

**Minutes of the Long Range Planning Committee meeting Thursday, June 11, 2015,
APPROVED by the Committee as amended June 25, 2015**

The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees Long Range Planning Committee conducted a meeting Thursday, June 11, 2015 at the Office of the Chancellor in Montpelier, Vermont.

Committee members present: Jerry Diamond (Chair), Church Hindes, Tim Jerman, Karen Luneau, Heidi Pelletier

Absent: Kraig Hannum

Other trustees present: Bill Lippert, Jim Masland, Martha O'Connor, Mike Pieciak

From the Chancellor's Office: Bill Reedy, General Counsel
Tom Robbins, CFO
Elaine Sopchak, Executive Assistant to the Chancellor
Jeb Spaulding, Chancellor

College Presidents: Joe Bertolino, Dan Smith, Joyce Judy, Barbara Murphy, Dave Wolk,
Incoming Johnson State College President Elaine Collins (by phone)

From the Colleges: Tess Conant, VSCUP Past President
Andy Myrick, VSC Faculty Federation President
Beth Walsh, VSCUP President

From the Public: Josh O'Gorman, VT Press Bureau
Amy Ash Nixon, VT Digger
Eliza Larson, WCAX

Chair Diamond called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

A. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

1. Organizational business (Review charter)

Chair Diamond introduced members of the committee and reviewed the purpose of the day's meeting and the strategic inquiry process that led to the creation of the Committee.

Chancellor Spaulding emphasized that the Long Range Planning Committee will serve as a forum for discussion and to vet all kinds of ideas that may or may not rise to the Board level. He

reminded those present that the Committee's only authority is to make recommendations to the Board. He reviewed the mission and vision of the Vermont State Colleges and the charter of Committee.

Chair Diamond asked how the Board will implement the newly enacted legislation regarding Board composition. Chancellor Spaulding answered that there is a transition period specified in the statute beginning in 2017. At the time of the transition the Board will determine whether it needs a nominating committee for this purpose. He reminded the Committee that the statute also gives the Board the authority to change the name of the corporation.

2. Strategic Inquiry: Where we left off

Chancellor Spaulding reviewed the results of the strategic inquiry process, focusing on the "Ideal VSC" and "Six Big Ideas" (see attached slides). He noted that the highest ranked ideal quality on both lists is a unified system. Trustee Pelletier noted, and several trustees strongly agreed that affordability should be included in the list. President Murphy stated accessibility should be added as well.

Chancellor Spaulding stated that they are discussing the organization of the VSC system first, because before deciding whether Castleton State College should become a university, they must first establish a general idea of what is best for the whole system. Trustee Jerman reminded the group that the strategic inquiry process was intended to generate big ideas that could reengineer the system, and that they left off at the point in the process where they would start discussing how to achieve those big ideas.

Chancellor Spaulding shared with the group the websites of several higher education systems to demonstrate their organizational composition.

Penn State University (<http://www.psu.edu>) is one single, accredited institution with 23 campuses. When a student graduates, they get a degree from Penn State University. All of the campuses' websites look similar. President Bertolino shared that initially the 23 campuses were community colleges; if students applied to the main campus but were not accepted, they could attend one of the branch campuses and have an opportunity to reapply later if successful. Penn State then transitioned all those campuses to four-year degree programs; there is some consistency across the campuses but each campus has its own focus. The standards are different for each campus as well.

California State University (<http://www.calstate.edu>) is different in that there is no single Cal State University—all the campuses are independently accredited universities within a state

university system that has one board. California also has a separate university system and community college system.

University of Maine (<http://umaine.edu>) in Orono is the flagship institution of the University of Maine system (<http://www.maine.edu>). Each institution in the system is an independently accredited degree granting institution. The UMaine system is currently considering whether to become accredited as a single institution. The system currently has one board but each institution has a Board of Visitors that advises the system board. Maine's community college system is separate from the UMaine system. President Murphy stated that UMaine Augusta started out as a community college and transitioned to a four-year institution. The UMaine system has begun investigating consolidation and has so far consolidated human resources, purchasing, and IT.

State University of New York (<http://www.suny.edu>), like Cal State, does not exist as a single institution. It is composed of individual campuses across New York that are all independently accredited. President Murphy pointed out that unlike California, SUNY includes everything from research universities to community colleges and is the largest public system in the world (system website: <http://system.suny.edu>). SUNY has one board. President Bertolino shared with the Committee that a number of systems have attempted to group their constituent parts into one institution only to reverse course after a number of years and reestablish each individual school's identity. It is often an attempt to enhance a system's profile to compete with larger university systems and bigger name institutions. Students however, do not associate themselves with a system but rather with a college.

Trustee Hinds asked for information on what other small population, rural states do in their higher education systems, to complement the information being presented today. Chancellor Spaulding stated that staff will have that information ready to present at the next Committee meeting.

The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (<http://www.passhe.edu/Pages/default.aspx>) is a system of 14 public universities under one board. It is similar to SUNY and the VSC in that they have a chancellor and individual accredited institutions. On their individual websites, the institutions do not necessarily identify themselves as part of the system. The Committee discussed the similarities between Penn State University and the Pennsylvania State System, and whether there was a difference in perceived prestige. President Bertolino made the comparison that in Vermont, UVM might be considered equivalent to Penn State in terms of recognition, while the VSC would be equivalent to the PASSHE colleges. Penn State has established a brand name in the state, as has UVM in Vermont; both are land grant institutions.

Trustee Hinds inquired about the internal, operational efficiencies systems require. Chair Diamond asked Chancellor Spaulding to report at the next meeting what operational efficiencies have already been undertaken by the VSC.

Chancellor Spaulding stated that the Board must also take into consideration that the history and culture of every state is different. In New Hampshire, the University of NH and the rest of the state colleges are under the same governance system. He reminded the Committee that a similar governance structure has been studied in Vermont multiple times, as recently as 2009, and it is unlikely to happen in Vermont anytime soon.

The Committee then discussed a variety of ideas and goals to consider when planning a new system organization, as follows:

- Greater access to college and system resources (Jeb)
 - “Admit to one, go to five” (Church)
 - And know this ahead of time, not after enrollment (Bill)
- Marketing for each college and the system without competition with colleges (Heidi)
 - But raising awareness of collaborations between schools
- More modernized system that’s cohesive, diverse, inclusive (Dave)
- More entrepreneurial culture at colleges (Tim)
 - Lack of state support requires this
 - Potential enterprise zones
 - System business plan competition; externships (Mike)
- Partnerships with industry (Karen)
 - What can industry do for us? (Tess)
- Focus on applicants and employers
- User friendly dashboard and technology platform (Joe)
 - Improvement to Colleague/registration
 - Ease of customer experience for new consumers and current consumers (Jeb)
 - Web tools to enhance recruitment
- More competitive financial aid system (Joe)
- System assistance in fundraising (Jerry)
- Partner with other New England institutions on premium programs (Karen)
- Invest in the web presence (Mike)
- Actively advocating at the state level (Church)
 - Demonstrate system value
- More nimble, moving faster (Jeb)
- Functionality will help determine form (Jim)
- Operational efficiencies (Jeb)
- Commit to raising the college aspirations of VT’s K-12 students (Barbara)

- Strengthen relationships with K-12
- Blue Ribbon Commission on raising aspirations (Church)
- Common calendar (Jerry)
- Encouraging colleges' niche(s) (Jerry)
- Make transfer between colleges as easy as possible (Jerry)
- Offer up to date, practical degree programs to meet changing workforce needs (Mike)
- Vermonters' first stop when considering post secondary educational needs (Jeb)
 - Perceived as first choice, not a fallback (Jerry/Kraig)
- Market the value added by attending a VSC school (Bill)
- Be nimble and responsive (Bill)

The following items from the 2013 strategic inquiry process should also be included in the above list:

- Unified system; cooperative/collaborative
- High standards/increased academic rigor
- Modern/up to date
- Great faculty/staff
- Nimble/flexible
- Student centric/focused
- Welcoming/supportive
- User friendly/accessible
- Affordable
- Accessible

What Students want:

- A nurturing environment where they can receive personal/individualized attention
- A quality education that they are proud of and that will help them succeed
- Affordability

What Parents want:

- Affordability
- Solid foundation for success in life
- An education that fully realizes each child's potential

What Employers want:

- High standards of excellence
- Close relationships with educators; partnerships
- Affordability

What Faculty want:

- **Innovation**
- **Cross college cooperation and collaboration**
- **Vision, direction and leadership from the VSC**

What Staff want:

- **Respect for the VSC**
- **Financial stability**
- **Cross college cooperation and collaboration**
- **More opportunities**

3. Discussion with COP and Chancellor

Chair Diamond asked the presidents to comment on the topic of becoming a more tightly knit system, and how it would impact their colleges.

President Bertolino stated that he does not think the system has a choice about whether to be integrated if all five colleges are to be viable. Each college is an important economic driver in its own community. The downside to being fully integrated is the fear of losing one's identity and independence as individual institutions. The question is what is the balance between being supportive and integrative enough to help the system thrive while also allowing for the individual niches and cultures of each college? Many improvements at the system level will help individual colleges.

Chair Diamond asked President Bertolino if there could be a greater role for CCV at the other colleges. President Bertolino answered that interconnectedness is essential. As an illustration he stated that UVM's largest pool of transfer students comes from CCV—these students should go to VSC colleges. Working together to make it less complicated and more desirable for these students to attend VSC schools is critical. Lyndon State could do more to reach out to the large number of students attending CCV Newport.

President Judy reminded the group that students are also consumers, and if a VSC school will not accept transfer courses, then they will turn to UVM. In addition, scheduling plays a very large part. There are however over 550 other VSC students taking CCV courses—there is a lot of interconnectedness already. She asked the group to think about what we create that we can do better together than what we could do singly, and offered the Hartness Library as an example. It's a nationally recognized model of not just consolidating operations but combining forces to create something better.

President Judy stated that the current financial model of the system will likely need to change as progress continues towards a unified system. Currently each college has to succeed and this

creates competition based on enrollment. The system should also work more on broader questions of aspiration and the cost of college. She feels that establishing a common calendar is going backward; the system needs more start dates, not fewer. Trustee Lippert asked if there is any data on where CCV students go after completion. He stated that CCV as a feeder school should be a priority. President Murphy agreed that a common calendar would negatively affect EDP and other programs' multiple start/stop dates. Chancellor Spaulding noted that the academic deans at the colleges support having a common calendar.

President Smith noted that VT Tech and CCV have a very healthy transfer relationship, with CCV students moving on to multiple VT Tech programs, particularly nursing. The most important part of that is seamlessness for students.

Regarding the calendar, President Bertolino stated that given the demographics the VSC works with—non-traditional students, veterans, returning students, transfers—flexibility for these groups is essential, and the VSC is well positioned to become more flexible. Flexibility is necessary also in the kinds of degree programs offered, as well as other types of course offerings that generate revenue and provide education that may not offer a degree but rather an opportunity.

President Wolk stated that creating a Vermont State University system would be confusing for students, and that the board of UVM might object to such a name. Chair Diamond pointed out many states have two different university systems. Castleton and CCV have multiple articulation agreements, and work very closely together.

President Wolk shared his reasons why Castleton State College should change its name to Castleton University:

- The college now has several graduate programs and a doctoral program that will begin in fall 2016; being a university is an opportunity to expand the number of programs and the pool of potential students.
- The college has many new entrepreneurial ventures, many of which are off campus (as is the Polling Institute) or statewide in their reach (as is the Center for Schools). Castleton is the largest provider of professional development for teachers in Vermont. Use of the college's facilities during the summer is robust. Spartan Arena, Spartan Dome, and many other ventures serve the entire Rutland area.
- The university designation will attract more international students, a positive way to increase revenue and diversity on campus.
- The entire campus community is ready to become a university and has developed the Castleton Plan as a reflection of its desire to move forward.

Trustee Jerman asked JSC incoming president Elaine Collins for her opinion of Castleton's name change and the larger discussion of the VSC system. Dr. Collins stated that she feels it is very

important for each college in the system to have its own niche and to be independent. But it is also important to market the system to bring it more attention. She supports President Judy's suggestion that the colleges become interconnected in a way that the whole is better than the sum of its parts. She emphasized focusing on sustainable practices, both in the sense of sustaining the system but also in curriculum development and by each college addressing an aspect of sustainability that would give a graduating student a credential earned from all five colleges.

President Murphy suggested first taking advantage of the tools we have already invested in and improve them to serve us better—in particular Colleague—as well as preserving and nurturing what we each do best individually and collectively. She suggested funding some new initiatives, and taking some calculated risks. She also suggested reviewing institutional research as an area where more consolidation and collaboration could happen, generating better and more useful data and answering more questions, as well as identifying grant sources.

In terms of Castleton's name change, President Murphy stated that perhaps the change will have some implications for the other colleges. President Bertolino stated the name change is a great idea that makes sense for Castleton. It presents the other colleges with the challenge of defining themselves within the system and the state. It may help in recruitment for the system and though there are several unknowns, that is not a reason not to do it. Lyndon will need to maintain its niche programs to ensure its viability and those niche programs are what distinguish institutions from one another. He also stated he thinks it will raise the profile and credibility of the system, and send a message of quality on many levels. Each college is a unique sibling in a larger family.

President Smith stated that the unique value of having a university as part of that family will be shared across all of the colleges in the system.

Trustee Masland expressed concern about what kind of impact Castleton's name change may have on Johnson State and Lyndon State. He stated he did not see a downside to Castleton remaining a college. Trustee Pelletier stated she is not convinced that it is necessary for Castleton to change its name and that she shares Trustee Masland's concerns. Though she is not completely against it, she is not convinced it will make a difference for Castleton or the system. She is concerned the negative impacts on the other colleges might outweigh the benefits for Castleton.

President Judy stated she supports the Castleton name change, and reminded the Committee that the term "university" has a different meaning than "college" for international students. The change will be important for Castleton's goal to recruit more international students. The entire system should not ignore the potential revenue opportunities international students represent. CFO Robbins stated that when he thinks of Castleton University, he thinks less of what it would

mean for our colleges and more about how it would encourage students to come to Castleton rather than to UVM.

Trustee Hinderes stated that the immediate value of the Castleton name change question is that it has accelerated the discussion of the bigger question of the VSC system organization and name. That conversation needs to happen first, and then the Board should take up the Castleton question. He stated he is neutral on the Castleton name change and would prefer to address the system implications first.

Chancellor Spaulding stated he does not think the Board needs to determine a new name for the system before allowing Castleton to change its own name. Rather, the Board should first decide whether the system should be one system with campuses (like Penn State) or a system with distinct institutions within the system (like SUNY). That decision should happen before the Castleton name change decision. He reminded the Committee that at its next meeting there will be two visitors who are professionals in the field: Michael Thomas, President of the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE), and Aims McGuinness, Senior Associate with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS). They will provide their expertise and guidance while the Committee and Board think about this decision. Chancellor Spaulding stated that he hoped the Board would be able to make this decision at its July meeting.

Chair Diamond asked President Wolk to answer the following questions at the next meeting:

1. What impact will the name change have on students? Will the students have a different life under a university as opposed to a college? Is there a benefit that they will see as a result of this change?
2. What changes and benefits will the name change cause for faculty and staff?
3. If there is to be a noticeable change to students, faculty, and staff, why would we not want those same benefits to extend to all of the students, faculty, and staff at all of the state colleges?
4. What is the name change going to cost: signage, uniforms, etc? To this question President Wolk answered that over the last two to three years the college has already begin changing its mark to reflect simply "Castleton," with the result being that an official name change will not cost much at all. He will share the costs and communication plan at the next Committee meeting.

4. Next steps

The Committee scheduled a third meeting to occur before the next Board meeting. The Committee selected July 16th from 1-5 p.m. at the Chancellor's Office in Montpelier. Board Chair O'Connor stated that the Board could spend time on the topic during the July 23rd Board meeting as well. Trustee Lippert asked if the presentations on the 25th could be recorded for future viewing. Staff will ensure the meeting is recorded.

5. Public input

There was no public input.

6. Potential areas of focus and priorities for the Committee

- Trustee Masland suggested the Committee discuss the system's web presence and marketing in general to raise the system's profile and improve seamlessness.
- Trustee Luneau asked for other examples of colleges and systems that have changed their names and whether or not they were successful.
- Chair Diamond suggested the Committee discuss how the colleges can further develop their niches and how Board can help in that process.
- Chair Diamond stated another topic requested is a strategic look at how to make VTC survive and thrive.
- Chancellor Spaulding stated that the Committee needs to develop either a strategic plan or strategic priorities, and ensure the priorities and the colleges' plans align.
- Chancellor Spaulding said that staff will report at the next meeting what the VSC has already accomplished so far in terms of operational efficiencies and what else can be done.
- Chancellor Spaulding also suggested discussing the finance/revenue sharing model currently existing between VSC institutions.
- Trustee Pelletier suggested a discussion of the VSC Foundation: what is its status and what can be done with it? She suggested trustees review the website for the Maine community college system foundation (<http://www.maineccfoundation.org/about-the-foundation/>).
- Trustee Hindes recommended also considering topics to be discussed at the retreat in September.
- Trustee Lippert asked for a document that lists all program offerings at all colleges.

Trustee Jerman moved and Trustee Hindes seconded to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 4 p.m.