

Northland Pioneer College
Little Colorado Campus
Community Outreach Meeting
March 10, 2016
MINUTES

Attending: Jeanne Swarthout, Mark Vest, Ina Sommers, Prescott Winslow, Pat Ceballos, Tess Kenna, Thomas Chacon

Dr. Swarthout called the meeting to order at 1pm and opened with introductions from everyone.

Mr. Chacon commented that he would like to see more educational opportunities for the elderly and wondered what NPC could do to meet that need.

Mrs. Kenna mentioned that as a hobby she is publishing an online (Facebook) forum called Winslow, AZ News that focuses on bringing positive, uplifting news to more than 6,000 followers.

Dr. Swarthout explained that the reason the college holds outreach meetings is to learn what's going on in the college communities and what the college should think about for higher education in those communities. She explained the problems caused by the Expenditure Limit, which is based on 1979-80 data. It is really designed to hold down property taxes. NPC is working with the legislature to increase the limit.

Mrs. Ceballos mentioned that she was disappointed that more City Council members weren't present. Mr. Chacon explained to her that council members are busy with jobs and other responsibilities and often can't attend meetings held during working hours.

Mr. Vest asked the group if they thought it would be best if outreach meetings were held in the evening at a City or Chamber location. The response was that we should try it.

Mr. Chacon commented that NPC and the Winslow businesses need to focus on workforce development to prepare young people for employment. He suggested bringing together the schools, NPC, tribal, business, and community groups to work together for this cause.

Dr. Swarthout mentioned that she wants to introduce a series of short-term classes for people who have gone to college but would like to take classes they weren't able to take as part of their college curriculum. They would be college-level courses on a variety of topics.

Dr. Swarthout commented that Winslow is gaining recognition as an arts center. She asked how NPC could become part of that movement. The general consensus from the group was that NPC should collaborate with the Arts Council and find ways to involve them with our students and vice versa; perhaps a combined art show could be arranged.

Mr. Winslow suggested NPC use its advertising dollars more wisely. There are always ads in the Scoop for employment opportunities, but maybe we should focus on making sure people know that summer session tuition is half-price and that the Finish Line Scholarship allows students to earn their last 12 credits for the cost of the media fee and books.

Mr. Chacon suggested that information like the half-price summer tuition and Finish Line Scholarship would be valuable information that could be presented at City Council or Chamber of Commerce meetings so that people in the community would be informed.

Mrs. Kenna asked if students can get Bachelor degrees through NAU at NPC. Mark Vest replied that NAU offers eight online degrees that match NPC degrees but they can't take them on campus. NPC is attempting to work with NAU to offer classes on NPC campuses on Saturdays. Currently nursing students can complete BSN degrees online through ASU.

Mr. Chacon told us he is a member of the Education Advisory Council, which is comprised of educators from all over Arizona. Their concerns are (1) the low number of students graduating high school; (2) lack of educational preparedness of students who do graduate, and (3) the high drop-out rate of Arizona students. He wondered how NPC could help address those problems.

Mr. Vest replied that at NPC 50% of high school students require remedial classes to reach college level. Many of these students become frustrated with their slow progress and drop out. NPC has learned that to be successful, remediation has to be developed around what the student wants to accomplish and the career path they choose.

Dr. Swarthout said the message that all people need a college degree needs to be expanded to include certificates in trades that give graduates opportunities in business and industry. NPC offers several trade courses that are successfully placing graduates in satisfying, well-paid careers.

Mr. Chacon thanked NPC for holding outreach meetings aimed at bettering the community. He said the key to success for NPC is community involvement. He repeated his invitation that NPC send representatives to City Council and Chamber of Commerce meetings.

Dr. Swarthout closed the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and sharing their ideas.

The meeting adjourned at 2:35pm
Minutes prepared by Ina Sommers