

Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Meeting held Wednesday, August 3, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom – APPROVED

The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees met on Wednesday, August 3, 2022 via Zoom

Board members present: Lynn Dickinson, Megan Cluver (Vice Chair), Janette Bombardier, David Durfee, Adam Grinold, Shirley Jefferson, Bill Lippert, Karen Luneau, Jim Masland (3:11 p.m.), Mary Moran, Perry Ragouzis, David Silverman, Shawn Tester, Sue Zeller

Presidents: Parwinder Grewal, Joyce Judy

Chancellor's Office Staff: Donny Bazluke, Network/Security Analyst
Kellie Campbell, Chief Information Officer
Kathrine Levasseur, Director of External and Government Affairs
Jen Porrier, Administrative Director
Sarah Potter, Chief Human Resources Officer
Kathryn Santiago, Associate General Counsel
Sharron Scott, Chief Financial/Operations Officer
Mike Stevens, Manager of Transformation Projects & Planning
Toby Stewart, Controller
Littleton Tyler, Lead Financial Analyst
Patty Turley, General Counsel
Meg Walz, Director, Project Management
Sophie Zdatny, Chancellor
Yasmine Ziesler, Chief Academic Officer

From the Colleges: Nolan Atkins, Provost, Northern Vermont University
Jae Basiliere, Chief Diversity Officer, Northern Vermont University
Sarah Chambers, Coordinator of Instructional Technology, Castleton University
Ana Gaillat, Dean of Academic Affairs, Vermont Technical College
Laura Jakubowski, Chief Budget & Finance Officer, Castleton University
Karen Madden, Director, Academic Support Services, Northern Vermont University
Maurice Ouimet, Dean of Enrollment, Castleton University
Denise Rhodes, Consultant, Finance & Registration Services, Castleton University
Dave Rubin, Dean of Administration, Vermont Technical College
Dannielle Spring, Chief Budget & Finance Officer, Northern Vermont University
Beth Walsh, President, VSCUP, Northern Vermont University

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

Chair Dickinson welcomed President Parwinder Grewal, as this was his first Board meeting since officially becoming President of Castleton University, Northern Vermont University, and Vermont Technical College, as well as the inaugural President of Vermont State University.

2. Public Comment

Chair Dickinson explained that considering the feedback that has been received, the Board has moved the Public Comment section for Board meetings, including Board Committee meetings, up to the top of the agenda. This will enable attendees to share their feedback with the trustees before the Board takes action. To facilitate public participation in Board meetings Chair Dickinson approved a set of Rules for Public Comment. These can be found [here](#) at pages 4-5 in the meeting materials. These are also posted on the VSC website, along with the Board's meeting schedule.

Beth Walsh expressed appreciation for the increased opportunity to provide comment, the ability to access meeting materials prior the meeting to prepare her comments, and her hopes to be able to provide comments throughout meetings. Ms. Walsh then expressed concern over the phrase "free for all" and asked that it be removed. Chancellor Zdatny clarified that portion came directly from a quote in the Secretary of State's guidance for public meetings. It was agreed that the Rules would be revised to remove this portion of the quoted language.

3. Approval of June 16, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Chair Dickinson noted the need for a correction in the June 16, 2022 minutes under item 3.

Trustee Lippert moved and Trustee Jefferson seconded the motion to amend the June 16, 2022 minutes as mentioned. The motion was approved unanimously.

Trustee Jefferson moved and Trustee Silverman seconded the motion to approve the amended minutes from the June 16, 2022 meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Report from the Executive Committee

Chair Dickinson provided an overview of the July 18th Executive Committee meeting, where an evaluation of the Chancellor was conducted. The evaluation was very positive and the Chancellor was thanked for her leadership and assembling a strong transformation team. Additionally, the Committee discussed and agreed that the system should re-join the Association of Governing Boards. This will provide the trustees with additional resources relating to best practices for governing boards.

5. Report from the DEI Committee

- a. Motion/Vote on possible name change for DEI Committee

Trustee Jefferson provided a report from the DEI Committee meeting held earlier in the day, including the appointment of Dr. Jae Basiliere as the inaugural Chief Diversity Officer of Vermont State University. The Committee heard from Chief Human Resources Officer Sarah Potter on the incorporation of DEI into the hiring practices for Vermont State University. Dr. Basiliere provided an update from the VSC DEI Transformation Work Group, which seeks to ensure DEI is incorporated into transformation work. The Student Diversity and Inclusion Task Force is looking for new members and new opportunities to expand and connect with the community. Finally, the DEI committee decided to defer a decision on whether to change the name of their committee pending further discussion and exploration.

Chair Dickinson then congratulated Trustee Jefferson on being named the Vice President for Community Engagement and Public Affairs at Vermont Law and Graduate School.

6. Motion/Vote to approve grant from a congressionally directed spending request

Chair Dickinson shared that the Vermont State Colleges was awarded three congressionally directed spending requests. The first request, sponsored by Senator Leahy, provides \$3.7 million in funding over three years to support the system-wide transformation of workforce development, institutional research, and libraries. This is the request for which Board approval is being sought.

The second request, sponsored by Senator Sanders, is for \$4.5 million to support educational opportunities for incarcerated Vermonters and corrections officers through the Community College of Vermont. This will be submitted to the Finance and Facilities Committee for its review before coming to the full Board for approval.

The third request for \$250,000, sponsored by Rep. Welch, is for student support services at NVU-Lyndon. Given the size of the award, this does not need Board approval

Trustee Zeller moved and Trustee Jefferson seconded the motion to approve receipt of the congressionally directed spending request for workforce development, institutional research, and libraries. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. Transformation update from the Chancellor

Chancellor Zdatny gave an update on the progress of the ongoing transformation work. The progress since the June 16th Board meeting includes the appointment on July 1st of Parwinder Grewal as President of CU, NVU and Vermont Tech. He will assume the presidency of the new University next July pending the approval of NECHE. VSCS received formal notice of its acceptance of its substantive change proposal from NECHE and will submit two progress reports in the coming months – the first on September 1st and the second in March 2023. NECHE will also conduct a focused evaluation of the new university in Fall 2023. Chancellor Zdatny shared that hiring for the new university is ongoing, with the current focus on filling the leadership positions first. The goal is to have interim leaders in place by August. The Chancellor then went on to provide detailed updates, including information from each of the core transformation teams. Transformation updates can be found [here](#).

8. Discussion with the Presidents regarding presentation of Presidents' Reports to the Board

Chair Dickinson invited the Board and the Presidents to share their thoughts on what kinds of information the trustees would like to receive from the Presidents, and for the Presidents to share how the trustees can show their support for the institutions. Community College of Vermont President Joyce Judy started by asking the Trustees what they find helpful to hear from the Presidents. Several Trustees responded with requests including uplifting stories about students, the risks confronting the institutions, and reports framed around the institutions' strategic priorities and key performance indicators so that the trustees might better understand the bigger picture. President Grewal shared that his reports may evolve over time as transformation progresses, but they will include enrollment reports, reports on new initiatives and reporting on key performance indicators and priorities. Further discussion ensued surrounding the current strategic priorities and the possibility of reevaluating those given the current transformation work. Establishing a standardized format for the reports was also suggested.

9. Annual Board Trainings:

- a. VSC Policy 311, *Non-discrimination and Prevention of Harassment and Related Unprofessional Conduct*
- b. VSC Policy 311-A, *Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking*
- c. VSC Policy 316, *Protection of Minors and Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect*

Associate General Counsel Kathryn Santiago and General Counsel Patty Turley presented this annual training to the trustees on Title IX and VSC Policies 311, 311A and 316. These policies cover discrimination, harassment, sexual violence, and the protection of minors. This training is critically important to ensure that trustees are familiar with VSC policies, are aware of their obligation to report any conduct in violation of these policies of which they become aware, and to whom such reports should be made. These materials can be found [here](#).

10. Additional Business

There was no additional business.

11. Executive session

At 3:02 p.m. Trustee Cluver moved that the VSCS Board of Trustees enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) to discuss the appointment and employment of a public officer. She further moved that the Board 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. Along with the members of the Board present at this meeting, the Board invited the Chancellor, the Chief Financial and Operating Officer, and the General Counsel to attend executive session. Trustee Jefferson seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

The Board exited executive session at 3:35 p.m. and took no action.

Chair Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 3:36 p.m.