

**NORTHLAND PIONEER COLLEGE**  
**Community Outreach, White Mountain Campus**  
Meeting Minutes

*October 23, 2013*

*Present:* Thia Ebert-Loomis, Mel West, Joel Weeks, Steve North, Roger Williams, LuAnne Frost, Ron Wheeler, Bryan Savage, Clay Wood, Daryl Seymore, Greg Schalow  
Jeanne Swarhout, Blaine Hatch, Mark Vest, Leslie Wasson, Susan Olsen, Karen Hall, Marcia Bennett

*Meeting Location* 1001 W. Deuce of Clubs, Show Low AZ  
Aspen Center Room 111

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**I. Overview of Campus, Programs and Services, Susan Olsen**

- Programs at our campus: Cosmetology, Emergency Medical Services, Nursing and Nursing Assistant and also all General Education.
- Also have Small Business Development Center, Advising, Disability Resource Coordinator, GED Testing, NAU Northlands, and the Talon Gallery
- Off-campus we have Welding, Automotive and Metal Art.

**II. Summary of Current Strategic Plan, Jeanne Swarhout**

- We have a three year strategic plan that's a rolling plan. We review every year and update to move it out another year.
- We hold these community meetings to see what the community needs so we can plan it into our strategic plan and therefore our budget.
- Our focus is on student retention and persistence. Student push is for job ready programs. That's where a lot of our emphasis is, the core priority of our Strategic Plan.
- Have to be more practical with our resources. Trying to make our Strategic Plan more focused and connected.
- Current Strategic Plan is online.
- Budget to the Strategic Plan. Strategic Plan is tightly linked to accreditation standards.

**III. Budget and Facilities, Blaine Hatch**

- Three main sources of revenue:
  - Property Tax is the largest source.
  - State Aid accounts for one-third of funding. Has declined but we expect it to stay stable.
  - Tuition we try to maintain as low as possible. It accounts for about 12% of our revenue stream.
- We connect budgeting directly to the Strategic Plan.
- In the Strategic Plan we have a district wide facility plan. We have multiple major needs identified at this campus. Currently we have an approach to capital funding projects that does not include money other than what we are able to accumulate. We don't anticipate bonding and we don't have any long-term debt and don't feel like this is the environment to incur long-term debt.
- Looking at WMC, we may be adding:
  - Allied Health Facility
  - Skills Center
  - Remodeling and improving the Learning Center

- Not sure where we'll be starting
- Roger Williams: What is your current budget?
  - Blaine: Our General Fund is \$24 million. Incorporates most of our major activities. Total is about \$34 million.
- Daryl Seymore: How many students at this campus?
  - Mark Vest: System wide we have 3500-3600 students this Fall. Generally WMC accounts from about one-third of that, approximately 850-1000 students.
- Jeanne Swarthout: State has never funded community college for bricks and mortar because they usually do bonds.
  - Anything we do now has to come out of Maintenance and Operations. We have a process of moving funds here annually so we are able to purchase the equipment and buildings that we need. If we don't, our students don't get the state-of-the-art equipment that they need to be a success.
  - Talking with the board about unique tuition plans to make it easier for our students.
- Roger Williams: What is your retention rate?
  - Mark Vest: Approximately 51% which is average for community colleges.
- Roger Williams: Being job ready are you putting more focus on vocational training?
  - Mark Vest: We are guided by our students. Most of our students are focused on direct employment programs so about three-fourths of our students are in vocational programs.
- Greg Schalow: Because of budget issues, we've had to eliminate three CTE programs (BR School) because of funding.
- Daryl Seymore: Have we looked at Culinary Arts as a program?
  - Mark Vest: We've tried it twice. Enrollment collapsed both times. It's economy driven so when the economy turns it collapses.
  - Jeanne Swarthout: SBDC is helping to form a Restaurant Association. Once they get it set up and in the groove we may see more on this.

#### **IV. Highlights in Instruction, Mark Vest**

- This campus, more than any other, is focusing on Healthcare. We have a strong Nursing program and last year we rolled out the Medical Assistant program. Nursing program is working on a Direct Care Worker program. We are currently in a consortium application grant with a number of other community colleges from the Midwest and Southwest and if we receive that grant we will use it to begin a Nurse Navigator program as well.
- Agreement with NAU for co-classes to get RN at NPC and BSN from NAU. Also looking at an additional Nursing Cooperative agreement with Grand Canyon.
- Revising a pathway for a Paramedic to RN program.
- Long-term facility plan for this campus is an Allied Health building which would give us an opportunity to look at things that we simply don't have the physical lab space for right now. We've thought about a Respiratory Therapy program because there is so much overlap in the equipment used for Nursing. It would be easy for us to do if we have more physical space.
- Last year for the first time in twelve years we ran a Law Enforcement Academy. We're looking at a short term, full time academy in the Spring. We had thirteen graduates from the first Law Enforcement graduating class, twelve actively looked for jobs and found them in Navajo and Apache Counties. This is a win for students, win for us and a win for law enforcement.
- Ron Wheeler: Made a huge difference for us.
- Police Departments want local residents so they will stay here instead of leaving at the first offer from a valley PD.

- GED is changing January 1. Nationally, Pearson Products has the contract to take it over. The price will double. Test will be based on Common Core. It will all be computerized. Any previous work on GEDs will become invalid on December 31<sup>st</sup>. We're doubling up on GED test offerings between now and December. Very different testing environment come January 1<sup>st</sup>. In some ways it will be more student friendly because of the convenience of taking the test whenever they like. May also be more challenging because they will need to have adequate computer skills. This will force them to be introduced to computers which will be good in the long run because secondary education is moving that way too. If you know anyone who needs a GED encourage them to come in before January.
- Nationwide there has been a push for online learning. We haven't resisted it but we haven't jumped into it either because many of the Navajo and Apache county residents don't have access to broadband Internet or don't have computer access whatsoever. We're doing a lot for online learning but we're also pushing our distance education. Using model classrooms. Has increased the General Education offerings here at the White Mountain Campus by about 20%. We have another grant to add another model classroom at each campus this year. It's not ideal but it's the best way we can serve our broad service area.

#### **V. Recommendations and Comments from Community Members**

- Roger Williams: What are your demographics? Where do your students come from?
  - Mark Vest: Campuses in Show Low, Snowflake/Taylor, Holbrook and Winslow. Centers in Whiteriver, Polacca, Kayenta (Kayenta asked us to serve them), and Apache County with Centers in Springerville and St. Johns. About a third of our students are here at the White Mountain Campus. The other three campuses vary but are generally 10-13% at each. The rest is spread kind of equally between the Centers. We're actually at about 50 different locations in Navajo and Apache County doing either Adult Basic Education or Early Childhood Development onsite in Head Start classrooms. That's spread mostly over the Navajo Nation. That doesn't count any of the High Schools where Dual Enrollment is taking place.
- Roger Williams: What type of educational facility do you have in Whiteriver?
  - Mark Vest: We basically outgrew Whiteriver the day we opened. We now have three modular buildings there. We have a Center Manager and a full-time Academic Adviser. We have a Nursing Assistant program and a Science lab there. We're limited to using adjunct faculty. We run the construction program, Adult Basic Education classes. They have the same distance education classrooms as other locations so they have access to the general education offerings. We run business and computer courses there too. We also have a library which is the only public Internet access in Whiteriver so it gets a lot of community use.
- Roger Williams: How much vocational education is in Whiteriver?
  - Mark Vest: We haven't even discussed our Business and Industry Training which is almost all non-credit. Royce Kincanon is our BIT coordinator and he has been working with the tribe in the ramp up for the dam project. We've run a series of introductory business classes. He's run some OSHA trainings, highway flagging class, and he's working with them on some heavy equipment options. We tend to go BIT for fast training when they're not worried about college credit.
- Roger Williams: Do you have any aeronautical or A & P?
  - Mark Vest: No. In mid to late 80s we had a small program for this but it died for lack of enrollment.
- Daryl Seymore: Has Overseas Aircraft expressed any desire there?

- Mark Vest: Sheet metal workers. It's difficult to aggregate enough to meet class sizes. This is problem we have as a county because there's not a regional hub city. When we started Heavy Equipment we had good enrollment. When job demand went down, we dropped to about 3-5 enrollment and it made it difficult to maintain. If there was a program that we could run that had cross cutting skills, that would be easier for us to manage. Mechatronics is going into the Skills Center. Good for potash mining, furniture making and instrumentation side of coal fired power plants. We look at it as something that students can get skills for three or four different sectors of the economy. Like Welding, we export a lot of welders but keep a lot too.
- Thia Ebert: When is the paramedic to RN pathway starting?
  - Mark Vest: Next fall. We tried to do it this year but the Nursing Board said no.
  - Jeanne Swarthout: It's easy to think of community colleges as a local resource, governed by a local board which is true. State and federal don't always agree on what we should use resources for. Classic example is what the Department of Education did in making changes to Pell grants which makes it more difficult for our students to be successful.
  - Mark Vest: We had 197 student drop off the Pell roles this Fall.
- Daryl Seymore: What is our success rate of getting students through to Universities? What can we tell the tax payers is their benefit of having a community college here?
  - Mark Vest: Two groups that move through our system. High school students that go to Universities with six to twenty-four credits that their parents didn't pay for which is actually a tax break for that family. Students that finish their undergrad degree here and move on to a university has two advantages. They've saved \$12,000 which more than offsets anyone's property tax bill. The second advantage is that students who transfer to universities with their AGEC graduate at a higher rate with a higher GPA than students who go to universities as freshmen.
- Daryl Seymore: Have you thought of getting dorms?
  - Jeanne Swarthout: The only community college that has dorms is Eastern Arizona College. It's a big step. Dorms come with their own set of problems.
  - Mark Vest: I would love to see, locally, low-cost housing.
- Roger Williams: How many students in Blue Ridge Dual Enrollment?
  - Mark Vest: Because of Blue Ridge's schedule changes our Dual Enrollment is not as high this year. Three years ago, per capita, Blue Ridge and NPC had the largest Dual Enrollment in the state. Show Low was either third or fourth.
  - Greg Schalow: A number of the students leave High School with the Associates Degree.
  - Mark Vest: We're the only community college who doesn't charge tuition for our Dual Enrollment. This is a large savings to these families.
  - Jeanne Swarthout: That decision is based on the economy.
- Jeanne Swarthout: The lack of four-year access here is frustrating. We've worked with universities, especially ASU, to give certain groups of students access to four-year degrees from within the community. It's limited; it's not always in areas that students actually want. It allows them to do the equivalent of almost three years here and one year online. It's difficult for our student's to get a four-year degree. It's frustrating to see bright students with great potential working for minimum wage because they can't go anywhere.
- Ron Wheeler: What do you [NPC] need from the cities and towns?
  - Mark Vest: When the economic downturn started, we focused so heavily on cost that we haven't focused on quality and what students do when they leave here. Ability to send children off to college is shrinking. We would ask you to promote the quality of what they can get locally.

- Greg Schalow: When we look at education as a burden instead of an investment we're going to continue to have the same problems. If we're going to invest in anything, we should invest in education locally. Any investment that's worthwhile is costly.
- Ron Wheeler: Can we offer an internship that might get those bright students slightly better pay but exposes them to other experiences?
  - Jeanne Swarthout: Those are the experiences that really develop students. I think internships is one of the ways to go. We also need to give the universities a clearer view of what we need. We have seventeen pathways to ASU. Fifteen aren't really what our students want, they were just the easy ones to do.
- Roger Williams: How can we help with four-year access?
  - Jeanne Swarthout: We have facilities, we can double back with them. We need them to bring to the conversation the things that Navajo County needs.
  - Mark Vest: About four years ago, well-meaning folks from NAU presented degree programs for online, but they were similar to our degrees. No input from us. They had created them for Maricopa and Pima. We need a conversation here of what our community needs. We've made some progress with NAU.
  - Daryl Seymore: Talk to the ASU alumni that come up for the golf tournament. They have a lot of pull. Maybe we could get them to buy in and help us?
  - Jeanne Swarthout: With our infrastructure, we can cloud, there is no need to drive to Tucson. The obstacles aren't there.
  - Mark Vest: ASU is making a big push for rural areas. And they have a well-articulated structure to do that.
  - Steve North: It always come back to, they want the communities to underwrite the majority of the cost, which is the problem.
  - Greg Schalow: We've had conversations with them and told them they had an empty facility and still couldn't generate a whole lot of interest.
  - Leslie Wasson: They don't think the population density will be enough to sustain it.
  - Steve North: They don't understand that people will drive that far in our rural community.
- Roger Welch: How many students do we have on the GI bill?
  - Mark Vest: Under one hundred and about half of those are dependents.
- Leslie Wasson: [to Ron Wheeler] If you will give me your card I will pass it on to our Career Services.
- Mel West: Last year they discussed a partnership between the City and NPC but nothing happened.
  - Jeanne Swarthout: We dropped the ball but it's on my to-do list now.
- Roger Welch: VP of ASU was receptive of going to rural communities. He was extremely positive about the relationship with the tribes and their educational programs. I'm sure there are a lot of federal funds available to help. We need to provide them the needs of our communities to see if they can adjust.
- Mark Vest: Steve brought up last year a Bachelor's degree in Business.
  - Steve North: I think I talked about expanded business programs especially those related to entrepreneurship because there are so many entrepreneurs here. It would be good to do something not only at the collegiate level but the high school level too. We don't have a traditional Business Incubator but it's something that we may look at down the road.
  - Jeanne Swarthout: You have that Business Development Center at the City and SBDC works with them. Recently I noted that the County is talking about starting an Incubator. Are we getting out of conversations and doubling things that could be complimentary?

- Steve North: We're really complimentary to what the SBDC is doing. We're trying to be a conduit to the SBDC. A lot of entrepreneurs come here that don't know where to go. Trying to catch some of those and direct them to the right people.
- Steve North: We formulated a survey for our business license renewals. We sent out 1500, got 300 back. Variety of topics. Tied them in with the individual organizations that could fill their need. Identified 6 or 7 companies with potential for mentorship programs.
  - Jeanne Swarhout: That was a good venture, everyone learned from it.
  - Steve North: Doing the same thing with our new businesses.
- Susan Olsen: It's NPC's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, we made \$7,000 at the Pedal the Petrified event.
  - Jeanne Swarhout: We had a really good turnout. We had a limit of 100 this year and they allowed us to up it to 200 for next year. Participants really want the event to grow to include the entire weekend up here on the mountain.
- Raffle: Clay Wood, Joel Weeks (who gave his to Roger Williams) and Daryl Seymore won the NPC bags with a water bottle, pen and pad of post-it notes.

### **Student Focus Group, White Mountain Campus**

#### Meeting Minutes

No students attended the Student Focus Group.