



BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 13, 2021 ~ 5 p.m. ~ TEDC – Blue Ridge Conference Hall

Item

MEMBERS PRESENT	Brianna Allen, Vivian Bolaños, Steve Dozier, Clay Eddleman, Betty Gash, Dr. Jeremy Gibbs, Chip Gould, Nathan Kennedy, Kelly Leonard, Mike Pressley, Jim Rasmussen and Dr. Brian Weaver
MEMBERS ABSENT	Cathy Childress, Mark Isabelli and Duke Woodhull
OTHERS PRESENT	Lisa Adkins, Kathy Allen, Carolyn Alley, Kirsten Bunch, Lee Anna Haney, Dr. Laura Leatherwood, Dr. Chad Merrill, Tammy Pryor, Dr. Scott Queen, College Attorney Dean Shatley, and David Lancor and Chad Roberson of Clark Nexsen.
CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME	Chairman Chip Gould called the meeting to order at approximately 5 p.m. Mr. Gould welcomed all including Chad Roberson and David Lancor of Clark Nexsen and new SGA President Brianna Allen.
ETHICS STATEMENT	Chairman Gould read the Ethics Statement. No conflicts were reported.
APPROVAL OF AGENDA	Ms. Bolaños moved to approve the meeting agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gash and carried without opposition.
APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA	After the Chairman confirmed that there were no items to move from the consent agenda for discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Leonard, seconded by Ms. Bolaños, to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed without opposition.
COMMITTEE REPORTS	<p>Facilities Committee</p> <p>Mr. Gould recognized Dr. Chad Merrill to bring the board up-to-date on construction and facilities projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Merrill referenced the written reports posted to the meeting web page and paused for questions.• Dr. Merrill provided a high-level explanation of the Patton Project Flex Lab, its purpose in workforce training, and answered all questions. <p>Clark Nexsen’s David Lancor was invited to the podium to provide an update on the Patton Project:</p>

- He began by playing a drone video taken of the construction site last week.
- Building schematics and interior finishes were viewed; samples of chosen interior finishes were on display in the meeting room.
- The project has reached the half-way mark and is currently on budget and on schedule for completion at the end of May 2022.
- Move-in is planned for June 2022, in time for fall 2022 classes.
- Demolition of the General Studies and Arts & Sciences buildings will take place later in the fall of 2022.
- The demolition project includes grading, installing sidewalks and seeding grass once the buildings are removed.

Dr. Merrill wrapped up the facilities report with his appreciation and thanks to both Chad Roberson and David Lanor for attending the meeting in person and for Mr. Lancor's informative presentation. Mr. Roberson and Mr. Lancor were excused from the remainder of the meeting.

Chairman Gould and Dr. Leatherwood spoke about recent individual meetings with Transylvania County Commissioners (Commissioners) and the Transylvania County Manager regarding the facility needs for the college's Transylvania County Campus. They reported that the overall tone of the meetings was positive and the plan moving forward includes:

- Commissioners agreed to form a committee of local economic development, workforce and business leaders to address the need for updated college facilities in Transylvania County and to begin to garner public support.
- College leaders will work collectively with the Commissioners on a Public Relations campaign.
- Dr. Leatherwood will address the benefit of a local college and how college programs help further economic development in the county when she presents the college budget request to the Commissioners this coming March. Communication between the college and county officials will be frequent and ongoing in the interim.

Finance and Investment Committee

Committee Chairman Kelly Leonard called on Associate Vice President Carolyn Alley to lead a review of financial statements as of August 31, 2021.

Ms. Alley discussed the:

- State budget
- Henderson County and Transylvania County budgets
- Institutional Funds Summary
- Short Term Investment Fund balance
- Pension Spiking Reserve

Ms. Alley reminded all that the college continues to operate under a baseline budget while awaiting approval of the state budget. Once the state budget is signed into law, the baseline budget will be reconciled to the final budget allocation.

Ms. Alley concluded her report with the following:

- Financial Statement Audit field work will soon be underway for the year-ended June 30, 2021.
- A review of the EAGLE Internal Control report that was posted to the board website; explained two findings and steps taken to correct findings.

COLLEGE REPORTS

President's Report

Dr. Leatherwood referenced her written report which was published on the meeting web page and paused for related questions.

College Update

For background information, Dr. Leatherwood conveyed extensive data from EMSI's *The Demographic Drought* report to prove that a long-term workforce shortage is looming on the horizon. For several reasons shared by Dr. Leatherwood, high school students alone won't meet future workforce needs. It will be necessary to upskill the current workforce to meet employer needs. When invited by the John M. Belk Endowment, along with five other community colleges, to participate in a pilot initiative targeting adult learners, the college recognized an opportunity to address workforce shortage. Dr. Leatherwood and Vice President for Student Services Kirsten Bunch teamed up to provide details about the Engaging Adult Learners initiative:

- Strategies included:
 - Finish First; contact with 2,500 former students without credentials
 - Ground Game; engaged nonprofits to help reach talent pools, targeting underserved and underemployed populations
 - Marketing Campaigns; Better Skills Better Jobs and Brighter Future Free College
 - Two new Success Coaches; funded by Dogwood Health Trust, to help students navigate college
 - Starter packs for adult learners
- How did we do?
 - Highest enrollment in college history; most NC community colleges are either flat or down in enrollment
 - Adult learners account for 32.5% of fall enrollment

- 33% increase in African-American enrollment
- 12% increase in Hispanic enrollment
- 65% of degree enrollment is in career and technical programs; these students enter the workforce sooner than transfer students
- What's Next:
 - Retention
 - Spring recruitment/enrollment
 - Outreach to adult learners of color
 - Strategy to reach and support male learners
 - NC Bankers Association Apprenticeship support

President Leatherwood accredited the success of this initiative to months of targeted, collaborative work by college staff and faculty, on top of all their other duties. She also expressed her appreciation to Ms. Bolanos for her advocacy with Dogwood Health Trust in support of a grant which helped back these efforts.

2021 Performance Measures

President Leatherwood recognized Vice President for Instruction Kathy Allen to review 2021 Performance Measure results. Ms. Allen reviewed two related reports that were posted to the board meeting web page and provided to the trustees in hard copy. She compared this year's results to the prior two years and received several questions from the trustees. Ms. Allen answered all questions and concluded her presentation by sharing several strategies that have been or will soon be implemented in order to make improvements in each category.

Advancement and Educational Foundation Report

The Advancement and Educational Foundation written report was contained in the President's Board Report and was posted to the meeting web page for review. Additionally, Vice President Adkins imparted the following:

- Annual Foundation Financial Statement Audit is wrapping up
- Employee Giving Campaign will kickoff at the end of September
- Played video of Blue Ridge graduate and employee Stacy Hill that will be used as part of the giving appeal
- Scholarship Appreciation Luncheon: postponed until spring

Student Government Association (SGA) Report

The written SGA Report and was posted to the meeting web page for review. Additionally, SGA President Brianna Allen shared the following:

- SGA Officers and Student Ambassador positions have been filled.
- SGA Offices and Student Ambassadors from both campuses attended leadership training prior to the start of fall semester.

- Welcome Week activities were held at both the Henderson and Transylvania County campuses; Blue Ridge swag and free food was provided at each event and each event was well attended.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

State Ethics Commission Evaluation of Statement of Economic Interest

Mr. Gould acknowledged receipt of the Evaluation of Statement of Economic Interest filed by Jim Rasmussen. He stated that the State Ethics Commission did not find an actual conflict of interest, but found the potential for a conflict of interest. The potential conflict identified does not prohibit service on the board.

Mr. Gould also acknowledged receipt of the Evaluation of Statement of Economic Interest filed by College CFO and Associate Vice President Carolyn Alley. He stated that the State Ethics Commission did not find an actual conflict of interest or the likelihood for a conflict of interest.

CLOSED SESSION

The Blue Ridge Community College Board of Trustees entered closed session at approximately 6:44 p.m. on a motion pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(1) to prevent disclosure of confidential personnel information pursuant to G.S. 115D-27, and 318.11(a)(3), to prevent disclosure of confidential attorney-client communications. The motion was made by Dr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Rasmussen, and passed without opposition.

The meeting returned to open session at approximately 6:57 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Dozier. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bolaños and carried without opposition.

COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Gould paused for comments from board members. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting in person. He reminded everyone of the upcoming training session scheduled for October 12th, and the next regular board meeting scheduled for November 8th. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:59 p.m.

John B. "Chip" Gould, Chairman

Dr. Laura B. Leatherwood, Secretary