

Meeting Minutes

MECC Local Advisory Board

Tuesday, March 21, 2023, 4:30 p.m.

Kline Foundation Boardroom

MEMBERS PRESENT

| SCOTT COUNTY | WISE COUNTY | LEE COUNTY | NORTON | DICKENSON CTY |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Rodney Baker | Kalen Hunter | Emily Kinser | Carol Caruso | |
| Adrienne Hood | Betty Cornett | Joyce Williams | | |
| Freda Starnes | Mike Hatfield | Kristi Taylor | | |
| Keith Wilson | Roy Munsey | Scott Napier | | |

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mike Abbott (Wise)
Carolyn Strouth (newly appointed from Dickenson)

Others Attending:

Mr. Ron Vicars – Vice President, Financial and Administrative Services
Dr. Amy Greer – Vice President, Institutional Advancement
Dr. Bill Brownsberger – Vice President of Academic and Workforce Solutions
Peggy Gibson – Executive Assistant to the President
Special Guest – Val Lee (Human Resources)

CALL TO ORDER



The Mountain Empire Community College Advisory Board met on Tuesday, January 24, 2023, 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 Mr. Roy Munsey to accept the January 24, 2023, minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Betty Cornett and passed unanimously. **(Exhibit 1)**

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mr. Baker reported on the following information items:

-  Celebration of People Friday, **May 5, 10:30 a.m.** Goodloe Center
 -  Board Meeting/Graduation Friday, **May 12, 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.

President's Report – Dr. Kristen Westover

Enrollment

- Dr. Westover presented and reviewed the 2023 Spring Semester Preliminary Enrollment Report. MECC headcount is 1,786; a decrease of (6) percent compared to last year's enrollment of 1,926. The college's FTE is 1,094; a decrease of (6) percent compared to last year's enrollment of 1,159. Dr. Westover mentioned that we are holding steady on the non-credit side. What has happened is that over the last 5 years students have shifted from credit instruction to non-credit instruction and are taking advantage of early industry recognized credentials.

Additionally, she mentioned some key factors that should be highlighted even in a declining population:

- ✓ Since 2018 we have increased our graduation rate by almost 16 percent; from 28.65% to 44% in 2022.
- ✓ In 2022, we have awarded 975 degrees & certificates compared to 650 in 2017-2018; a 50% increase.
- ✓ We have also increased fall to fall retention from 56% to 68% for all students, and up to 70% for full-time students.

She mentioned that our goal is to have students complete their programs and get jobs.

Other Updates

- Dr. Westover reminded Board members of the upcoming Chancellor's visit to the MECC. All Board members should have received the itinerary for the day via email. The Chancellor's first day is April 1, however, Dr. Dore' has already meet with all twenty-three presidents via zoom and is planning a retreat for later in the year.
- Dr. Brownsberger and several other employees here at MECC have been heavily involved with the Rural Educator Academy (REA) and with the Community Colleges of Appalachia. Part of the tasks as participants in the program was to come up with a Capstone Project. The outcome of the meetings is that MECC decided to roll out the former KIT (Keeping in Touch) program as a pilot with limited basis. The KIT program was implemented several years ago to mentor new students. The pilot will involve self-selecting students matched with self-selecting faculty and staff.
Dr. Westover mentioned that MECC will be sharing what we have learned and how we hope to implement this initiative in June at a conference in Asheville. The intent is to make students more successful and to complete.
- Dr. Westover mentioned that she and members of her Team have met with some of the County Administrators to shore up funding for the MECC Promise Program. She mentioned that our recruiters and Admissions staff have been working in our high schools helping students who are getting ready to graduate helping them enroll with the intent they know that the MECC Promise Program is in place and there is a pathway to every student that graduates from high school to at least engage in post-secondary education. Dr. Westover gave kudos to Keith Wilson for all his hard work in getting that Resolution in place.
- Skills USA was on our campus in February - the event was a huge success.
- MECC is holding a Wise County Early Childhood Education Partnership meeting on our campus Monday, March 27, as part of an initiative across the region to expand childcare within our region. Dr. Westover mentioned that we recognize that in order to grow our region we also need to entice people to come which means that we need to look into childcare opportunities for folks who may want to come to our region.
- MECC will also be hosting an Energy Education and Job Expo on our campus April 14 geared mostly toward Solar energy.

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

- Dr. Brownsberger updated Board members regarding the following programs:

- MECC is a recent recipient of a G3 Innovation Grant in the amount of \$250,000 that will support the stackable credentials initiative. Dr. Brownsberger mentioned that a portion of the funds will be used to support the renovation of classrooms such as the Pharmacy Tech and Phlebotomy Labs both located in Robb Hall.
- Bill mentioned that Kim Dorton, Dean of Health Sciences is planning to retire at the end of December 2022. Kim plans to stay to help mentor the new Dean once that person has been hired.

ACTION ITEM(s): None

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

Budget update - Mr. Vicars shared that we are still waiting for the General Assembly to reconvene in order to pass the FY24 budget. He mentioned that the good news is that this is a conducted budget and that there are several things that have already been passed.

Mr. Vicars reviewed with Board the following reports:

Local Funds Expenditure Report – Mr. Vicars reviewed with Board members the Local Funds Expenditure Report ending February 28, 2023. **(See Exhibit 3 with details)**

Personnel Report – Mr. Vicars reviewed the personnel report for March 2023. **(See Exhibit 4 with details)**

There was no discussion or questions from the Board regarding these reports.

ACTION ITEM(s): None

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

Information Item(s):

Dr. Greear shared the following updates regarding her area:

- The Foundation is working to complete a preliminary design for the MECC amphitheater. Mr. Abbott has been involved in that process. After an initial design, the committee requested an additional design to include a fully covered area for the facility. Once the design is in place, they plan to consult with the state to begin a design-build and an engineering study of the site which is anticipated to be in the back of Phillips Taylor Hall.
- The Foundation held the John Fox Jr. Festival last week with special guest NYTimes best-selling author Silas House. The event was well attended and the luncheon following the event was sold out. Mr. House was an excellent speaker, and the crowd enjoyed his presentation on writing and Appalachian culture.
- The Foundation is completing its audit for the 2022 year, with auditors expected to visit this week.
- The Foundation is preparing for our upcoming Golf Tournament June 2 at Lonesome Pine County Club

ACTION ITEM(s): None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Curriculum and Student Affairs Committee (Dr. Bill Brownsberger)

Action Item(s):

After approval by the Curriculum and Student Affairs Committee, Dr. Brownsberger presented the following action items for full Board for approval:

- **Discontinuance of Career Studies Certificate – Dental Assistant** – Dr. Brownsberger shared that the CSA in Dental Assistant transitioned to a Certificate Program in order to attain program accreditation with the Commission on Dental Accreditation. Dr. Brownsberger shared that a Career Studies Certificate is between 15 and 29 credits. He reminded the Board that they had approved a Dental Assisting Certificate back in May 2022 which is between 30 and 59 credits. Basically, taking a small program and making it a bigger program for accreditation. Applications for next year closed on April 15th which looks to be a big program.
- **New Curriculum – Precision Machining** – Dr. Brownsberger shared that he noticed since he came to MECC a lot of machines purchased by previous grant money before the pandemic. He mentioned that he had been approached some time ago by Komatsu in Duffield regarding some precision machining training such as milling and lathe work. Komatsu agreed to offer us a \$420,000 match for a \$420,000 grant from the Tobacco Commission. He, along with Dean, Matt Rose, came up with an associate of applied sciences, 65-credit, 2-year program. Individuals will have a lot of time on machines and the salary will be approximately \$40,000 per year. State minimums that we must achieve in terms of numbers are nine full-time students and six graduates. Dr. Brownsberger projects that in year 3 we will most likely meet this range. Currently, our plan is to not hire a new faculty member when there is only one cohort. First year can be covered by adjunct or other specialty faculty on campus. As numbers increase, the college will look at the possibility of hiring a new faculty member for this program.

A motion was made by Mr. Keith Wilson to accept the discontinuance of the Dental Assistant CSC and the new Precision Machining curriculum, as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Betty Cornett and passed unanimously.

Executive Committee (Mr. Rodney Baker, Chair)

Action Item(s):

1. Amended MECC Advisory Board Bylaws:

Mr. Rodney Baker brought to Boards attention that the MECC Board Executive Committee met prior to this meeting and unanimously voted to present the following updates of the MECC Advisory Board Bylaws. The updates are in order to be in compliance with FIOA and will allow us to hold virtual meetings if needed, in case of emergencies, and to clarify who can attend virtually, when, and why. After review and discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Betty Cornett and seconded by Mr. Mike Hatfield to approve the recommended changes. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Presidential Item

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Ms. Freda Starnes and seconded by Mr. Keith Wilson that:

“The MECC Local Advisory Board go into Executive Session to discuss *Presidential Item: Discussion of Presidential Survey*, Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711, sub-section A, sub-section 1 of the Code of Virginia.”

A vote was taken to confirm the request, and each member concurred.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

A motion was made by Ms. Freda Starnes and seconded by Mr. Keith Wilson to return to open session. The motion passed unanimously.

After returning from executive session, each member was asked individually to respond to the following questions:

- Do you affirm that during executive session, you discussed only public business matters lawfully exempted from statutory open meeting requirements, and
- Public business matters identified in the called motion to convene the executive session?

A vote was taken to confirm, and each member concurred.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Action Item – 2023 Nominating Committee

The following Board members volunteered to serve on the 2023 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.

OTHER COMMENTS

Ms. Betty Cornett made the Board aware that a report had been made to the Wise County Board of Supervisors that an MECC sign on US 23 was destroyed several years ago by an accident on the highway. She mentioned that the Board of Supervisors had contacted VDOT to report the issue and VDOT stated that MECC would need to make the request.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m. Next meeting date will be May 12, 2023.

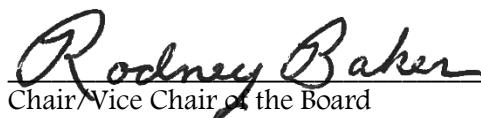
Peggy Gibson, Recorder

Respectfully Submitted,



Kristen Westover, President & Secretary to the Board

APPROVED:


Chair/Vice Chair of the Board

May 12, 2023

Date