MECC Local Advisory Board

Tuesday, March 18, 2025, 4:30 p.m.,

Kline Foundation Boardroom

MEMBERS PRESENT

SCOTT COUNTY	WISE COUNTY	LEE COUNTY	DICKENSON CTY	NORTON
Rodney Baker Freda Starnes Keith Wilson	Betty Cornett Teresa Adkins	Emily Kinser Joyce Williams Scott Napier		Carol Caruso

MEMBERS ABSENT

Adrienne Hood (Scott) Mike Abbott (Wise) Mike Hatfield (Wise) Roy Munsey (Wise) Dana Cronkhite (Dickenson) Kristi Taylor (Lee)

Others Attending:

Dr. Clint Pinion – Vice President, Academic Affairs and Workforce Solution Dr. Amy Greear – Vice President of Institutional Advancement Dr. Kristen Westover - President Ms. Peggy Gibson – Executive Assistant to the President Ms. Amber Boring – Staff Senate representative Ms. Sarah Gilliam – President, Faculty Senate

CALL TO ORDER

The Mountain Empire Community College Advisory Board met on Tuesday, March 18, at 4:30 p.m. in the Kline Foundation Boardroom. The meeting was called to order by the vice chair, Mr. Rodney Baker.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Keith Wilson made a motion to accept the January 14, 2025, 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 2, 10:30 a.m.

Goodloe Center

Board Meeting/Graduation Friday, May 9, 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

Dr. Westover reported on the following items:

Enrollment

- The <u>2025</u> Spring Semester Preliminary Enrollment report point-in-time <u>headcount</u> is 1,885 compared to last year's headcount of 1,859, an increase of (1) percent. The College's <u>FTE</u> is 1,184 compared to last year's 1,187, reflecting a (0) percent change. **(Exhibit 2)**
- Dr. Westover also shared an enrollment comparison chart between the other southwest colleges MECC, VHCC, and SWCC. (Exhibit 3)

VCCS Updates

• Dr. Westover shared that HB1621 recently passed in the Virginia legislature. This bill requires all publicly funded institutions of higher education, both 4-year and community colleges, to appoint ex-officio faculty and staff members to their advisory boards. Dr. Westover shared that this also requires faculty representation on state boards. The representatives must be elected, not appointed, by their respective faculty and staff Senates. Boards are not allowed to select and appoint these representatives themselves. Dr. Westover shared that the VCCS asked her to assemble the election process.

A draft has been put together, and we are waiting for the next steps, which will require the Governor to sign the final bill for this legislative session.

- Dr. Westover shared that 11 employees are participating in the President's Institute class this semester. This class is for anyone at the college who may be interested in learning more about VCCS governance leadership and how our structure works and operates. These individuals will attend the VCCS State Board meeting in Abingdon, VA this Thursday.
- Dr. Westover shared with Board members information sheets of what we are measured on as a college from the System level. These are the goals and metrics that we will be measuring for Accelerate Opportunity 2030. She mentioned that some of these goals are under review and have been suspended and goals we will not get measured on this year. Dr. Westover shared that for this first year, we are only being measured in the fall, but next year, we will be measured for an entire year, from spring to fall. This means that Dr. Westover will only be held accountable for the fall numbers for her evaluation process. She mentioned that we will have some issues meeting these goals next year. Below are some of the Objectives discussed:
 - Objective 1.5 Increase the number of VCCS graduates entering high-growth industries year one progress is 329 currently, we are at 204.
 - Objective 2.1 Increase cumulative enrollment in regionally aligned high-demand fields year one progress is 513 currently, we are at 450.
 - Objective 2.3 Increase the annual application yield for Hispanic students year one progress is 55% currently, we are at 53%.
 - Objective 2.5 Increase the annual credit headcount percentage of military-affiliated students year one goal is 6%.
 - Objective 3.5 Increase annual online headcount year one progress is 2,241 currently, we exceed that goal at 2,327.
 - Objective 3.6 Expand credit-for-prior-learning to all FastForward credentials we are on track to meeting this goal at 32%.

- Objective 4.1 Increase the annual percentage of program-placed students applying for Financial Aid currently, we are on track at 75%.
- Objective 4.2 Increase Financial Aid for FastForward (FANTIC) application completion year one goal is 112; currently, we are at 85.
- Dual Enrollment—Dr. Westover mentioned that it is unknown at this time how dual enrollment will be delivered and how students will be charged. The College and Career Ready Virginia (CCRV) was enacted in the 2024 legislative session. She mentioned that they had sought funding to cover college costs to deliver but came up short. Essentially, anything that is taught in the high school by the high school faculty member or that is part of the Uniform Certificate of General Studies (UCGS), MECC is picking up the cost. The VCCS defines dual enrollment in a way that is different from the rest; dual enrollment is when high school faculty teaches a course at the college level in the high school. Concurrent enrollment is when our college faculty teaches a class to a high school student. For those concurrent courses, the message is that we charge full tuition. Tuition will be discussed on Thursday during the State Board meeting in Abingdon, but no action will occur until the next meeting in May.

Dr. Westover shared that she feels that we have a team that can meet these challenges and figure out a way to make this happen without hurting our students and ensuring they have access to these programs and are successful. Dr. Westover and Dr. Pinion, along with other staff members, will be meeting with school superintendents this month to discuss these changes.

Budget Conference Report ~ VCCS Specific Items

- > Removes \$15M recurring funding and \$20M funding associated with Dual Enrollment
- Does not defer enaction of CCRV, therefore program implementation for Fall 2025 remains in effect with no associated funding.
- Provides an additional \$7.6M in tuition moderation funding in FY25. (This will increase carryforward balances for FY26).
- Provides an additional \$2,836,000 in need-based financial aid for FY25. (This will increase the financial-aid carryforward balance for FY26).
- Transfers \$15M from G3 Program to SCHEV for WCG Program. (no restrictions or guardrails on use of the funds or additional reporting requirements).

Other updates:

- Dr. Westover reviewed her current community involvement with Board members, including a list of internal and external activities from January 14 March 18, 2025. (Exhibit 4).
- The college has been conducting tours for area high schools this spring, ramping up for enrollment of high school graduates.
- Dr. Westover mentioned that we have received an Appalachian Regional Health grant initiative, which will provide free health symposiums for students and employees, such as vaccinations, healthy cooking, wellness education, and awareness on our campus through this opportunity.
- MECC's Dr. Bethany Arnold recently published the book *Finneus Finds His Way*. Copies were distributed to all Board members, and the book will be shared in our public schools.
- Employees will receive a 3% raise that was decided in the last legislative session and an additional 1.5% bonus in mid-June if the Governor signs the bill.

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

Ms. Hall was unable to attend tonight's meeting due to the scheduled VEMS Conference in Roanoke, VA. Dr. Westover reported on her behalf:

- <u>Local Funds Expenditure Report</u> Dr. Westover reviewed with Board members the Local Funds Expenditure Report ending February 28, 2025. (See Exhibit 5 for details)
- <u>Personnel Report</u> Dr. Westover reviewed the personnel report through March 2025 (See Exhibit 6 for details)

There were no questions or comments regarding the reports.

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

Dr. Greear reported on the following items:

Dr. Greear mentioned that she has been busy applying for the following grant opportunities:

- VCEDA Workforce training grant in the amount of \$200,000.
- Appalachia Regional Commission grant for Project Soar in the amount of \$500,000.
- Slemp Foundation is accepting applications with some projected projects totaling \$100,000.
- Rapha Foundation ~ \$100,000
- Lowes Gable Grant is specifically for community colleges promoting construction trades. The grant is for \$400,000.
- Anne & Gene Worrell Foundation The Anne & Gene Worrell Foundation supported our Promise Program three years ago and we have been invited to apply for another \$750,000.
- Virginia Tobacco Commission grant for student scholarships for \$240,000.

Other updates:

- Within the next couple of weeks, Dr. Greear shared that the Foundation will be working on our Scholarship Budget. The Foundation board will meet in late April to review the Scholarship budget proposal as well as the Programming budgets.
- Last week, the John Fox Jr. Festival featured the New York Times bestselling author Jeannette Walls. She mentioned that the event was a huge success and included a sold-out luncheon at the John Fox House.
- The Lonesome Pine Golf Tournament is scheduled for Friday, May 30.
- The Cedar Hill Golf Tournament is scheduled for July 12^{th.}
- Dr. Greear shared an update regarding the amphitheater. She mentioned that there were folks on campus from the architecture firm out of Roanoke who were assigned to the project. These folks have set a timeline and will visit again in May for a site selection workshop. Once a site has been selected, they plan to meet again in July. The July meeting will include members of our Boards and community to discuss the project. Possible locations are outside of Phillips Taylor Hall and near the pond location.

Dr. Greear mentioned that they hope to have a final total for the project by the end of the year.

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

Dr. Pinion reported on the following items:

Grant update:

• <u>National Science Foundation STEM grant</u> - In addition to Dr. Greear's grant update, Dr. Pinion mentioned that we are participating in a National Science Foundation STEM Paced grant of which we are partnering with UVA, UVA-Wise, Southeast Kentucky Community & Technical College, and Hazard Community College. The grant is to provide wraparound services for our STEM majors. If accepted, Dr. Pinion mentioned that we should receive \$550,000 over a

five-year period for wraparound services to help provide stipends for individuals who engage in scholarships, research, and mentors.

- <u>MOU HRSA Diversity Grant</u> Dr. Pinion also mentioned that we have just signed an MOU for an HRSA Diversity Grant. We are working with the Virginia Rural Health Association, including several community colleges and four-year schools in Southwest Virginia, to provide wraparound services for nursing students.
- Dr. Pinion mentioned that a joint meeting of our Perkins and Curricular Advisory Committees will be held tomorrow. He shared that our local plan for Perkins opened this week, which means we can begin asking for specific funding for professional development, marketing, student needs, and equipment related to different career and technical programs.
- A VCCS Perkins Administrative review is scheduled for next Wednesday.
- Dr. Pinion shared that SACSCOC has approved the four new Career Studies Certificate (CSC) programs, Machine Operator 1, 2, and 3, and Community Health Worker, which were approved by this Board in November and submitted in December. Lab for our Machine Operator will be available for the fall semester. He mentioned that they have met with Komatsu regarding a potential business partner for this program.
- Dr. Pinion mentioned that the SACSCOC Interim Report draft sections have been submitted to our internal reviewer. The internal reviewer will provide feedback and will continue to collect artifacts. The review should be completed by April and is ahead of schedule for the final submission in September.
- We recently signed an MOU with the Flatwoods Job Corp., which helps us connect with a different set of individuals, mostly those who are not from our region. These individuals take tours of our campus once a month and meet with the appropriate programs.
- Dr. Pinion shared that he and several others met today in Abingdon to participate in the Regional Health Careers & Workforce Partnership meeting. This collaboration is aimed at addressing the growing workforce demands in the health and life sciences sectors within GO Virginia Region 1. This initiative brings together a diverse group of stakeholders, including HVAC, welders, and IT, who make a lasting impact on our region's workforce. Dr. Pinion also mentioned some of the challenges discussed, such as transportation, childcare, and housing, and for us, it would be having the space to grow the enrollment, such as bigger labs and to accommodate more students. He mentioned that workgroups will be created and using GO Virginia Region 2 and our model.

Action Item(s): See Curriculum and Student Affairs Committee below

COMMITTEE REPORTS

• Executive Committee (Mr. Rodney Baker, Vice Chair)

Information Item:

Amendment to the MECC Advisory Board Bylaws

Dr. Westover shared that while reviewing policies for the upcoming SACSCOC review, she found sections in the VCCS Bylaws that need to be added to our bylaws. Below is the new addition to the MECC Advisory Board Bylaws: Section 1.2.b:

"All members of the College Board shall be deemed members-at-large charged with the responsibility of serving the best interests of the whole region being served by the College. The college board membership distribution should be representative of the industries, businesses, and professions that are located in the service area of the college. To ensure an appropriate membership distribution representative of the service area, the State Board established the list of employment categories shown in the following Table 2A-1 to assist and guide the College Board Chairman and local government jurisdictions in the selection and appointment process. The President and College Board Chairman should work closely with the local jurisdictions in order to maintain a membership distribution representative of the college service area." (See Exhibit 7 for details)

Action Item(s):

Emeritus Nominee Recommendations:

Mr. Baker mentioned that the Executive Committee met before this meeting and unanimously voted to present the following 2025 Professor and Support Staff Emeritus nominees for full Board approval. (Exhibit 8)

- Ms. Kim Dorton Professor Emeritus
- Ms. Jane Parton Support Staff Emeritus

After discussion, the full Board unanimously approved the motion from the Executive Committee. These individuals will be invited to participate in the 2025 Graduation Ceremony and will be recognized at our Celebration of People event in May.

♣ Presidential Item (Survey) Closed Session

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Ms. Teresa Adkins 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 Mr. Scott Napier and seconded by Ms. Freda Starnes to return to open session. The motion passed unanimously.

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

- Do you affirm that during the 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.

• Curriculum and Student Affairs Committee – Dr. Clint Pinion ACTION Item(s):

- Dr. Pinion presented for advisory board review and approval the following items:
 - New Program:
 - a. Career Studies Certificate Human Services

<u>Purpose</u>: There is a growing need for entry-level human services workers as aides, attendants, instructors, and paraprofessionals. This career studies certificate program is designed to prepare individuals for potential employment in settings where social welfare, mental health, substance abuse, developmental disabilities, and residential services are provided. This program can also lead to one of our associate degrees and serve as part of a bridge to a four-year degree, such as social work or other human service majors. The program will expose students to the structure, purpose, philosophy, and services of these programs, and survey the basic skills and characteristics necessary for human service providers. Awareness in professional careers in these fields will be gained.

After review, Ms. Carol Caruso motioned to accept the new Human Services program presented for full Board approval by the Curriculum and Student Affairs Committee and passed unanimously. **(Exhibit 9)**

<u>Closing of an Off-Campus Instructional Site</u>

Dr. Pinion explained that Clintwood High School is still listed as an Off-Campus Instructional Site and needs to be taken off of our OCIS list for SACSCOC purposes. Those students are now being served at our Ridgeview site.

Mr. Keith Wilson motioned to approve removing Clintwood High School as an Off-Campus Instructional Site, which passed unanimously.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

<u>Action Item</u> – 2025 Nominating Committee

The following Board members volunteered to serve on the 2025 Nominating Committee: Scott Napier, Freda Starnes, and Carol Caruso. 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 to discuss this.

OTHER COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m. without further discussion. The next meeting date is May 9, 2025.

Peggy Gibson, Recorder

MECC Advisory Board Chair

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristen Westover, President & Secretary to the Board

APPROVED:

Michael DAthoth

Chairman of the Board

<u>May 9, 2025</u>