

Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Meeting held Monday, January 22, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom – APPROVED

The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees met on Monday, January 22, 2024, via Zoom

Board members present: Lynn Dickinson, Betsy Bloomer, Megan Cluver, David Durfee, Bob Flint, Shirley Jefferson, Bill Lippert, Karen Luneau, Perry Ragouzis, David Silverman, Shawn Tester, Sue Zeller

Absent: Janette Bombardier, Jim Masland

Presidents: David Bergh, Joyce Judy

Chancellor's Office Staff: Beth Mauch, Chancellor
Jen Porrier, Administrative Director
Drake Turner, Director of Governmental & External Affairs
Yasmine Ziesler, Special Assistant to the Chancellor

Shared Services: Donny Bazluke, Network/Security Analyst
Kellie Campbell, Chief Information Officer
Sarah Chambers, Director, Learning Technologies
Helen Linda, Business & Process Analyst
Sarah Potter, Chief Human Resources Officer
Kathryn Santiago, Associate General Counsel
Sharron Scott, Chief Financial & Operating Officer
Toby Stewart, Controller
Patty Turley, General Counsel
Meg Walz, Director, Project Management

From the Colleges: Nolan Atkins, Provost, VTSU
Kelley Beckwith, Vice President, Student Success, VTSU
Mary Droege, Faculty, VTSU
Barb Flathers, Executive Assistant to the President, VTSU
Nicole Mace, Dean of Administration, CCV
Maurice Ouimet, Vice President, Admission & Enrollment, VTSU
Sarah Truckle, Vice President, Business Operations, VTSU

From the Public: Mary Collins
Cathy Printon

1. Vice Chair Cluver called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m.
2. Public Comment

Mary Collins offered a comment voicing concern about the possible censoring of a comment she made on the VTSU social media pages.

Mary Droege shared her frustration with how Administrative Optimization 2.0 decisions were handled.

Chair Dickinson thanked the commenters and reminded anyone who had further thoughts to share to please email them.

3. Approval of November 13, 2023, November 17, 2023, November 29, 2023 Minutes

Trustee Zeller moved and Trustee Bloomer seconded the motion to approve the November 13, 2023, November 17, 2023, November 29, 2023 meeting minutes. The motion was approved with two abstentions.

4. Report from the Finance & Facilities Committee

Trustee Silverman shared information on the Claire Fisher Heist and Mae Niles Scott Nursing Scholarship Endowment, including that preference, per the trust, shall be given to those students who plan to pursue a nursing career in the Northeast Kingdom. Further information can be found [here](#) on pages 18-20.

Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the motion to approve the Claire Fisher Heist and Mae Niles Scott Nursing Scholarship Endowment. The motion was approved unanimously.

Trustee Silverman referenced VTSU's proposed rates for Tuition, Fees, Room, and Board for academic year 2024-2025. He noted the proposal increases tuition and fees by 3.5%, eliminates the separate orientation fee, and eliminates lab fees attached to specific courses. The comprehensive fee and tuition have been adjusted to reflect these changes.

Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Jefferson seconded the motion to approve Resolution 2023-015: 2024-2025 VTSU Tuition, Fees, Room & Board. The motion was approved unanimously.

Trustee Silverman shared information about the new fee for one-to-one devices (technology) for those students who lack a device. The fee, estimated at \$1,258, split over two semesters in the student's first year with the university, assures that each student has access to the necessary technology to be successful in a hybrid university. Students with documented financial hardship will be eligible to receive a loaner device.

Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Zeller seconded the motion to approve Resolution 2023-016: 2024-2025 One-to-One Device (Technology) Fee. The motion was approved unanimously.

Trustee Silverman reviewed proposed revisions to policy 403-A, which reduces the strategic initiative reserve from 4% to 2% of the total available general fund appropriation, gives direct control to the Board to use unspent strategic initiatives funds from the prior fiscal year for

another purpose, and caps an institution's annual proportional change in appropriation to no more than 1% per year. Details can be found [here](#) on pages 26-28.

Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Zeller seconded the motion to approve revised Policy 403-A: Allocation of State General and Capital Fund Appropriation. The motion was approved unanimously.

Trustee Silverman concluded by sharing other matters covered at the December 11 committee meeting including (1) a review of the first pass of the FY24 shared services and chancellor's office budgets, (2) an update on the Vermont State University Master Plan, (3) an update on the ERP assessment update, and (4) a brief review of first quarter results.

5. Report from the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Trustee Jefferson provided a report from the January 8th meeting of the DEI committee. The committee welcomed the new VTSU Chief Diversity Officer, Dr. Oyibo Afoaku; they heard an educational presentation from Mary Brodsky, CCV's Dean of People and Culture, entitled "Calling-In vs. Calling-Out" based on the works of Loretta Ross; and Trustee Perry Ragouzis introduced the anticipated formation of a VSC Student Association Diversity and Equity Committee which is expected during Spring 2024.

6. Report from the Education, Personnel and Student Life Committee

Trustee Cluver provided an overview of the January 8th meeting of the EPSL committee which included a CCV-VTSU Transfer Pathways progress update; an update on Vermont State Center for Agriculture and Food Entrepreneurship (CAFÉ); an update on VSC Student Association Constitution revision; an update on VTSU student government, and a brief presentation on AI and pedagogy at CCV and VTSU. VTSU Provost Atkins then provided a summary of the addendum to the new academic program proposal in Restorative Justice, details of which can be found [here](#) on pages 30-64.

Trustee Jefferson moved and Trustee Flint seconded the motion to approve the proposal for a new academic program in Restorative Justice. The motion was approved unanimously.

Trustee Ragouzis shared updates underway at the VSC Student Government Association as it condenses from representing five institutions to two institutions. The group will be sharing a schedule of the VSCSA's meeting times with the Board.

7. Report from the Audit & Risk Management Committee

Trustee Zeller reviewed the recommendation from the January 15th meeting of Audit and Risk Management Committee to hire Withum as the independent auditors for the Vermont State Colleges for Fiscal years 2024 through 2027. A thorough, open, request for proposal process was conducted that resulted in four highly qualified auditing firms. After evaluation of organization structure, audit approach, firm qualifications, and price, it was recommended to rehire Withum for this work. To maintain independence and integrity in this service, Withum will be changing audit partners from Kieth Goldie to Zach Laflash.

Trustee Zeller moved and Trustee Tester seconded the motion to approve Withum as the Independent Auditors for 2024-2027. The motion was approved unanimously.

8. Approval of revisions to Board of Trustees Handbook

General Counsel Patty Turley reviewed the proposed updates to the Board of Trustees Handbook which can be found [here](#) on pages 66-76. These changes include updated language reflecting the shift from five institutions to two institutions, as well as updated links.

Trustee Zeller moved and Trustee Durfee seconded the motion to approve the revisions to the Board of Trustees Handbook. The motion was approved unanimously.

9. Report from the Presidents

CCV President Joyce Judy shared that today is the first day of spring semester and noted a 3% increase in enrollment from last spring with nearly five thousand students enrolled in 650 classes across the state. Additionally, CCV is running 119 courses in high schools and tech centers – an increase from 92 last spring. President Judy then shared that Katie Mobely, Dean of Enrollment for CCV, Maurice Ouimet, VP of Admissions & Enrollment for VTSU, and Jay Jacobs, UVM’s VP of Enrollment, testified before House Senate and House Education committees, coming together for the first time to speak about higher education in Vermont. Finally, President Judy shared that CCV is about to move into new quarters in the St. Johnsbury Fairbanks Museum’s new annex. The ribbon cutting will be on February 15th and all are invited. Trustee Luneau requested a report from CCV at the next Board meeting regarding the number of high schools participating in dual enrollment and how many high school and tech centers there are in Vermont that are working in cooperation with CCV.

VTSU President David Bergh reported that Administrative Optimization plans are being implemented this semester and Academic Optimization 2.0 has also been finalized and is being implemented and targeted for work over the coming months in preparation for a full Board review in April. Additionally, VTSU is working on a list of institution events and opportunities for trustee engagement at the campuses which should be out shortly.

10. Government Affairs Update

Drake Turner, Director of Governmental and External Affairs, gave a brief report on the first four weeks of the Legislative session. The Chancellor has spent time in the State House over the past two weeks meeting legislators and introducing herself to some key committees. She has also been introduced to the Lieutenant Governor, President Pro Tem of the Senate, and Speaker of the House. Introductory testimony was also provided to the Senate Education and Senate Institutions committees. Upcoming, introductory testimony will be provided to the House Education committee, and the House Appropriations committee in early February. More testimony to key committees is expected to be scheduled in the coming weeks. The Governor’s budget address will be coming in the next day.

11. Report from the Chancellor

Chancellor Beth Mauch shared some background about herself and her extensive experience in higher education. One of her passions in higher education is removing barriers (academic, social/emotional and financial) for students who might not otherwise attend college. Chancellor Mauch expressed her enthusiasm to be working with the VSC on their goal of transforming to ensure access to high quality education for all Vermonters. She closed by mentioning how impressed she is with the support the VSC receives from the Vermont Legislature and looks forward to working with them.

12. Report from the Executive Committee

Chair Dickinson shared that the Executive Committee met on January 16th for an introductory meeting with new Chancellor and concentrated on outlining goals and priorities for the coming year.

13. Nominating Committee appointments

Chair Dickinson described the current slate of Nominating Committee members and asked if other Trustees wanted to serve on the Nominating Committee. Hearing none, Chair Dickinson called for a motion to reappoint the current slate of members to the Nominating Committee.

Trustee Jefferson moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the motion to reappoint Trustee Bombardier, Trustee Dickinson and Trustee Lippert to the Nominating Committee. The motion was approved unanimously.

14. Additional Business

Trustee Silverman requested a follow-up on the possible censorship issue raised during the public comment section of this meeting. President Bergh agreed there would be follow-up.

Chair Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 2:26 p.m.