College Board of Trustees gathered for a retreat meeting at noon on Monday, January 18, 2016. The meeting was held in the Community Foundation of Northeast Michigan conference room, 100 N. Ripley, Alpena.

Chairman Briggs called the meeting to order at 12:25 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: John Briggs, Teresa Duncan, Joseph Gentry II, Lisa Hilberg, Florence Stibitz, and Tom Townsend. Absent: Marc Ferguson.

Seated at the Board Table: President Don MacMaster and Board Secretary Jay Walterreit.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Trustee Duncan that the agenda be approved; seconded by Trustee Hilberg.

Ayes: 6. Nays: 0. Motion carried.

Introduction of Guests and Public Comment

One guest was present: Bethany Ricciardi, reporter for WBKB. There were no public comments.

President's Evaluation Discussion

Trustee Hilberg started the discussion by talking about evaluation tools. She noted the number of tools available, but they didn't work well with each other. Hilberg mentioned a desire to include some measurements and metrics as suggested by Trustee Ferguson. Lastly, she pointed out that using a new evaluation tool would be the third presidential evaluation method in three years. Her desire was to find a tool and use it for a number of years.

Attention then turned to the accomplishments and goals document written by President MacMaster.

Chairman Briggs stated that measuring the success of the institution can be one way of measuring the success of the president, though there are situations in which the president has no control over factors affecting the institution. Briggs then suggested three institutional measurement he thought were important:

- Enrollment for Fall Semester (and budget)
- Enrollment for Spring Semester (and budget)

- End of Year Budget Status

Chairman Briggs went on to say he thinks President MacMaster is doing a very good job communicating with the trustees on a weekly basis and he appreciates MacMasters' efforts in the southern portion of the ACC service area rebuilding relationships, etc.

Trustee Stibitz stated she likes the weekly updates from President MacMaster but in some cases she would like more explanation included. She understood it takes a lot of time and effort to create the weekly reports.

Trustee Townsend said that if he has a question about something, he calls the president.

President MacMaster shared that he has received questions from each of the trustees on various occasions. His opinion was the weekly reports help keep track of the many good things going on at the College, and they are necessary to have ongoing communication with the trustees.

Trustee Hilberg said she is always interested to read the president's updates and enjoys learning how situations develop.

President MacMaster then detailed two current activities which show promise for development, Covaron and a grant from the BIRD Foundation.

Chairman Briggs noted the recent activities in the World Center for Concrete Technology beyond the normal classroom instruction. He said these activities help the College realize the original vision for the WCCT. President MacMaster then spoke briefly about the history of the WCCT, how the budgets for the WCCT were created, and how that model is changing to reflect market forces and realities.

Chairman Briggs asked President MacMaster to talk about how ACC can get the WCCT from where it is now to where the College wants the WCCT to be. President MacMaster noted the WCCT is currently in a budgetary break-even mode but is developing more opportunities. MacMaster noted the need to continue to chase new opportunities while acknowledging the headway currently being made. He noted that Jim Makowske is now the director of the WCCT for no extra compensation, and he is doing a good job. MacMaster also noted that the College relationship with Besser Company was going well.

Getting back to the topic of the president's evaluation process, Chairman Briggs suggested one way to proceed would be for the president to create a report and then get feedback from the trustees. Conversely, another method would be for the trustees to run the process.

Trustee Stibitz stated she is enjoying the current process of having a dialog with the president but agrees that it would be good to add some metrics like the ones Chairman Briggs mentioned.

President MacMaster then talked about Spring Semester 2016 enrollment numbers. He noted the situation is positive with credit hours being ahead of last year and headcount down only slightly. The budget is also positive.

Trustee Townsend stated that when metrics are applied to College operations the president doesn't have control over factors such as demographics, enrollment, etc. It's not a black or white situation, he noted, it's gray and it's difficult to apply metrics with 100% awareness.

MacMaster noted that there is a heightened awareness about enrollment issues at ACC. Trustee Townsend agreed, and attributed that awareness to efforts started by President Joynton and continued under President MacMaster.

Trustee Gentry mentioned the number of ACC-related activities which extend the College's influence into the community, but wondered how to measure the results of those activities. Gentry posited the president knows what activities are important and is responsible to make sure the College is on the right path and doing the right things.

Trustee Townsend called attention to MacMaster's weekly reports and the accomplishments and goals document and said he thought those communications were helpful to the trustees and formed the basis for conversations.

Chairman Briggs mentioned that budget information is communicated each month in the board meeting agenda, and that constitutes a monthly measurement of the College's activities. In general, said Briggs, the trustees try to push the president in the directions in which they are interested.

President MacMaster noted he takes input and information from sources around the College and from the trustees. He likes narrative opportunities for the trustees to give him feedback. Chairman Briggs said it's important for the trustees to reflect the community's interests in the College to make sure the community's needs are being met.

Trustee Hilberg then distilled the evaluation conversation by proposing to keep President MacMaster's accomplishments and goals document as the basis for evaluations, and give Trustee Ferguson and others the opportunity to propose metrics. The trustees would keep notes for conversation with the president and a narrative-style feedback mechanism.

The trustees agreed to the following process to conduct President MacMaster's next evaluation.

April/May — The president will compose an accomplishments and goals document which will be circulated to the trustees and form the basis for an evaluation conversation.

After the evaluation conversation, the trustees can compose written comments to be sent to the president.

June Board meeting — Chairman Briggs will report on the evaluation process and set the president's salary, etc., for FY17.

President MacMaster stated the first seven months of his presidency have been exciting, challenging, and motivating.

Chairman Briggs said he thought President MacMaster has tackled a number of important situations, such as enrollment in the southern service counties and servicing the schools districts there, and has helped get ACC back on track in those areas.

MacMaster updated the trustees on ACC's work with Alpena Public Schools on Early College activities and mentioned future possibilities with other schools.

The topic of reaching out to homeschooled children was raised by Trustee Stibitz. The number of those students and methods for contacting them were discussed.

Trustee Townsend noted that he feels ACC needs to fill its tech program seats and it's logical to recruit outside our service area to do it.

On the topic of the proposed truck route, President MacMaster mentioned a number of recent contacts he had with people and organizations. Trustee Townsend said there needs to be a thorough road study to determine who is using the roads and where they are going. Trustee Hilberg noted her husband thinks Johnson Street is built for trucks with concrete underneath asphalt.

President MacMaster noted that during a meeting with Alpena City Mayor Matt Waligora, they discussed the possibility of putting a walkway over Johnson Street/

The trustees agreed they were supportive of MacMaster's efforts and urged him to press for road studies and other data.

The workshop discussion then turned to property use.

Trustee Townsend recounted some of the details related to a Planned Unit Development document that had been created by then College Architect Paul Dickinson. The PUD was created but never officially adopted by ACC. Its purpose was to address the different ways in which College property would be used.

It was noted that some College property had been recently rezoned in case a potential user wanted to partner with ACC on an appropriate usage.

Trustee Gentry noted that he has seen garbage dumped on ACC property.

Trustee Townsend stated his opinion that the College needs to make sure user groups understand that they may lose the use of College property if a higher use comes along.

Chairman Briggs suggested the need to make a more permanent arrangement with the Huron Human Society.

Trustee Stibitz asked about the high ropes course. She stated she didn't know if the high ropes course was being used. Trustee Gentry responded by saying there are two new high ropes

stations and someone is taking care of the area. President MacMaster said the Volunteer Center is in charge of managing the ropes course.

Trustee Duncan asked about recent interest in the College property located across from the Sheriff's Department. President MacMaster said the interested party had opted to purchase property elsewhere.

MacMaster then asked the trustees for feedback on a new topic: security on campus. He asked about their thoughts related to adding some sort of security to the Alpena Campus. He mentioned the possibility of asking a local law enforcement agency to spend a limited amount of time on campus each day as a way to increase security visibility. He noted that Northwestern Michigan College, North Central Michigan College, Gogebic Community College, and Bay de Noc Community College do not have security.

Trustee Stibitz said having security on campus would make her uncomfortable. Chairman Briggs suggested offering coffee and cookies to police to encourage them to walk through campus.

Trustees Stibitz and Townsend both agreed that having part-time security wouldn't be a great deterrent. They also thought that a number of important questions would need to be answered, such as would the security people be armed?

Trustee Hillberg said that her opinion on security has changed in the last year and she would be supportive of security on campus.

Trustee Townsend said he thought the high school has more issues than ACC; he also noted a bigger issue, which would be how would ACC pay for security.

Trustee Duncan said she would be supportive of what President MacMaster had outlined; she thought it would begin to establish a presence on campus. It might also help remove barriers between law enforcement and students. If the effort is successful, it might establish the need in three to five years for a permanent security presence.

Chairman Briggs mentioned that Alpena High School can control their doors and access to their facilities, whereas ACC cannot. He also thought that there are probably people on ACC's campus who are carrying concealed weapons.

President MacMaster pointed out the College has done a fair amount of safety training which helps to minimize an incident, but that training can't prevent an incident.

Trustee Gentry asked if the College had an early warning mechanism to deal with potentially dangerous people. President MacMaster noted that student issues are usually handled through the Dean of Students. Gentry asked about the phone system as a way to immediately let people on campus know about an incident.

Trustee Townsend stated his opinion that the College needs to make sure all of the current tools available are operating fully before consideration is made of pushing boundaries.

President MacMaster wrapped up the discussion by promising to reach out to local law enforcement agencies and engage in dialog with them.

Trustee Hilberg asked President MacMaster if it was possible to create an incentive to encourage remedial students to persist. Some sort of financial incentive would be good if it's fiscally achievable. President MacMaster suggested it might be better to provide more help, such as more tutoring, for struggling remedial students. MacMaster noted recent efforts in collaboration with Alpena High School to help students. He also noted Nick Bancroft's recent ALP efforts.

Trustee Duncan brought up the topic of mutual gains bargaining; she wondered if the mutual gains process was still being used after the most recent bargaining unit contracts were ratified. President MacMaster said Vice President of Instruction Kathy March was still the champion for the mutual gains bargaining process and the faculty are still supportive of it. The College has not regularly engaged in mutual gains activities, but President MacMaster does meet with the union heads on a monthly basis and they discuss potential issues. Trustee Duncan expressed a desire for the College to continue to support the mutual gains process.

Chairman Briggs suggested the College will have a challenge in filling the Vice President of Instruction position after Marsh retires, and it would be a shame to lose the progress gained by the mutual gains process. His opinion is the College should keep the mutual gains process going as much as we can. Trustee Duncan pointed out that part of the process included regular conversations and affirmation of the mutual gains philosophy.

MacMaster and the trustees discussed the possibilities for upcoming retirements and how the College might go about filling those positions.

Chairman Briggs noted that three ACC trustee seats are up for election in November 2016; Briggs suggested that the trustees should think about who might be good additions to the board if any of the three trustees currently up for reelection choose not to run. Briggs also mentioned the need to renew ACC's millage in 2018; the trustees wondered about the impact of recent Michigan legislation which sets limits on how public institutions can communicate about public funding requests. President MacMaster noted that he and other ACC staff are aware of the legislation and are waiting for clarification about the potential impacts.

Trustee Hilberg asked about the recent activities of a group seeking to bring a 4-year university to Northeast Michigan. President MacMaster noted his perception that the group had made a number of public presentations and was now considering things like what courses should be offered. Chairman Briggs suggested ACC's new bachelor degree in Electrical Systems Technology will be a good start to bringing 4-year degrees to Alpena. The trustees agreed that President MacMaster is handling the subject appropriately and it has not adversely affected ACC.

Trustee Hilberg asked if President MacMaster thought the College's recent activities related to drones would bring people to Northeast Michigan. President MacMaster stated he did not know where the drone efforts will lead, but from a curriculum standpoint it's hard to build a program

since rules are still being developed and it's difficult to forecast what types of jobs will be enabled. The recent efforts might encourage businesses to come to the area and partner with the county, the airport, etc. President MacMaster stated his support for the College to continue its collaboration in a way that doesn't threaten its financial stability; he is hesitant to put general fund money toward the effort.

Trustee Stibitz asked where the theatre figures in the president's vision for the College. President MacMaster noted that people vote with their feet, so if there's an interest in theatre classes, they will sign up for classes. He noted the recent theatre class presentation of a two-person show at the end of Fall Semester. Trustee Stibitz then asked about music and singing classes; President MacMaster promised to look into those offerings. Chairman Briggs noted the College is doing well in the fine arts area and pointed to the continuing success of the Evening with the Arts event and the use of the Joynton Fine Arts Center.

President MacMaster agreed that the arts add a lot to the campus. It was suggested that the student newspaper could be resurrected as an electronic publication. He also noted a suggestion to incorporate more artwork into campus decoration.

Trustee Gentry asked about use of the Wellness Center. It has a senior orientation right now; are there other people who would like to use it? MacMaster reported that it is breaking even budget-wise and is used by some classes.

President MacMaster was asked about his vision for the Volunteer Center. He stated that as long as it is funded by the Besser Foundation it will stay open. Activities in the Volunteer Center have slowed recently.

Chairman Briggs asked Trustee Stibitz about Association of Lifelong Learners activities. Stibitz said A.L.L. has about 250 members and has a good perception of ACC. The trustees discussed ways in which A.L.L. can be involved in supporting the College.

The workshop session was adjourned at 3:49 p.m.

Jay Walterreit
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