

**Minutes of the Long Range Planning Committee meeting held Wednesday,
May 31, 2017 at the Office of the Chancellor, Montpelier, VT – APPROVED October 25,
2017**

Note: These are unapproved minutes, subject to amendment and/or approval at the subsequent meeting.

The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees Long Range Planning Committee conducted a meeting Wednesday, May 31, 2017 at the Chancellor's Office in Montpelier.

Committee members present: Jerry Diamond (Chair), Lynn Dickinson, Church Hindes, Tim Jerman, Karen Luneau (Vice-Chair), and Martha O'Connor

Other Trustees present: Bill Lippert and Linda Milne

Chancellor's Office Staff: Tricia Coates, Director of External & Governmental Affairs
Kevin Conroy, Chief Information Officer
Todd Daloz, Associate General Counsel
Harriet Johnson, Executive Assistant to the Chancellor's Office
Jeb Spaulding, Chancellor
Elaine Sopchak, Administrative Director
Steve Wisloski, Chief Financial Officer
Sophie Zdatny, General Counsel
Yasmine Ziesler, Chief Academic Officer

College Presidents: Nolan Atkins, Elaine Collins, Joyce Judy, and Pat Moulton

From the Colleges: Lisa Cline, Johnson State College, Faculty Federation President
Scott Dikeman, Dean of Administration, Castleton University
Laura Jakubowski, Director of Finance, Castleton University
Barbara Martin, Dean of Administration, Community College of Vermont
Maurice Ouimet, Dean of Enrollment, Castleton University
Sharron Scott, Dean of Administration, Johnson State College
Toby Stewart, Controller, Johnson State College
Beth Walsh, VSCUP President, Johnson State College

1. Chair Diamond called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
2. Approval of the May 9, 2017 meeting minutes.

Trustee Jerman moved and Trustee Hindes seconded the approval of the minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Discussion of challenges in current higher education landscape Chair Diamond asked Chancellor Spaulding to open the discussion.

President Collins identified the following macro trends:

- Rising tuition takes 40% of family income now versus 20% twenty years ago.
- 80% of students graduate high school. Of those, 50% are not ready for college; there is a preparation issue. Rising mental health issues affect retention and time to graduation.
- Financial need for aid increasing.
- There is a public relations crisis where the public is not understanding the benefits of higher education other than the financial benefit. Need to articulate the personal value and social impact (how does it benefit society) of education.
- State and federal budgetary pressures. Strings attached by states to appropriation increases like performance benchmarks or other measures do not take into consideration infrastructure needs.
- Increased labor costs and increased cost centers in general. Health care, salary increases, retirements, tenure are fixed investments with little room to change.
- Increasing competition.

President Moulton added to President Collins statements relative to undervaluing certain professions particularly in liberal arts, and prioritizing professions based on service to others (teachers, primary care doctors, direct care nursing, social workers, etc).

President Judy emphasized there are huge opportunities within these challenges. Low collegegoing rate is an opportunity to reach those potential students. Chancellor Spaulding stated students that are not going on to postsecondary education are the ones most likely to be unprepared and need aid. It is more expensive to prepare them and help them succeed. VSC tries to help students so they can attend college and this requires an investment. The group continued with further discussion regarding the need for remedial work.

Dean Dikeman spoke of the accumulation of multiple factors affecting Castleton University, referencing the New York free tuition program, aggressive discounting by other colleges, and international students and travel bans. He also mentioned that Canadian students' attendance is lower due to the exchange rate and affordability. This accumulation adds up to serious challenges facing Castleton University. General discussion of demographics and markets continued.

Trustee Hindes stated structural deficiencies within higher education should be considered as a challenge. How should we target certain groups, and how do we perceive our roles.

Trustee Dickinson spoke about the perception of free tuition being the cure for everything. President Moulton discussed deferred maintenance and how students see our buildings in comparison to competition. The dorms are not new and this is a challenge.

Chancellor Spaulding asked the Trustees to discuss how the colleges can address these challenges.

President Collins presented several revenue generating ideas, including unification; reduced number of administrative positions; resource sharing; increased development efforts; increased fund raising; increased revenue streams; public/private partnerships developing new programs; letting go of other programs, non-traditional programming; increasing technical delivery systems; and examining instructional costs.

Interim President Atkins stated many students are currently earning 12 or fewer credits per semester. Some ideas to improve this include creating a new academic calendar to build in winter and summer terms, which will allow students flexibility to stay on track for 4-year graduation; or to have a fall and spring semester with multiple start dates.

Other ideas include:

- Examine the advising model (cf SNHU's advising center); more for retention. Resolving student-facing software and technology issues continues to be a big challenge. Summer bridge program starting this summer on both campuses.
- Diversity of revenue streams—NVU Online, hybrid/low res options, micro credentials, other entrepreneurial partnerships (NECC).
- Addressing the perception and brand of state colleges because there is a stigma associated with them.
- More institutional research to understand who is enrolling and who is not. For example, better understanding the application to deposit conversion. Need to get smarter about how we look at data.

President Judy spoke about supporting K-12 and encouraging dual enrollment, nurturing relationships with other high schools and colleges, and working on credentials development.

Dean Dikeman of Castleton spoke about the need to downsize Castleton due to reduced enrollment. He suggested looking at the workforce; reduction in hours; and early retirement options. An option for revenue will be requiring students to live on campus the first two years, and will also consider looking at new technology and increasing marketing efforts. Dean Ouimet of Castleton would like to revisit Vermont tuition and look at whether secondary Vermont property owners could get tuition breaks.

President Moulton provided the following suggestions: setting up a working adult programs two nights a week or on a weekend; bringing more high school students on campus and organizing competitions, or having NVU offering courses at the CCV or VTC campus.

Trustee Hinds asked whether we should have this conversation with the Secretary of Education or her staff to have their perspective and begin to work together. Trustee Lippert suggested our system should convene a conversation between the AOE and key stakeholders in K-12. Chief Academic Officer Yasmine Ziesler stated she is also looking at designing some programming delivered in high schools in partnership with faculty, and high school teachers.

4. Other business

Chair O'Connor discussed scheduling problem regarding the Board's June 21-22 meeting. Legislators will be absent, and several other members are unavailable so there won't be a quorum. The Board will consider alternatives and have a decision by June 5 regarding how to hold this meeting.

5. Comments from the public

Beth Walsh spoke about workload and reduction in hours as we try to find ways to do more with less and asked the Board to be mindful of contracts and ensure equity of process.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:14 p.m.