

**Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Long Range Planning Committee meeting held Wednesday, June 19, 2019, in the 1787 Room at Castleton University, Castleton, VT – APPROVED**

The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees Long Range Planning Committee conducted a meeting Wednesday, June 19, 2019, at Castleton University, Castleton, Vermont

Committee members: Michael Pieciak (Chair), Megan Cluver, Lynn Dickinson, Dylan Giambatista, Adam Grinold, Bill Lippert

Absent: Janette Bombardier

Other Trustees Present: Peg Flory, Izzy Gogarty, Karen Luneau, Churchill Hinds, Jim Masland

Presidents: Joyce Judy, Karen Scolforo

Chancellor's Office Staff: Jeb Spaulding, Chancellor  
Tricia Coates, Director of External & Governmental Affairs  
Todd Daloz, Associate General Counsel  
Jen Porrier, Administrative Director  
Steve Wisloski, Chief Financial Officer  
Sophie Zdatny, General Counsel  
Yasmine Ziesler, Chief Academic Officer

From the Colleges: Nolan Atkins, Provost, Northern Vermont University  
Ana Gaillat, Dean of Academic Affairs, Vermont Technical College  
Laura Jakubowski, Chief Budget & Finance Officer, Castleton University  
Maurice Ouimet, Dean of Enrollment, Castleton University  
Jonathan Spiro, Chief Academic Officer, Castleton University  
Emily Wiezalis, Assistant Dean of Enrollment, Castleton University

1. Chair Pieciak called the meeting to order at 3:16 p.m.

Chair Pieciak welcomed everyone to Castleton then turned the meeting over to President Scolforo who expressed her pleasure at hosting the Board at Castleton University and at her house.

Chair Pieciak took a moment to introduce to the Board the new Dean of Academic Affairs at Vermont Technical College, Ana Gaillat, as well as the new Trustee elected by the Vermont State Colleges Student Association, Izzy Gogarty. Chair Pieciak stated that the meeting was being recorded and will be available for viewing on the [www.vsc.edu](http://www.vsc.edu) website after the meeting.

2. Approval of the minutes
  - a. October 24, 2018
  - b. May 29, 2019

**Trustee Dickinson moved and Trustee Giambatista seconded the motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 24, 2018 and May 29, 2019. The motion was approved unanimously**

3. Committee Discussion of “*Serving Vermont’s Students by Securing the Future of the VSCS*” white paper

Chair Pieciak gave a brief overview of the white paper itself, describing how it explores the urgent challenges facing higher education in general and the VSCS in particular. The paper poses a series of questions for the Board to consider as it envisions the future. Chancellor Spaulding added that the paper discusses the VSCS’s mission of serving the students and the challenges the System faces while doing so. Chair Pieciak outlined the questions listed below and invited input from Committee and Board members.

- a. Do the challenges described in the paper adequately capture what we face? Is there anything missing, or is there something that does not warrant inclusion?

Chancellor Spaulding highlighted the six challenges faced by the VSCS and asked if the list is inclusive or if there are other challenges that need to be identified. Trustee Dickinson discussed the need to educate the public about the severity of these challenges. CCV President Judy reiterated the need for the VSCS to partner with local business and agencies for job preparation. CU President Scolforo talked about attracting more students to Vermont through branding to counteract the declining demographics. She also mentioned the need for a more robust fundraising infrastructure. Trustee Cluver posited that disruptive technology (challenge six listed on page 16 in the white paper) as epitomized by not-for-profit online universities (Arizona State Online, Southern New Hampshire University, Purdue Global and Western Governors University) pose the greatest threat. These institutions have the ability to be nimble, possess significant capital, have a completely different faculty structure, and are not limited by geographical location. Students are attracted to these online educators because they’re non-profit, accredited, less expensive, and provide flexibility. She added that some significant businesses with power in the job market (Amazon, Apple, Google for example) are starting to place less value on traditional college degrees and consider applicants for hire based on demonstrated skills, rather than educational attainment. Dean Gaillat proposed that the VSCS can be competitive only by

finding niche markets where it can focus and excel and meet specific needs. Trustee Lippert reiterated the need to serve Vermonters, first and foremost. He would like to focus on the transformative changes that can be done, as opposed to incremental changes. Trustee Grinold noted that as the Vermont school-aged population decreases, the level of poverty in that same group is increasing, which is likely to make the leap to post-secondary education more difficult for those students coming from less affluent backgrounds. This trend, if it continues, will pose an additional hurdle to the VSCS as an access institution.

b. Which system strengths are the most significant as we consider the future?

Trustee Gogarty discussed the benefits of building connections, including with potential future employers, as well as the opportunities for students to accrue personal experiences by attending a bricks and mortar college. Chair Hinder proposed capitalizing on the traditional college experience. He noted that the VSCS benefits from having distinctive campuses and being able to try different ideas at each institution. He added that our name recognition is a strength in the state of Vermont. CFO Wisloski summarized the discussion with three points: (1) What is within our control that we can change? (2) What return on investment do our students receive? and (3) Are we exercising due diligence with the financial aid awarded to students?

c. Discuss the “What’s Next” questions (p. 22). Are they the right questions? Are there additional questions we should ask?

No comments were provided about the proposed questions.

4. Discuss and approve proposed summer outreach schedule

Director of External and Government Affairs Tricia Coates discussed the reasoning behind the current proposed schedule. There are regularly scheduled LRPC Committee meetings with goals delineated for each. Additionally, there will be informal time scheduled with the leadership teams of each institution to meet with the LRPC chair and the Chancellor. A system-wide zoom meeting will be scheduled later in the summer with participation open to all members of the VSCS community. Also proposed is a meeting with statewide opinion/thought leaders. Ms. Coates also shared information about the “Secure the Future” website, which will include recordings of meetings along with articles, materials and updates as they occur. See <https://www.vsc.edu/board-of-trustees/securethefuture/>.

Northern Vermont University Provost Nolan Atkins stressed the importance of having a clear message about the purpose of the project for communications with faculty, staff and students. Trustee Grinold suggested that the message on the webpage be more of a call to action than a passive message.

5. Other business

No other business

6. Comments from the public

No Comments from the public

Chair Pieciak adjourned the meeting at 5:10 p.m.