

Meeting Minutes

MECC Local Advisory Board

Tuesday, January 14, 2025, 4:30 p.m.,

Kline Foundation Boardroom

MEMBERS PRESENT

SCOTT COUNTY	WISE COUNTY	LEE COUNTY	DICKENSON CTY	NORTON
Adrienne Hood	Mike Abbott	Emily Kinser	Dana Cronkhite	Carol Caruso
Keith Wilson	Teresa Adkins	Joyce Williams		
Rodney Baker	Betty Cornett	Scott Napier		
Freda Starnes	Mike Hatfield	Kristi Taylor		
	Roy Munsey			

MEMBERS ABSENT

Others Attending:

Dr. Clint Pinion – Vice President, Academic Affairs and Workforce Solution
Dr. Amy Greear – Vice President of Institutional Advancement
Ms. Kristy Hall – Vice President of Financial and Administrative Services
Dr. Kristen Westover - President
Peggy Gibson – Executive Assistant to the President
Ms. Sarah Gilliam – President, Faculty Senate

CALL TO ORDER

The Mountain Empire Community College Advisory Board met on Tuesday, January 14, at 4:30 p.m. in the Kline Foundation Boardroom. The chair, Mr. Mike Abbott, called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Mike Hatfield motioned to accept the November 19, 2024; minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Betty Cornett and passed unanimously. **(Exhibit 1)**

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mr. Abbott reported on the following information items:

- Mr. Abbott reminded Board members that the 2025 Conflict of Interest/Financial Disclosure must be completed by February 3, 2025.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Mr. Mike Abbott and seconded by Mr. Mike Hatfield that:
“The MECC Local Advisory Board go into Executive Session to discuss the assignment, appointment, and performance of a board member, Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711, sub-section A, sub-section 1 of the Code of Virginia.”

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Ms. Teresa Adkins made a motion to return to the open session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mike Hatfield and passed unanimously.

Upon returning to open session, a motion was made by Ms. Dana Cronkhite, seconded by Mr. Mike Hatfield, to amend the agenda to reflect an action item to vote on the dismissal of Mr. Roy Munsey from the MECC Advisory Board due to lack of attendance. A vote was taken and the motion passed. A letter had been sent from the President's office to Mr. Munsey in July of 2024 regarding his lack of attendance in Board meetings, having missed the previous 6 meetings. Mr. Munsey attended the September 2024 meeting, indicating he would not miss a meeting again without notification. Mr. Munsey was not present in the November 2024 Board meeting, and he did not notify the College, Board Chair or Secretary, regarding the unexcused absence. The letter included a portion of the MECC Bylaws that states the following:

"If any College Board member substantially fails to perform the duties of his or her office, including failure to attend meetings, without sufficient excuse shown to the Board, the College Board shall, at its next regularly scheduled meeting, cause the fact of such failure to be recorded in the minutes of their proceedings and certify the same by way of a recommendation to local governing body for removal and replacement.

However, said vote of the College Board must be by a two-thirds majority of those present and taken only after written notice has been given to the College Board Member of the alleged failure in duties and after allowing said Board Member the opportunity to present evidence in mitigation.

The Chair of the College Board shall be able to excuse a Member's attendance or performance of specific duties before or after the fact and such excuse shall be prima facie evidence that the Board Member in that instance has not violated the requirements of these paragraphs.

Ms. Dana Cronkhite motioned to proceed with the action item to dismiss Mr. Roy Munsey due to lack of attendance. Mr. Keith Wilson seconded the motion. A discussion ensued regarding Mr. Munsey's current appointment, expiring in June 2025. Several Board members voiced a desire to allow Mr. Munsey to fulfill his current term with just 2 meetings left in the appointment. A vote was called: 7 yay and 7 nay. The vote did not pass by two-thirds of the present Board members. Mr. Munsey will be notified of the results of the Board's vote, which will allow him to remain on the Board for the duration of his term. Further discussion by the Board ensued about Mr. Munsey being eligible for reappointment. President Westover indicated that typically, the College sends a "statement of fact" letter to the respective Board of Supervisors when an individual is eligible for reappointment to the College Advisory Board. The letter indicates previous performance and attendance and whether or not the College endorses the individual to serve another appointed term. Several Board members voiced concerns over Mr. Munsey being appointed for an additional term. Dr. Westover's future letter will include their concerns as well as a record of attendance.

President's Report – Dr. Kristen Westover

Dr. Westover reported on the following items:

Enrollment

- The 2024 Fall Semester point-in-time headcount is 2,116 compared to last year's headcount of 2,016: an increase of (4.96) percent. The College's Fall 2024 final FTE was 1,370 compared to last year's 1,340, reflecting an increase of (2.27) percent. Regular growth was approximately 1%, and dual enrollment was about 5%.
- The 2025 Spring Semester point-in-time headcount is 1,743 compared to last year's headcount of 1,727: an increase of (0.93) percent. Students tend to take less credits in the Spring. The College's FTE is 1,100 compared to last year's 1,095, reflecting an increase of (0) percent. Enrollment is trending close to where we were last year, but due to the recent weather, we expect enrollment to increase. **(Exhibit 2)**
- FastForward Enrollment—Dr. Westover mentioned that our FastForward enrollment is a big part of our enrollment and receives funding through state-level grant opportunities, the Workforce Credentials grant, and FastForward. She commended our workforce division for the job they do and shared that our workforce enrollment has

increased by 23.36%, the Workforce Credentials Grant is up 28%, and our FastForward headcount increased by 28.38%.

Other updates:

- Dr. Westover mentioned that we are still focused on New Majority Learners and the fact that these new learners are our majority. She mentioned the shift that we have seen from traditional students to non-traditional. They attend part-time in greater numbers and require institutions to move away from rigid, one-size-fits-all models to a more adaptable, learner-focused approach that prioritizes accessibility, affordability, and relevance to the modern workforce and is nearly 10 percent of our enrollment.
- Dr. Westover shared that MECC uses an advising software called EAB Navigate. This software serves as a resource for advisors to interact and communicate with their students regarding their progress, enrollments, degree plans, etc. This also allows the faculty members to send alerts to their students. We recently received data from EAB that showed that after using this platform for approximately one year, 96% of the students who were scheduled with an appointment after following up on an alert proved successful compared to 53% of students with an alert and no appointment showing that meaningful interactions with students do make a huge difference.

Legislative Updates

- Dr. Westover shared with Board members a one-page document/fact sheet that talks about the VCCS's Region 1 priorities and mentioned that Board members are encouraged to use this page when advocating for the College. (Exhibit 3) She mentioned that some of the ways that Board members can assist in advocating for Virginia's Workforce are:
 - Virginia's community colleges are the lowest-funded higher education institutions in the Commonwealth.
 - Our 23 colleges comprise approximately 46% of the public undergraduate enrollment in Virginia.
 - We provide flexible options for people with other commitments like a job, children, family responsibilities, and more.
 - The most affordable higher education option in Virginia.
 - Virginia's community colleges receive only 57 cents for every dollar that goes to support a full-time equivalent student at a public Virginia University.
 - Seventy-seven percent of community colleges in the US spend more per student than Virginia.
 - A vast majority, over 80% of our graduates stay and work in Virginia, making our colleges the engine of economic mobility for Virginians and contributing to the economic growth of Virginia.

Dr. Westover will send this information via email to Board members.

Vice President of Institutional Advancement/Foundation – Dr. Amy Greear

Dr. Greear reported on the following items:

- For the year, the MECC Foundation brought in \$1.6M in gifts, grants, and other revenue in 2024. Our endowment holdings at the end of the 2024 year were \$39.4M.
- The Foundation recently completed the audit of our 2023 fiscal year, which occurred much later than their normal timeframe due to a transition to a new accounting system. Despite a fairly complicated accounting transition that took months, the audit had no findings for the year. Dr. Greear mentioned that their auditor, Blackburn, Childers, and Stegall, also noted the Foundation's operational and functional expenses were effectively managed, with 67% directed toward program services, illustrating a strong alignment with the organization's mission. The standard for nonprofits is that 60-75 percent of funding is directed toward program services.
- In today's Board packets, Dr. Greear included a card with information on the college and foundation and a link for the Foundation's annual report if you are interested.

- The Foundation Board is exploring additional ways to assist the College, primarily in infrastructure investments. The VCCS is currently working with a firm to study the amphitheater cost and site development. The College is also developing a list of priorities for infrastructure improvements and working with Thompson and Litton to develop a cost estimate for those priorities. Once the Foundation's budget is formalized, usually in April, they will be able to assess how much funding can be directed to infrastructure improvements for the year.
- This year's John Fox Jr. Festival is scheduled for Wednesday, March 12. The featured author is Jeanette Walls, New York Times best-selling author of *The Glass Castle*. Walls is a Virginia resident, and her book is an autobiography of her childhood in Welch, WVA.

Action Item(s): none

Vice President of Academic Affairs and Workforce Solutions – Dr. Clint Pinion

Dr. Pinion reported on the following items:

- Dr. Pinion shared that the four new programs approved by the Advisory Board in November have now been submitted to SACSCOC for review - Machine Operator 1, 2, and 3, and Community Health Worker.
- The Curriculum Advisory Committee and Perkins Advisory Committee meetings are scheduled for March 11.
- **Strategic Planning** - Dr. Pinion shared that his team recently participated in a retreat as part of their strategic planning process. As part of this process, his team identified programs that were seen as growing and programs that we could do a better job of in terms of marketing and areas of opportunity as to courses that we could offer here at MECC.

The outcome of teamwork was what his area thought were the top 5 growing programs:

- ❖ Energy
- ❖ CDL-A – parole and probation population
- ❖ Management
- ❖ Nursing
- ❖ Police Science

Some of the programs that his team thought were steady or lower-growing programs were:

- ❖ Mechatronics
- ❖ Paramedic
- ❖ Health Information Management (HIM) program. The HIT program tends to shine brighter because of advertising and marketing

Some future programs were:

- ❖ Education (CSC for teacher recertification) - nine of the 15 hours could be done here at MECC
- ❖ Accounting and Bookkeeping
- ❖ Practical nursing for night and weekend students
- ❖ Logistics
- ❖ AI

Wraparound services for students:

- ❖ Transportation
- ❖ Student Needs Assessment survey

High-impact instructional practices – (Work base learning, apprenticeships, and internships)

Board member Ms. Kristi Taylor mentioned that she would like more Special Education training.

Vice President, Financial and Administrative Services – Ms. Kristy Hall

Ms. Hall reported on the following items:

- Local Funds Expenditure Report – Dr. Westover reviewed with Board members the Local Funds Expenditure Report ending December 31, 2024. **(See Exhibit 4 with details)** Our online bookstore is with VitalSource and mentioned that after working through some issues, things are going better.
- Personnel Report – Dr. Westover reviewed the personnel report through December 2024 **(See Exhibit 5 with details)**

There were no questions or comments regarding the reports.

Facilities update:

Robb Hall Elevator—Ms. Hall reported that the Robb Hall elevator project is 80% complete and should be in operation within the next couple of weeks.

Godwin Hall Life Safety Project—Phase 1 is complete, and inspections are scheduled for this week. We hope to obtain the Occupancy Certificate and to transition employees back into that building by January 22.

Upcoming: Phillips Taylor roof replacement is ready for bid, as is Dalton Cantrell Hall door lock replacement and fire updates.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Executive Committee: (did not meet)**
 - *2025 Emeritus Nominee Recommendations: (Due to the recent college closure due to weather, this item was tabled until the March meeting)*
- **Curriculum and Student Affairs Committee (did not meet)**
- **Finance and Facilities Committee: (FY2026 Local Funds Budget)**
 - Ms. Kristy Hall met with the Finance and Facilities Committee at 4:00 p.m. this afternoon to present the FY2026 Local Funds Budget. The Committee approved the Budget and presented it to the full Board for approval. The following documents were presented and discussed by Ms. Hall:
 - Proposed Maintenance and Operation Budget for 2025-2026— This document shows the breakdown of how the funds will be spent. Ms. Hall noted the following regarding the proposed budget:
 - In the past, a percentage of the funds were allocated to student scholarships. However, this item has been removed because the Foundation is confident that it can support the student's needs through scholarships and the implementation of the MECC Promise Program.

- Some funds have been moved to different areas, such as Fiscal Operations, to help cover the cost of caps and gowns for our students' graduation.
 - The Home Craft Days budget was also increased by \$5,000 due to the increased cost of tent rentals, etc.
 - The remaining funds were added to Site Development to help with campus improvements.
- 2025-2026 Senior Count – detailing the sources for the high school senior data. (it was noted that Michael Paul Berry was the principal of Rye Cove High School)
 - Municipalities Request – detailing the breakdown of high school seniors by locality. Ms. Hall mentioned that the total dollar amount for this budget has not changed in over six years but may have to be increased next year. The percentages that each county would pay may change each year based on the number of seniors reported by the local school systems.

After some discussion, Mr. Mike Abbott moved to approve the FY2026 Local Funds Budget, which the full Board unanimously approved.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

President's Evaluation – Human Resources will send out a survey. Once survey results are composed, the Executive Committee will review and bring a Recommendation Letter to the full Board for approval at the May 9, 2025, meeting.

OTHER COMMENTS

- Ms. Dana Cronkhite thanked the Foundation for their donation to sponsor the Dickenson County Career Fair held back in November and for MECC's support. She also mentioned that ten students are enrolled in the electrical course through Project Amelioration as of last night.
- Mr. Mike Hatfield thanked Dr. Westover, Dr. Pinion, and their staff for their hard work in helping make Wise County number one in the state in Workforce Development.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m. without further discussion. The next meeting date is March 18, 2025.

Peggy Gibson, Recorder

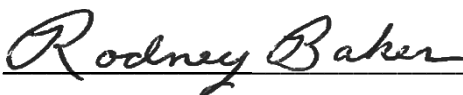
MECC Advisory Board Chair

Respectfully Submitted,



Kristen Westover, President & Secretary to the Board

APPROVED:



3/18/25