

Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Meeting held Saturday, April 11, 2020, via ZOOM – APPROVED

The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees met on Saturday, April 11, 2020, via ZOOM.

Board members present: Churchill Hindes (Chair), Janette Bombardier, Megan Cluver, Lynn Dickinson, Peg Flory, Dylan Giambatista, Izzy Gogarty, Adam Grinold, Bill Lippert, Karen Luneau, Linda Milne, Mike Pieciak, David Silverman

Absent: Jim Masland

Presidents: Elaine Collins, Joyce Judy, Pat Moulton, Karen Scolforo

Chancellor's Office Staff: Jeb Spaulding, Chancellor
 Kevin Conroy, Chief Information Officer
 Todd Daloz, Associate General Counsel
 Jen Porrier, Administrative Director
 Meg Walz, Director, Program Manager
 Steve Wisloski, Chief Financial Officer
 Sophie Zdatny, General Counsel
 Yasmine Ziesler, Chief Academic Officer

From the Colleges: Thomas Anderson, Associate Dean of Academic Programs, Northern Vermont University
 Lori Arner, Director of Registrar Services, Castleton University
 Nolan Atkins, Provost, Northern Vermont University
 William Barrett, Student Reporter, News7, Northern Vermont University
 Nate Ball, Vice President, VSCUP, Vermont Technical College
 Tony Blueter, Director, Upward Bound, Northern Vermont University
 Kellie Campbell, Chief Technology Officer, Vermont Technical College
 Annamarie Cioffari, Director, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Northern Vermont University
 Maria Coviello-Gould, Program Coordinator, Northern Vermont University
 Jonathan Davis, Dean of Students, Northern Vermont University
 Michal Eakin, Assistant Director, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Northern Vermont University
 Michael Fox, Dean of Enrollment, Northern Vermont University
 Gillian Galle, Faculty, Castleton University
 Robby Gilbert, Faculty, Northern Vermont University
 Kate Gold, President, VSCUP, Northern Vermont University
 Laura Jakubowski, Chief Budget & Finance Officer, Castleton University
 Jennifer Harris, Executive Director of Development & Alumni Affairs, Northern Vermont University
 Ellen Hill, Internship Coordinator, Northern Vermont University
 Leah Hollenberger, Development & External Relations Officer, Northern Vermont University

David Hutchinson, Faculty, Northern Vermont University
Flo Keyes, Faculty, Castleton University
Sara Kinerson, Director, Advising & Registration Center, Northern Vermont University
Karen Madden, Director, Academic Support Services, Northern Vermont University
Kathleen Moore, Faculty, Community College of Vermont
Laura Murakami, Faculty, Community College of Vermont
Linda Olson, Faculty Federation, Castleton University
Curtis Ostler, Associate Dean of Resource Development, Northern Vermont University
Maurice Ouimet, Dean of Enrollment, Castleton University
Andy Pallito, Dean of Administration, Community College of Vermont
Philip Parisi, Faculty, Northern Vermont University
Lori Phillips, Conference & Events, Castleton University
Sylvia Plumb, Director of Marketing & Communications, Northern Vermont University
Brady Rainville, Academic & Study Away Advisor, Northern Vermont University
Kelly Rue Riso, Director of Human Resources, Vermont Technical College
Sharron Scott, Dean of Administration, Northern Vermont University
Tracy Sherbrook, Assistant to the Provost, Northern Vermont University
Jonathan Spiro, Chief Academic Officer, Castleton University
Dannielle Spring, Director of Conference & Events Planning, Northern Vermont University
Michael Stevens, Director of Facilities, Northern Vermont University
Littleton Tyler, Dean of Administration, Vermont Technical College
Beth Walsh, Director of Career Development, Northern Vermont University
Margaret Warden, Director, First-Year Experience, Northern Vermont University
Cill Waterhouse, Student, Castleton University

From the Public:

Dominic Amato, Reporter, WCAX
Lola Duffort, Reporter, VT Digger
David Manning, Principal, Johnson Elementary School
Cyndi Miller, AFT-Vermont
Gary Moore, Former Chair of VSC Board
Heather Riemer, AFT-Vermont
Jennifer Wall-Howard, Assistant Principal, Montpelier High School

Chair Hindes called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Chair Hinder shared that this is the third full Board meeting since the first COVID-19 diagnosis and that the Executive Committee has met four times in that span. The Chair appreciates the strong engagement with the Board and the leadership during this unprecedented time. Chancellor Spaulding stated that Vermont is in a State of Emergency right now and this is a crisis in the making for higher education and for this country. Many colleges and universities won't be opening in the fall and many have announced significant personnel actions already. The revenue loss brought on by COVID-19 is significant for residential institutions and it's imperative that the VSCS take informed and rapid action to address the deteriorating financial situation, while at the same time ensuring that current and prospective students know that the VSCS intends to continue delivering educational opportunities at a post-secondary level despite these challenges.

The Chancellor provided an update on the current status of the System, with powerpoint slides. These included some of the statistics and information that were previously outlined in the Chancellor's Whitepaper: Serving Vermont's Students by Securing the Future of the Vermont State Colleges System. (See attachment). It included charts outlining the declining demographics and enrollment, the bottom ranking for state support, the pricing pressure, the barriers to adaptability, and changing student preferences. These are all ongoing challenges facing the VSCS that have been intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic. The projected COVID-19 related revenue losses and costs include refunds of room and board, loss of auxiliary revenue (such as from camps and conferences), summer tuition losses, and the costs of federally mandated COVID-19 sick leave. Colleges and universities around the country are recognizing that there are likely to be additional costs and loss of revenue from COVID-19 and there is considerable uncertainty as to whether face-to-face instruction can resume by the Fall 2020 semester. Some of the actions taken to date include a hiring and spending freeze, efforts to secure additional financial assistance, and a reduction in staffing at the Chancellor's Office. Further personnel actions are under consideration. The Chancellor restated the VSCS's goal to continue to deliver on its public mission for the benefit of Vermont which is statewide access, affordability, high value education, and a residential learning experience.

Comments from the Public:

VT Digger Reporter Lola Duffort asked if it was an option to not open one or more campuses next fall. Chancellor Spaulding replied that the VSCS is looking at all options and this is one option being considered. Ms. Duffort followed up by asking when the final decisions would be made by the Board and Chancellor Spaulding answered that he hopes to bring final recommendations to the Board on April 20, 2020.

Executive Session

At 1:41 p.m. Trustee Dickinson moved that the VSC Board of Trustees enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(F), for the purpose of receiving confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services; and 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B), for the purpose of discussing labor relations agreements with employees; and because premature general public knowledge of these discussions would place VSC at a substantial disadvantage. Trustee Dickinson further moved that the Board enter executive session pursuant to: 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(6) to discuss records exempt from the Vermont Public Records Act. The motion stated that the Board did not anticipate taking any action during executive session. Along with the members of the Board present at the meeting, the Board invited the Chancellor, the members of the Council of Presidents, the VSC General Counsel, Chief Academic

Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and Associate General Counsel to attend portions of the executive session.

Trustee Pieciak seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The Board exited the session at 3:44 p.m. and took no action.

Chair Hindes adjourned the meeting at 3:51 p.m.