

**Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Meeting held Saturday, March 19, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. via ZOOM – APPROVED**

The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees met on Saturday, March 19, 2022, via ZOOM.

Board members present: Lynn Dickinson (Chair), Janette Bombardier, Megan Cluver (Vice Chair), Ryan Cooney, David Durfee, Adam Grinold, Shirley Jefferson, Bill Lippert, Karen Luneau, Mary Moran, David Silverman, Shawn Tester (9:21 a.m.), Sue Zeller

Absent: Jim Masland

Presidents: Joyce Judy, John Mills, Tom Mauhs-Pugh, Pat Moulton

Chancellor's Office Staff: Donny Bazluke, Network/Security Analyst  
Kellie Campbell, Chief Information Officer  
Wilson Garland, Director of Transformation Projects  
Kathryn Levasseur, Director of Governmental & External Affairs  
Jen Porrier, Administrative Director  
Kathryn N. Santiago, Associate General Counsel & System Investigator  
Jen Porrier, Administrative Director  
Sharron Scott, Chief Financial/Operations Officer  
Toby Stewart, System Controller  
Patty Turley, General Counsel  
Littleton Tyler, Lead Financial Analyst  
Meg Walz, Director, Program Manager  
Sophie Zdatny, Chancellor  
Yasmine Ziesler, Chief Academic Officer

From the Colleges: Nolan Atkins, Provost, Northern Vermont University  
Sarah Chambers, Coordinator of Instructional Technology, Castleton University  
Laura Jakubowski, Chief Budget & Finance Officer, Castleton University  
Dave Rubin, Acting Dean of Administration, Vermont Technical College  
Beth Walsh, President, VSCUP, Northern Vermont University

1. Chair Dickinson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Approval of February 14, 2022 Meeting Minutes

**Trustee Zeller moved and Trustee Moran seconded the motion to approve the minutes from the February 14, 2022 meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.**

### 3. Report from Finance & Facilities Committee

Trustee Silverman shared that at the most recent committee meeting Chief Financial and Operating Officer Sharron Scott reviewed Pass 1.5 of the Budget Review. This was one more additional pass than usual due to the current transformation work. CFOO Scott then reviewed those slides which can be found on pages 11-23 [here](#).

### 4. Report from the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Trustee Jefferson reported that Student Diversity and Inclusion Task Force gave an update on the Anti Racism Pledge. The group has developed a website with the goal of having a soft launch of the pledge before the end of the current semester, with an official launch at the beginning of the next academic year. Additionally, the committee was presented with a draft of the VSCS Diversity Statement, which has been reviewed by the Council of Presidents. The VSCS DEI Transformation Work Group will be gathering additional feedback from the college communities and will seek to build support for the statement. Another process currently underway is updating the processes for data systems to ensure pronouns are stored correctly to avoid misgendering. Finally, the committee learned that the new Chief Human Resource Officer position, currently posted, will provide leadership and coordination with the institutions' Chief Diversity Officers and system leadership to implement strategies to build a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce.

### 5. Repeal and revision of selected VSC Board Policies

General Counsel Patty Turley described the process for periodically reviewing and revising the VSC policies. Ms. Turley provided brief descriptions of the changes made to six Board policies and the reason for repealing VSC policy 202 (no longer necessary).

**Trustee Moran moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the motion to repeal VSC Policy 202 and revise VSC Policies 204, 205, 401, 402, 404, and 503. The motion was approved unanimously.**

### 6. Legislative Update

Director of Governmental and External Affairs Katherine Levasseur provided a federal and state relations update. On the federal side, President Biden signed the FY2022 budget. This bill contains three Congressionally Designated Spending earmarks for the Vermont State Colleges. First, Northern Vermont University-Lyndon will receive \$250,000 to support student persistence and retention of first generation, low income, and students with disabilities. Second, the Community College of Vermont will receive \$4.5 million to support educational opportunities for incarcerated Vermonters and correction officers. Third, VSCS will receive \$3.7 million to support transformation in the areas of unified libraries, institutional research, and workforce development.

On the state side, the FY22 Budget Act was signed. This bill contains \$2.35 million in Critical Occupations Scholarship backfill funding to reimburse the VSC for this academic year. Over 1,038 VSC students received Critical Occupation Scholarships this year and enrollment doubled in Vermont Tech's RN to BSN nursing program. Further, nearly 4,000 Vermont learners accessed education and upskilling opportunities at the VSC at a free or further reduced cost thanks to these initiatives. The House Appropriations Committee has committed to a \$10 million

increase in the annual base appropriation for the VSC in the FY2023 budget, which is just \$2.5 million shy of the \$48 million annual appropriation recommended by the *Select Committee on the Future of Public Higher Education in Vermont*. If the FY2023 budget is approved, it will be the largest single-year base appropriation increase since the VSC was founded

The House Appropriations Committee is also recommending \$2.5 million dollars in one-time bridge funding to assist with our structural deficit.

Vermont Technical College President Pat Moulton shared that \$10 million is earmarked for a strategic partner of Vermont Tech and some of these funds can be used for additional equipment and operational needs at the Advanced Manufacturing Center.

#### 7. Transformation Update

Director of Transformation Projects Wilson Garland shared a transformation update focused on the vision for the campuses. That presentation can be found [here](#).

#### 8. Revisions to Board Calendar

Chancellor Zdatny discussed the addition of two Board meetings on April 11 and April 18. The Audit Committee meeting scheduled for April 11<sup>th</sup> will be deferred to another time and a Board meeting will be held in its place. The Board will meet to evaluate and discuss the VSU Presidential Candidates at this meeting. At the April 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Board will conduct final interviews with candidates and will select the final candidate. Additionally, the May 9<sup>th</sup> Board meeting will be delayed to May 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Trustee Luneau moved and Trustee Silverman seconded the motion to approve the revised Board calendar. The motion was approved unanimously.**

#### 9. Additional Business

There was no additional business.

#### 10. Comments from the public

Beth Walsh expressed appreciation for the progress being shared in the transformation updates as she is experiencing anxiety from students worried about their future ability to complete their classes in person as opposed to online. She also expressed excitement about the impending candidate visits and encouraged the Board to consider the diversity of the candidates, not just those who are a good fit.

#### 11. Executive Session

**At 10:09 a.m. Trustee Cluver moved that the VSCS Board of Trustees enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B) to discuss labor relations agreements with employees because premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body involved at a substantial disadvantage. Chair Cluver further moved the Board enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) to discuss the appointment and employment of public officers. Along with the members of the Board present at this meeting, the Board invited the Chancellor, the General Counsel, the Chief Financial and**

**Operating Officer, and the Director of Transformation Projects to attend. Trustee Moran seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

The Board exited executive session at 11:28 a.m.

**Chair Dickinson moved that the Board adopt the following Guiding Principles for collective bargaining negotiations:**

Vermont State Colleges respects the rights of employees to seek representation by a labor union, as provided in the Vermont State Employees Labor Relations Act. Trustees and management of the VSCS are committed to working collaboratively and in good faith with all union representatives, in support of Vermont public post-secondary education that is affordable, accessible, high-quality, and relevant. In our labor relations, we are guided by the following principles:

- Students and their Success are our Singular Goal.
- To focus on student success, we will:
  - foster a workplace that provides education for life and a lifetime;
  - be responsible stewards of our fiscal resources;
  - be a leader in our Vermont communities;
  - collaborate with our workforce for effective and efficient operations;
  - make well-informed decisions based on objective data, metrics, and evidence; and
  - seek to continuously improve the delivery of education for the Benefit of Vermont.

**Trustee Moran seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

Chair Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 11:31 a.m.