

WESTERN NEVADA COLLEGE

Meeting Minutes for the Vacancy in the Office of the President Open Forum and Joint Meeting of the: Western Nevada College Institutional Advisory Council, Western Nevada College Foundation, Associated Students of Western Nevada

Date and Time:

Monday, September 18, 2017 — 11:00 a.m.

Location:

Western Nevada College, 2201 W. College Parkway, Carson City, NV 89703, Reynolds Building, Room 102

Video conference from Location to:

Western Nevada College – Fallon, 160 Campus Way, Fallon, NV 89406, Piñon Hall, Room 202

Call to Order of the Joint Meeting of the Western Nevada College Institutional Advisory Council, Western Nevada College Foundation and Associated Students of Western Nevada (the “Institution Groups”).

Members present from the Institutional Groups:

- Tania Covarrubias, ASWN President
- Rochelle Tisdale, WNC Foundation Board Member
- Michelle Joy, WNC IAC Member
- Rob Hooper, WNC IAC Chair
- Bus Scharmann, WNC IAC Member (via Fallon IAV)

1. Public Comment

Information Only

Darla Dodge, WNC Business Officer, asked for public comment in Carson City. Deni French offered thanks for the opportunity to attend the meeting and for this level of transparency. Darla Dodge asked for public comment in Fallon; there was no public comment in Fallon.

2. Discussion on WNC President Search

Information Only

Darla Dodge read the agenda item description, reminding attendees not to state names of potential candidates for either acting or interim president and instead to email suggestions to the Chancellor after the meeting.

Chair Kevin Page said the meeting was an opportunity for the chancellor to receive as much feedback as possible from WNC's faculty and students as well as the community before the chancellor makes a recommendation to the Board of Regents regarding the vacancy in the office of the president.

Chancellor Thom Reilly said the thoughts of faculty, staff and community are of great interest regarding whether there should be an acting or interim president and what type of individual the college and community would be looking for in that position.

Chief of Staff Dean Gould explained the process for filling the vacancy in the office of the president as well as the difference between an acting president and an interim president.

Vice Chancellor of Community Colleges Nate Mackinnon praised the faculty, staff and students of the college and members of the community for attending the meeting.

Chief of Staff Gould explained the role of the regents in the process, saying that Chair Page will appoint four to six members of the Board of Regents to form the search committee. Chair Page will also select advisory members who play a very important role to the process. Although advisory members do not vote, the search committee takes the input of the advisory members seriously. All the meetings will be open meetings, so anyone can attend.

Vice Chair Jason Geddes added names of people to be considered for the advisory committee can be submitted straight to Chancellor Reilly.

Bob Whitcomb asked what the process is for determining whether there will be an acting or interim president and how that is decided.

Chair Page said the information solicited now will be part of the consideration made by the Board on whether there will be an acting or interim president.

Chief of Staff Gould opened the meeting for discussion and reminded attendees to state their name for the record before speaking.

Deni French asked for the search to be national and expressed a desire for those considered for the position to be rooted in the community, have a Ph.D. in Education and be a people person.

Maxine Nietz hopes for potential candidates who are interested in a mission of supporting our industrial and manufacturing base and making this a unified kind of campus, bringing back sports, music and drama, and providing an enriched life on campus.

Lorenzo Vincente, a representative of the Latino cohort, is looking for an interim who is a great leader, who is open-minded and interested in helping lead diverse communities in their achievements.

Tania Covarrubias, ASWN President, read a statement on behalf of ASWN supporting the current leadership and stating there was no need for a national search.

Lupe Ramirez supported an interim president, someone who is a strong supporter of the Latino population. Lupe explained the Latino cohort program needs a lot of support from a president.

Anne Hansen said it is time for a national search even though there are wonderful people at the college and that there hasn't been a national search in a very long time.

Angela Holt, from the Adult Language & Literacy program on campus, offered support for the appointment of an interim president: someone who has an understanding of the college and community and the needs of a non-traditional student including the transition into career pathways.

Rob Hooper, WNC IAC, said Western is on the right track and is delivering the right mix. Rob Hooper added that the college turned a corner under the direction of the previous president and he would hate to see that get disrupted. Hooper offered support for selecting an interim president who knows the college and community and builds on the results the college has been getting. Hooper does not support bringing in an outsider who would change the direction of the college.

Chair Page asked Rob Hooper how the IAC is working. Rob Hooper replied that is going well, with good two-way communication and that the WNC IAC is doing good tactical work in developing the pipeline.

Vice Chancellor Mackinnon asked to clarify that if the board chose to do a national search, that would not preclude anyone from the college or community-at-large from applying, and only the acting president would be ineligible to apply. Chief of Staff Gould said yes. Vice Chancellor

Deni French said he misunderstood the role of the interim president.

Chief of Staff Gould clarified that the whole point of an interim president is that the board identifies an individual who they believe has the qualities and qualifications necessary and the board gives that person one to three years to prove themselves. At any time, the board can either make that person permanent president or they can decide to do a national search. An acting president is not intended to be the permanent president.

Deni French said the national search does not exclude anyone from the community and also allows for someone from here and now living elsewhere to possibly return.

Vice Chair Geddes said the recent search for the GBC president is a good example of that; the GBC president had ties to Elko and wanted to return.

Cathy Fulkerson, Director of Institutional Research at WNC and GBC said GBC really benefitted from having an acting president appointed internally and kept the institution stable while there was a national search going on. People from within Western can apply for the national search.

Rochelle Tisdale, WNC Foundation and an administrator for one of the partnering schools, said she would like to see an interim appointed to keep all the options open. WNC has built a lot of momentum and it would be nice to have someone in the meantime who knows what we've been working toward.

Craig Robinson asked for clarification on how many times there was a national search conducted when an interim was appointed, where the board decided the interim ought to run against others.

Chief of Staff Gould said it doesn't work that way and that if the interim isn't made permanent, then the board does a search.

Craig Robinson then asked if there is a history of not making the interim president the permanent president.

Vice Chair Geddes said that code was changed a few years ago and we used to always appoint an interim and there was no option to appoint an acting president, so it is a little different now.

Craig Robinson asked if it was highly likely that if an interim president were appointed they would become permanent president.

Vice Chair Geddes said it is likely, but there are instances where the number two person on campus seemed to be a really good candidate for the position, but they weren't in actuality, so a search was launched.

Chair Page added that it is not an automatic but if the board feels comfortable enough to bring that person forward, then the board feels they could be president.

Susan Priest, full time professor teaching college success and philosophy, said she wanted everyone at the college to hear a faculty perspective. Priest is on the accreditation committee and wants board to know we have accreditors coming out in 2018. Priest said she feels very strongly that WNC needs an acting president and a national search; WNC deserves a national search. Priest wanted everyone to know what a huge deal it is that WNC is going through an accreditation cycle.

Bus Scharmann (in Fallon) said he was an employee at WNC for 35 years and since he's been gone things have changed quite a bit. Scharmann is on the WNC advisory council. Scharmann said he believes an acting president should be appointed and a national search conducted. Scharmann said he is sensitive to what Rob Hooper said about WNC moving in the right direction and it would be nice to have someone come in who can pick up and go from there. Scharmann commented that he felt giving up Mineral and Pershing counties in WNC's service area was a mistake and he hopes that changes. Scharmann added he hoped whoever is on the selection committee would make it clear to candidates that WNC is moving in the right direction.

Rob Hooper said he appreciated Scharmann's comments, and explained he'd rather have an interim than acting person because if we make the best person within WNC acting president, they are taken out of the running for the position. Hooper felt the best of both worlds would be to put the best WNC person forward as interim and keep them forward. Hooper also expressed concern for how a national search would impact the college's budget. Hooper asked the panel if the best person could be put forward and kept forward and can a broad search be done in a budget-sensitive fashion.

Chair Page replied if an acting president is put in, that signals a national search would be conducted and if an interim is selected, that person would be in there and the board could do a national search, but that is not automatic. Chair Page added if an acting is appointed, that person cannot apply for the position. Chair Page said the cost would probably be in the range of \$85-\$100,000 at the minimum and the cost is borne by the college.

Chief of Staff Gould added that if an interim president is appointed, it is more than likely that person will become permanent president and the only time the national search would occur is if the interim president was not offered a permanent position. Chief of Staff Gould added that the reason the policy doesn't allow for an acting president to apply for the position is that it hurts the national search because potential candidates feel they can't compete with the person already in the position and the board almost always recommends a search consultant be hired in order to receive as broad a pool as possible for the position and it is important to get a search consultant who knows community colleges.

Elizabeth Tattersall, faculty member at WNC, said she supports an acting president and while Tattersall does think good things are happening here, she feels not having a national search limits the options.

Bob Whitcomb, professor at WNC, said he has huge issues that WNC is an institution of "actings" and "interims." Whitcomb explained WNC has an acting president, acting vice president, acting academic director etc., so the college is already in that realm of temporary people filling positions. Whitcomb said he believes doing a national search is critical so that look for best possible candidate in a national capacity bringing in new ideas and concepts. Whitcomb also asked what the plan is for filling the other positions, adding the college doesn't have any regular vice presidents right now. Whitcomb added that the board will ultimately select who the interim person is and doesn't mean the interim president would be from here; the Board will find the best person from wherever and put them in. Whitcomb said the college needs some stable leadership brought in at the highest level from a national search.

Chair Page said Mark is Officer in Charge and not Acting. Chair Page added the advisory board is there to provide input to the Board and that input is very important. Chair Page said it is not at all likely the Board would appoint someone from UNLV, adding that they would look at someone who is familiar with the college and the community.

Maxine Nietz said she is in favor of a national search. Nietz asked if either an acting or interim president could be selected from within WNC or the NSHE community, and wanted to confirm that the question is whether there will definitely be a search or there may be a search.

Chair Page explained again the difference between selecting an Acting President and Interim President and how each option relates to a national search.

Chancellor Reilly said he is looking for recommendations as to whether an acting or interim president should be appointed.

Maxine Nietz reiterated her recommendation is for an acting president.

Judith Cordia, Director of Nursing & Allied Health at WNC, is looking for a president who will fight for this college, is respected and listened to, experienced more than a year, capable of raising money, a dreamer and a thinker. Cordia said a careful search needs to occur.

Susan Howland, Director of Computing Services, asked when a national search would start should an acting president be appointed.

Chief of Staff Gould replied that the goal would be to have a permanent president in place by July 1, adding that the search consultants would want five or six months for the process to play out. Chief of Staff Gould went on to explain the process, saying there will be a series of meetings most of which would be open meetings. The interviews with the semi-finalists would not be open because most candidates do not want to be publicly recognized until they are at the point of being serious contenders; the chancellor and the search consultants would be the only people interviewing the semi-finalists. Sometime in the winter, most likely, the finalists would be brought ins for interviews and would be open meetings with the search committee and advisory members. Once the group came to a consensus, the Board would call a special meeting to appoint a new president.

Vice Chair Geddes added that the process would launch day after an acting president were appointed, should it go that route.

Susan Howland added that it is important with accreditation coming up and the new programs WNC has going, that the college have some consistency.

Erich Holcombe asked to clear up a rumor that was circulating as to whether or not there were plans to combine TMCC and WNC.

Chair Page said no.

JW Lazzari, Director of Financial Assistance, asked if the Board was concerned that there are two presidential searches going on at the same time and that one search might suffer because of that.

Chair Page said no and added that the search committees are made up of four to six regents, so there are plenty of regents to handle two searches.

Vice Chancellor Mackinnon added that the pool of candidates for the two institutions would not be the same because WNC and CSN are two very different colleges.

Susan Howland said she was concerned about the price tag for a national search; fiscally we should look at an interim situation.

Jack Piirainen expressed his support for an interim president with a one- to three-year trial period because WNC has a lot going on during that period and Piirainen does not want to see progress halted.

Craig Robinson, President of Admin faculty senate and EH&S guy, said administrative faculty senate supported a national search and encourage qualified people from campus to apply; administrative faculty senate did not want to see the applicant pool restricted.

Anne Hansen asked if there was a way the college could get help with funding for a national search knowing that we are so strapped at this college.

Kevin Burns, who runs the Veterans Resource Center and the prison program and is also adjunct faculty, gave his support for an interim president who can maintain the current direction. Burns was concerned that a national search would have the potential to bring in a person who would take the college in a different direction.

Jamie McNinch, Director of Information & Marketing, said she has confidence in the current leadership, and offered qualities she is looking for in a president: innovative, progressive, willing to make an investment in infrastructure, has a vision for how we can grow, can build relationships in the community and be a face of the college.

Darla Dodge asked if there was a time limit on the meeting.

Chief of Staff Gould replied not really, although there is another meeting scheduled for 1:30 p.m.

Chancellor Reilly added that there was time to ensure everyone who wanted to speak would have time to do so.

Scott Morrison, who started at WNC in 2006 as math faculty and is currently interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, said that there were changes made four years ago, not the influx of money, that allowed the college to grow: it was a difference in looking at what our abilities

were and leadership decisions which allowed for changes to take place. Morrison said his biggest concern is putting someone in place who sees the value of WNC's various initiatives which are making an impact for students and the community and have led to WNC being a confident institution. Morrison said whoever is leading the college, whether acting or interim, needs to be someone who will look at how the college did things like Jump Start and increasing online enrollment by 44%, and someone who recognizes it comes at a cost to the institution and acknowledges that sustainability and infrastructure need to be addressed.

Maxine Nietz said she believed those inside the institution wanted an interim president so there would be the least amount of "push-pull"

Inside institution and least amount of push pull is best for them; a lot of talent out there.

John Kinkella, Dean of Student Services, Latino community are pretty firm on interim to continue direction. Committed to diversity and success of those students – top priority for a long time and keep going.

Darla Dodge asked if there were other comments or questions.

Chancellor Reilly reminded everyone to submit names for interim or acting directly to him.

Darla Dodge said the contact information would be sent out all college by Deb Conrad.

3. Public Comment

Information Only

Darla Dodge asked for any further comment in Carson and Fallon.

Chair Page thanked the attendees and said their opinions and time were valued and to keep up the good work.

No public comment in Fallon.

4. New Business

Information Only

Chief of Staff Gould asked if there was any new business; there was none.

Meeting adjourned at 12:11 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Deb Conrad, Assistant to the President.