

Meeting Minutes

MECC Local Advisory Board

Tuesday, March 15, 2022 4:30 p.m.,

Kline Foundation Boardroom and via zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT

SCOTT COUNTY	WISE COUNTY	LEE COUNTY	NORTON	DICKENSON CTY
Rodney Baker	Betty Cornett	Gail Elliott		Les Ritchie
Freda Starnes	Bonnie Elosser	Gary Perdue		
Keith Wilson	Roy Munsey	Emily Kinser		
	Mike Hatfield	Elwanda Pillion		

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mike Abbott
Tim Cassell
Adrienne Hood

Others Attending:

Dr. Bill Brownsberger – Vice President, Academic Affairs and Workforce Solutions
Mr. Ron Vicars – Vice President, Financial and Administrative Services
Dr. Amy Greer – Vice President, Institutional Advancement
Dr. Kristen Westover - President
Peggy Gibson – Executive Assistant to the President
Jake Gilley – President of Faculty Senate

CALL TO ORDER

The Mountain Empire Community College Advisory Board met on Tuesday, March 15, 2022, at 4:30 p.m. in the Kline Foundation Boardroom. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Rodney Baker, Chair.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Ms. Bonnie Elosser to accept the January 18, 2022, minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Freda Starnes and passed unanimously. **(Exhibit 1)**

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mr. Baker reported on the following information items:

- 🚩 Celebration of People Friday, **May 6, 10:30 a.m.** Goodloe Center
 - 🚩 Board Meeting/Graduation Friday, **May 13, 4:30 p.m.** Dalton Cantrell Hall
- Graduation will begin at 6:00 pm/Dinner at the John Fox House at approximately 7:30 p.m.

Dr. Westover reported on the following items:

Enrollment

- Dr. Westover presented and reviewed with Board members the Spring Semester 2022 Preliminary Enrollment Report. MECC headcount for spring is 1,930; a decrease of (3) percent. The college's FTE is 1,632 compared to last year's 1,229 - reflecting a decrease of (5) percent. **(Exhibit 2)** Dr. Westover mentioned that the FTE decrease is due to students taking less credits. She shared that FTE's are calculated by every 15 credits a student takes – so only students taking 15 credits are considered full time enrollment. She mentioned that we have also had a 19% population decline in regional high school graduates over the last five years which means 19% less graduating seniors eligible to come to MECC.

Additionally, Dr. Westover mentioned that we are also down approximately 38 students in our workforce programming. She mentioned that we are doing all we know to try and make sure that we reach out to our local businesses to let them know that we're providing what they need in terms of credentials in workforce programming.

Other Updates

- Dr. Westover mentioned that we learned this week that the Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) funds has been extended. A portion of these funds are providing professional development for our faculty and staff in order to better serve our students during the pandemic. Additionally, based on this year's enrollment declines, we will likely need to use those funds to also fill budget gaps.
- The regular legislative session adjourned on Saturday with no agreement on the Budget. There are 45 additional house bills that did not go through and 29 senate bills that were still in conference and unresolved. Typically, there is a special session usually in late March or mid-April, which likely will not be set until they have signaled they have an agreement.

Right now, the priorities for the VCCS are:

- Funding for additional advisors (60 additional advisors in the System over the biennium)
- G3 capacity increase
- Employee increases- 5% over the biennium

There have been no Capital outlay projects that moved forward for anyone in the VCCS.

- Dr. Westover mentioned that the Tobacco Commission recently cut some of the funding around educational scholarships. The College has been working closely to try and pull data to share the need for those scholarship funds with the Tobacco Commission letting them know that those funds are used wisely and going to help students in our region who stay in our region. She mentioned that Dr. Greear has been instrumental in leading this effort. We know that for this year there will not be as much funding but the College will try and get as much funding as we can for AIMS Scholars and scholarships moving forward.
- Dr. Westover reported that the VCCS State Board Chair has reached out to the colleges letting them know that they are aligned with the Governor's office now and the process is moving forward for the next VCCS Chancellor. The Chair indicated that they are hoping to make an announcement soon.
Dr. Westover mentioned that the State Board is very interested in moving the Systems strategic plan forward and is hoping to bring someone in that has that same goal. The strategic plan (Opportunity 2027) is built entirely on the basis of improving our equity, diversity, and inclusion outcomes across the System and is what our college-level strategic plan is based on as well.
Dr. Westover shared that she is leading the Teaching and Learning portion of the Systems strategic plan which is made up of 38 diverse members across the System. The Team made recommendations about improving our processes to intake students and how we communicate with them in making that process easier. Those recommendations are then aligned with the current strategic plan strategies. The Teaching and Learning group is working on goals around high impact teaching practices and maintaining and recruiting diverse qualified faculty. She also mentioned that we have been working on our own process in terms of the strategic plan and have just recently created a curricula review process for the entire College in terms of how we present our curriculum in our different subject areas, and how it aligns with the audience.

- Dr. Westover mentioned that the new Clinical Researcher Program that the College has just started is the only one in the state. She mentioned that she has reached out to approximately 10 other colleges and six have given us approval to be able to market in their region and through their health care providers.
- The in-person graduation is scheduled for May 13th at 6:00 p.m. Dr. Westover mentioned that as part of the College's 50th Anniversary a concert featuring Darrell Scott and If Birds Could Fly will be held the Saturday after graduation, May 14th. She encouraged all Board members to attend if possible.

Vice President, Academic Affairs and Workforce Solutions – Dr. Bill Brownsberger

Dr. Brownsberger reported on the following items:

- HyFlex update – Dr. Brownsberger reported that the college is having success implementing HyFlex learning. With HyFlex students have the option of being in person in the classroom or they can get the same material at home online. Currently there are 18 promethean boards set up in HyFlex classrooms and of our four divisions, Arts and Sciences shows the most interest and willingness in exploring HyFlex as a teaching modality. This new modality will accommodate equal access learning - different capacities, different family commitments, and different health situations.
- Dr. Brownsberger mentioned that there have been a few curricula changes in response to the VCCS that will make things easier for students to transfer to a four-year institution within the Commonwealth. Additionally, Dr. Brownsberger mentioned that they have also looked at programs that are heavily reliant on technology to make them more appropriate to our time. He mentioned that the process is that of a moving target that we've been trying to follow.

Vice President, Financial and Administrative Services – Mr. Ron Vicars

Mr. Vicars reported on the following items:

Mr. Vicars mentioned that the College is currently working through a couple of different software updates with one of those being an eVA procurement software conversion. The go-live date for this new system will be in May, 2022.

Facilities

The college is upgrading the plumbing and electrical service in parking lot B in order to better serve food vendors during the Home Craft Days celebration. The upgrade will allow vendors to utilize their air conditioners, burners, etc. The project is almost ready to be approved, and hopefully the College will get a contractor on campus soon.

Local Funds Expenditure Report – Mr. Vicars reviewed with Board members the Local Funds Expenditure Report ending February 28, 2022. **(See Exhibit 3 with details)**

Personnel Report – Mr. Vicars reviewed the personnel report through March, 2022 **(See Exhibit 4 with details)**

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

Dr. Greear reported on the following items:

- The MECC Scholarship application is open to students currently for 2022-2023. Dr. Greear mentioned that they anticipate awarding at least \$700,000 in scholarship funds in 2022-2023, depending on market conditions and Tobacco Commission funding. That funding has been cut initially by \$75,000 for 2022-2023.
- MECC continues to raise funds for our 50th anniversary. The college has raised an estimated \$1.7M toward its \$2M goal.
- MECC has applied for an \$800,000 federal Rural Public Health Workforce Training Grant to support the creation of a Health Information Technologist Data Analyst Program. This is a new program to meet a growing demand in technology/data skills in health information technology.
- The MECC Foundation will hold a retreat session next Friday, March 25th to discuss free tuition initiatives and potential funding opportunities.
- The Scott County fundraising event will be held April 23 at the Crooked River Farm. Please see Dr. Greear for tickets. This event was rescheduled from August 2021.

ACTION ITEM(s): None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee (Mr. Rodney Baker, Chair)

Action Item(s):

- **Presidential Housing Allowance:**
Mr. Rodney Baker presented for full Board approval the Presidential Housing Allowance which had been presented to the Executive Committee by Ms. Val Lee yesterday, March 14th, 2022.

Mr. Baker shared that as part of Dr. Westover's Compensation and Benefits package, VCCS Chancellor, Dr. Glenn DuBois, had previously met with Dr. Westover regarding a housing allowance several years ago. At that time, Dr. Westover had requested that the subject of her housing allowance be tabled until she could gain a proper understanding of the college budget and status of the Foundation investment strategy and funding. With Dr. Westover's five-year anniversary as MECC President approaching, Chancellor DuBois requested that the Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, Malinda Carter initiate a housing allowance for Dr. Westover with this being one of the items on Chancellor DuBois's list to review before his retirement in June.

Mr. Baker reviewed with Board some of the objectives that was presented by Ms. Lee to the Executive Board: MECC has experienced a loss of 44 employees since the beginning of the pandemic, which is 27% of our total regular workforce. This period is being termed the "Great Resignation" in the HR world. If MECC had not had a consistent and present leader, losses would have been greater with the 83% increase in global job postings in 2021 over 2019. MECC must focus on retaining a trained workforce, including the President.

According to the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Human Resources at the VCCS, 11 of the 23 college Presidents receive a housing allowance, seven of which receive the maximum allowed per policy. Dr. Baker mentioned that, traditionally, the housing allowance is funded by the Foundation. As of July 1, 2017, when Dr. Westover was hired at MECC, the Foundation net assets stood at \$23,543,978. As of December 31, 2021, the Foundation net assets stood at \$33,961,972, an increase of almost \$10.5 million. This increase alone is an indicator of donor trust in the leadership at MECC and commitment to goal attainment by Dr. Westover.

Mr. Baker brought to Board's attention the following:

- Seven of the 11 colleges who provide housing allowances provide an amount equal to the maximum of \$25,000.
- The lowest housing allowance of the four colleges who provide less than the maximum of \$10,000.
- MECC's Advisory Board agrees to revisit the request annually at the first annual meeting every January to determine if adjustments to the housing allowance are needed.
- MECC's Advisory Board agrees to maintain/increase/decrease the allowance based upon current stability of the college and the Foundation net investment amount.

Mr. Baker mentioned that Dr. Westover's housing allowance was one of the items on Chancellor DuBois's list to review before he retired in June.

After discussion, Mr. Baker shared that the Executive Committee is bringing before the full Board a recommendation of \$15,000 per year housing allowance for Dr. Westover. Ms. Bonnie Elosser made the motion to accept the recommendation as presented and motion was passed unanimously by the Board.

A letter by the MECC Advisory Board will be sent to Chancellor DuBois requesting that his office submit an appeal to the MECC Foundation to fund the housing allowance for Dr. Westover in its entirety beginning May 1, 2022.

Curriculum and Student Affairs Committee (Dr. Bill Brownsberger)

Action Item(s):

Due to lack of quorum at today's Curriculum and Student Affairs Committee, the following Action items were presented to members of the Advisory Board for approval of the following Career Studies Certificates (CSC):

- **Solar Installer I** – this is the grid tie version that would prepare a solar installer in our area. Dr. Brownsberger mentioned that we have had a lot of interest such as Solar Futures which is a company in our area that is interested in cultivating a student base workforce. Dr. Brownsberger mentioned that a Career Studies Certificate is 29 credits or less. This is something that a student can achieve in one semester of fulltime work and will most likely include on the job training. Many solar projects have been announced locally and are projected to need several employees.
- **Health Information Technology Analyst**-This program is designed to provide opportunities to gather and evaluate data from a variety of sources such as electronic health record, billing statements, patient satisfaction surveys and reports relating directly to healthcare expenditures. Dr. Brownsberger mentioned that this is really the wave of the future and that that our area has shown a need for electronic health records training. He mentioned that this could also serve as a retraining or an opportunity for someone to add to what they are already doing in the health or allied health field.
- **Electrical Fabricator** – Dr. Brownsberger mentioned that the College within the last several months have cultivated a wonderful relationship with VFP, Inc. in Duffield, VA. VFP came to us with a prescriptive set of needs for their employees. VFP is in the middle of an \$8M facility expansion and has been very generous in terms of a community partner. Bending materials such as conduit in certain diameters is one of the things they are wanting to see our students to be able to do coming out of our programs. They have also given us some materials to make that happen. VFP is also willing to reimburse a successful employee for educational expenses if needed. (18 credits)

A motion was made by Mr. Gary Purdue to accept the three Career Studies Certificates as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gail Elliott and passed unanimously.

Follow-up NOTE: The following Career Studies Certificate for dental assisting did not make it for approval at our Advisory Board meeting. The item was sent via email approval to full Board. Item was unanimously approved via email on March 24, 2022

- **Dental Assisting** - MECC currently offers a Career Studies Certificate in dental assisting; the proposed Dental Assistant Certificate (CIP:51.0601) would represent an increase in credit hours from 28 to 45. Ideally, the certificate-level version of this program would begin in the summer or fall of 2022. The three-semester, 45-credit Dental Assistant Certificate would provide students with the theory, skills, laboratory, and clinical experience to perform as dental assistants. The program would prepare students for employment in dental offices, hospitals, corporations, specialty dental clinics, and public health settings. The shortage of dental professionals in our service region continues to impact the ability to provide sufficient oral health care. Our proposed curriculum, moreover, would allow MECC to proceed with efforts to achieve program accreditation by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). There are currently no accredited programs in the southwestern portion of the

Commonwealth of Virginia. In terms of resources and personnel, MECC is already adequately positioned without additional expenditures. The Dental Assistant program would be taught by the college's full-time 12-month faculty (program coordinator) and supplemented by three adjunct faculty who meet VCCS 29 requirements. These are already being employed in our current Career Studies Certificate program. Much of the didactic portion of the curriculum will be provided in an online or hybrid format. Laboratory skills will be provided utilizing our state-of-the-art dental laboratory with three operatories and a skills lab. Clinical experiences will be provided using our current slate of 45 clinical affiliates, with more clinical affiliates to be added.

Approval – The above Dental Assisting Career Studies Certificate was fully approved via email by the MECC Advisory Board on March, 22, 2022.

Finance and Facilities Committee: (Mr. Ron Vicars)

Due to lack of quorum during today's Finance and Facilities Committee meeting, Mr. Vicars is presenting the following items for Board approval:

○ **2022 – 2023 Maintenance and Operation Budget**

The overall budget has not been increased and is still at \$87,000. This is basically the same Budget that was approved last year:

- Student Scholarships \$30,000
- College Board \$5,000
- President's Office 19,000
- Fiscal Operations \$3,000
- Home Craft Days \$15,000
- Mountain Music School \$12,000
- Site Development \$3,000

This budget is split up among all of our localities and shows how each locality will be asked to fund the \$87,000. Mr. Vicars explained that the budget is basically divided up in a pro rata function as a number of seniors within that locality; Dickenson, Lee, City of Norton, Scott, and Wise Counties - (See attachment 10 for details.)

A motion was made by Mr. Roy Munsey to approve the 2022-2023 Maintenance and Operation Budget as presented; seconded by Ms. Freda Starnes and passed unanimously.

2023 Mandatory Non-E&G Fee Increase (Request to increase Parking Fees)

Mr. Vicars mentioned the need to increase student parking fees. Currently, student parking fees are \$2.00 per credit hour for each student and has been that way since 1999. The increase will help with some of the improvements that have addressed a lot of our safety concerns from students such as the lighting in our parking lots.

With Board approval, the College is asking for a .50 cent increase which will be \$2.50 per credit hour which is a total of \$7.50 per semester for a fulltime student taking 15 credit hours.

A motion was made by Mr. Les Ritchie to approve the .50 cent increase in student parking fees; motion was seconded by Ms. Emily Kinser and passed unanimously.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Action Item – 2022 Nominating Committee

The following Board members volunteered to serve on the 2022 Nominating Committee: Keith Wilson, Roy Munsey, and Betty Cornett. The Nominating Committee will recommend a Chair and Vice Chair at our next meeting.

Mr. Baker requested that Peggy Gibson schedule a zoom meeting with these individuals within the next couple of weeks for discussion.

Action Item: Resolution for outgoing Board member, Ms. Bonnie Elosser was read into the minutes by Mr. Rodney Baker (**attached herewith and becomes a part of the minutes**). Ms. Emily Kinser made the motion to approve the resolutions as presented. A second was made by Mr. Roy Munsey and was passed unanimously. Members of the MECC Advisory Board expressed their appreciation of Ms. Elosser's eight years of service to the MECC Advisory Board.

President's Evaluation –

Mr. Rodney Baker mentioned that in the past couple of years the College has conducted a 360° survey for President Westover which included the MECC Advisory Board, Foundation Board, Faculty, Staff, and Students of MECC. Last year, the VCCS conducted their own 360° survey which also included Faculty, Staff, Students, and the Advisory Board.

This year, Dr. Westover is requesting that a more targeted survey be completed in order to be more beneficial. She recommended that the survey include her direct reports, Deans, directors, and the MECC Advisory Board.

Mr. Baker mentioned that the Executive Committee decided during yesterday's Executive Committee Meeting that a more targeted survey will be completed this year to include Dr. Westover's direct reports, departmental deans and directors, and, current members of the MECC Advisory Board.

The survey will be sent out by MECC's Human Resources. Once survey results are composed, the Executive Committee will review and bring a Recommendation Letter to the full Board for approval in May. Board members may review results by making an appointment with Peggy Gibson any time before the May meeting.

OTHER COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m. Next meeting date will be May 13, 2022.

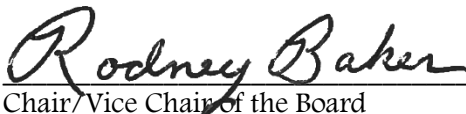
Peggy Gibson, Recorder

Respectfully Submitted,



Kristen Westover, President & Secretary to the Board

APPROVED:


Chair/Vice Chair of the Board

5/13/22

Date