

# Meeting Minutes

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## *MECC Local Advisory Board*

*Tuesday, March 16, 2021, 4:30 p.m.*

**Meeting was held remotely due to the impact and restrictions of COVID-19 and social distancing requirements from the Governor**

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

#### **SCOTT COUNTY**

Rodney Baker  
Adrienne Hood  
Keith Wilson

#### **WISE COUNTY**

Bonnie Elosser  
Mike Abbott  
Betty Cornett  
Teresa Adkins

#### **LEE COUNTY**

Emily Kinser  
Gary Perdue

#### **CITY OF NORTON**

#### **DICKENSON COUNTY**

Burl Mooney

### **MEMBERS ABSENT**

Tim Cassell (Norton)  
Freda Starnes (Scott)  
Gail Elliott (Lee)  
Elwanda Pillion (Lee)

### **OTHERS ATTENDING**

Dr. Kristen Westover - President  
Dr. Vickie Ratliff – Vice President of Academic and Workforce Solutions  
Mr. Ron Vicars – Vice President of Financial and Administrative Services  
Dr. Amy Greear – Vice President of Institutional Advancement  
Peggy Gibson- Executive Assistant to the President

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The Mountain Empire Community College Advisory Board met on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom meeting due to the ongoing situation with the coronavirus (COVID-19). 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 19, 2021 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: No reports

## President's Report – Dr. Kristen Westover

Dr. Westover reported on the following items:

### Activities Report

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, all travel has been cancelled at this time and most meetings are held via Zoom.

### Enrollment

The preliminary enrollment report for Spring Semester 2021 MECC headcount is 806 compared to last year's headcount of 829; a decrease of (3) percent. The College's FTE is 1,229 compared to last years, 1,234 which means that enrollment is running about the same as last year at this time. **(Exhibit 2)**.

### Updates

- **COVID-19** - Currently there are no employees in quarantine at this time due to the coronavirus.

### Funding Update

- **CARES Act Funding** – Dr. Westover reported that we are considering a fill the gap aid program for fall and spring. To date, the college has received nearly \$3.4M in federal aid; approximately \$700,000 has been distributed in direct payments to students and are planning another \$700,000 will be distributed to students within the following weeks. Dr. Westover reported that there was a brief discussion today considering how we may be able to use these funds as a fill the gap aid program for fall and spring. More information regarding this initiative will be forthcoming.
- **American Rescue Plan Act** was approved last Friday and is projected to provide 174% more in relief funding than we have received to date. This means we could receive up to \$5.7M more.

Dr. Westover mentioned that the Department of Education has lifted some of the restrictions regarding the use of some of these funds.

- **The G3 initiative** “Get Skilled, Get a Job, Give Back” was fully funded at \$36M with \$1.5M for marketing and outreach. An additional \$5M was added to support advising across the system. Dr. Westover shared that the college is looking at restructuring our advising based on the recommendations as a result from our recent advising audit conducted by Dr. Kimberly Smith. We are hoping to receive two additional advisers through some of the approved funding.

Our operational budget was provided an additional \$15M in the System to maintain affordable access and another \$10.1 M to address unavoidable cost increases and required spending. The budget earmarks \$2.5M of the \$15M operational funding for advisers and provides an additional \$2.5M for G3 advising which totals \$5M to the system for advising capacity increases.

There was also a 5% salary increase for staff, faculty, and adjunct faculty.

Dr. Westover also mentioned a \$2.271M for students in need based aid beyond G3, plus an additional \$500,000 for pre-hire training and construction for community colleges. Many capital projects were funded although none were for MECC.

### Other updates

- Dr. Westover mentioned that Summer classes will likely look much like the current spring semester of hybrid and face-to-face offerings. By Fall, we are hoping to be back to in-person with some virtual where it may work.

- **Graduation and Celebration of People** – Dr. Westover mentioned that we have waited for some time for the State Council of Higher Ed to provide guidance for graduation and with little guidance the college made the decision to move forward with a virtual graduation. The graduation production will be shown as a live movie at the Central Drive-in in Norton with students and their family invited to attend. We plan to provide a program, alumni pin, popcorn, drinks, and sweets.

The college is also planning a virtual Celebration of People – Board will be invited to participate.

- **President's Evaluation** – Dr. Westover reported that the VCCS Chancellor has now included a new Presidential 360° Survey which will be administered by the System Office. Survey was sent to all MECC Faculty and Staff. Survey deadline is this Friday and results will be distributed to the Chancellor, Advisory Board Chair, Mr. Rodney Baker, and will be reviewed by the Board's, Executive Committee before our May meeting.
- **Strategic Planning** – Dr. Westover thanked all Board members that were able to participate in the recent strategic planning zoom focus group meeting conducted by Dr. Bethany Arnold and Dr. Ken Tucker. We are currently working with faculty and other focus groups and plan to review results with the college's Planning and Implementation Committee within the next couple of weeks in order to construct the college's next strategic plan.

The final draft of the VCCS Strategic Plan was shared during the last ACOP meeting earlier this month. The one overarching goal of the VCCS's Plan is "Virginia community colleges will achieve equity in access, learning outcomes, and success for students from every race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic group. Dr. Westover mentioned that we will be working around the VCC's final draft to build the college's Strategic Plan.

- **"Who Knew"** – Dr. Westover shared that the college has started a new video series called "Who Knew" and that the series showcases areas of the college and provides a better understanding of the different areas and what they do. The G3 initiative is a part of our larger strategy to increase customer service and communication across the college. Board members will be sent the link to join these sessions.

### **Vice President of Academic and Student Services – Dr. Vickie Ratliff**

#### **Information item(s):**

- Dr. Ratliff reported that the college is currently working through the recommendations of our recent advising audit. However, implementation of our plan has been currently put on hold as we wait to see what the guidelines are due to the additional advisors that were awarded through the Governor's G3 initiative.
- If Budget is approved as presented, Dr. Ratliff mentioned that we will have multiple sources of funding available to students in addition to what we currently have which is causing us to look at the structure that we usually use in determining awards and their priorities.
- As already mentioned, Dr. Ratliff shared that most of our summer classes will remain on-line with the exception of those that are already meeting in person such as our respiratory therapy, CTE, and nursing classes. Fall schedule will most likely have a larger number of in-person classes with on-line offerings available.

### Planning:

- ✚ Dr. Ratliff mentioned that the college is planning a modified Governor School program offering two different versions:
  - Mostly in-person for health sciences area
  - Offer up to six credits for students to choose classes that can lead toward their degree program (possible funding for 75 students).
- ✚ In addition, Dr. Ratliff mentioned that we are also planning to offer a modified Mountain Music School program with as much as possible in-person using the CWIA as a location.
- ✚ The college is also in the planning stages of its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Home Craft Days.

### WORKFORCE Update:

- Workforce enrollment is up at this time - FastForward has almost doubled since last year.
- Welding Fabrication Lab has been very busy.
- Basic Construction Class interest has increased with the possibility of receiving some additional funding from ARC to assist with the construction projects and would allow us to begin programs such as masonry and plumbing.

## Vice President of Financial and Administrative Services – Mr. Ron Vicars

### Updates:

Mr. Vicars mentioned that we continue to work on the overall State budget and are still waiting on the preliminary resource model to see exactly how the new funding will interact specifically with MECC and in knowing what our funding level will be.

Mr. Vicars shared that the pre-bid meeting for the Phillips/Taylor Hall HVAC upgrade took place today and mentioned that it is going to be a multimillion dollar project which includes an additional boiler room and will be upgraded from a 2-pipe system to a 4-pipe system which will be a lot more efficient for the building. He mentioned that we are hoping that contracts can be issued sometime in April based on bids that are turned in. Upgrades will have to be done while the building is in use which means there will be a lot of shifting of classes while providing space for contractors to work.

Local Funds Expenditure Report – Mr. Vicars reviewed with Board members the Local Funds Expenditure Report ending February 28, 2021. **(See Exhibit 2 with details)**

Personnel Report – Mr. Vicars reviewed the personnel report ending March 15, 2021. **(See Exhibit 3 with details)**

There were no questions or comments regarding these reports from Board members.

## Vice President of Institutional Advancement – Dr. Amy Greear

Dr. Amy Greear shared with the Board the following updates:

### Updates:

- ❖ Dr. Greear shared that the Foundation is planning their first in person events:
  - Auto World Golf Tournament will be held in early June.
  - Scott County event is planned for August 28.
- ❖ She mentioned that the new donor software is almost completed and we will be transitioning to the new system in mid-April. She also mentioned that she and Kristy Hall have been updating the scholarship application for 2021-22 and applications should be available within the next couple of weeks for students to apply for scholarships.
- ❖ The Foundation was recently named in a legacy estate gift that will result in several hundred thousand dollars.
- ❖ Dr. Greear mentioned that they are working on several grant applications; one is in coordination with the VCCS for health sciences, another is a federal grant that would assist with student childcare assistance. She also shared information regarding another Abandoned Mine Lands grant that would assist with expansion of our smart farming curriculum in coordination with an earlier grant we are partnering with the Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Facilities Authority related to a grain terminal operation in Wise County.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS –

### Executive Committee – (Did not meet)

### Finance & Facilities Committee –

- ❖ Local Funds Budget Requests 2021-2022 – Mr. Vicars presented and reviewed with Board members the Local Funds Budget Request for 2021-2022. Mr. Vicars mentioned that each locality does contribute to our Local Funds Budget and have requested their amounts. After review, on behalf of the Finance & Facilities Committee, Mr. Keith Wilson made the motion to accept the Budget Request as presented; seconded by Ms. Bonnie Elosser, and was passed unanimously. (Exhibit 4)

### Curriculum and Student Affairs Committee –

- ❖ VCCS Discontinuance of Mining Certificate – (Due to lack of quorum, Dr. Ratliff brought this item before full Board for approval)

Dr. Ratliff mentioned that this is a part of the “clean-up” that the System office is doing regarding programs with no documentations that the programs were discontinued and mentioned that we thought this Mining Certificate Program had been discontinued in 1993. She mentioned that this item is basically a “housekeeping” item and that we no longer offer this program. Dr. Ratliff stated that we discontinued the degree Mining program in 1993 but for some reason the certificate program was not reported as being discontinued. For formality purposes, there has been no enrollment in mining since that time and are needing our Local Board’s approval to discontinue.

A motion was made by Ms. Bonnie Elosser to discontinue the Mining Certificate as presented;

**OLD/NEW BUSINESS –**

**ACTION Item** – 2021 Nominating Committee

Mr. Rodney Baker, Board Chair, appointed the following Board members to the 2021 Nominating Committee: Keith Wilson, Emily Kinser, and Betty Cornett. Mr. Baker requested that Peggy Gibson schedule a conference call meeting with these individuals within the next couple of weeks.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS - none**

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

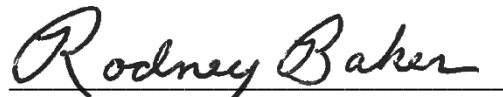
Peggy Gibson, Recorder

Respectfully Submitted,



Kristen Westover, President & Secretary to the Board

APPROVED:



Chair/Vice Chair of the Board

5/5/21

Date