

The Board of Trustees of Everett Community College held a regular meeting on November 17, 2020 virtually through ZOOM.

Board Chair Dr. Betty Cobbs called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Executive Session

Chair Dr. Cobbs welcomed everyone to the November 17, 2020 Board of Trustees meeting. She announced that the Board will break into Executive Session for half an hour and will reconvene at 5:30pm.

Chair Dr. Cobbs reconvened the Board into open session at 5:30 p.m.

Briefing by the President:

Dr. Willis asked for a moment of silence in honor of Cynthia Clarke who was an anthropology instructor at EvCC for quite sometime and passed away yesterday. Dr. Willis shared that Cynthia was recognized as an excellent instructor and peer who was always on the cutting edge of instruction and offered support to whomever was in need. She also acknowledged Jan Van Niel, retired biology instructor and Gordon Kimbell, retired computer science instructor who passed away in October of this year, and Bill Deller who passed away in August.

Dr. Willis introduced Dr. Cathy Leaker and her team who provided an update on Guided Pathways. Dr. Leaker, Jennifer Rhodes, Jessica Cain and Betsy Stam shared a PowerPoint presentation updating the Board on the current status and goals for the upcoming academic year.

Roll call:

Virtually present for the meeting were Trustees, Toraya Miller, Bob Bolerjack, Jerry Martin, Dr. Betty Cobbs and Mike Deller. Also present were President Daria Willis, Executive Assistants to the President Jeri Pourchot and Rita Belvill, Assistant Attorney General Leanne Foster, Vice President Cathy Leaker, Interim Vice President Jennifer Rhodes, Executive Director John Olson, Jessica Cain, Betsy Stam, Student Representative Hannah Williams, Exempt Union Representative Kelsey Lindstrom, Classified Union Representative Max Phipps, Faculty Senate Representative Mike Nevins, Faculty Union Representative Nina Benedetti, faculty, staff, students, administrators, and community members.

Reports from the Board:

Trustee Bob Bolerjack reported that he took part in the ACT Legislative Action Committee retreat along with Trustee Jerry Martin and Dr. Willis on November 11, 2020. He stated that Senator Karen Keiser, the President Pro Tempore of the State Senate, indicated that in dealing with the pending budget shortfall, there is no intention in the Legislature to reduce funding in the Washington College Grant, and the majority does not intend to institute a full 15% cut to CTC funding. She also said that Democrats will be looking at three possible areas to increase revenues that could head-off deep cuts. Bob shared that the recent election did not fundamentally change the balance of power in the Legislature, so if any of these revenue enhancements are to pass, some legislators who were opposed to them in the past will have to be convinced to change their position. Bob recommended the

administration take a conservative approach to budgeting for now, hoping for the best but preparing for the worst.

Trustee Mike Deller reported there were a couple of nice shout-outs in the Everett Herald over the past few weeks. One was about a foster child that attended Mariner High School and then ended up with a very successful career at Microsoft after attending EvCC. The article was about this person wanting to give back to Mariner High School and the College in the High School program. The other article was about the aerospace workers and retraining. Mike gave a shout out to Jessica Manfredi, our worker retraining specialist. This is very timely considering what is happening in aerospace right now.

Trustee Toraya Miller reported that she and Dr. Cobbs attended the fall conference as well. She stated she was impressed with their awareness around diversity, and that Dr. Cobbs is on the Diversity Committee for the Association of Community College Trustees. Toraya also shared that they are working on creating a culture that advances racial, social and economic justice and services for the communities we serve. It is important that we are looking at different ways that we can assist our diverse communities that are coming to the college and how we can communicate differently and engage them more inclusively.

Chair Dr. Cobbs added to Toraya's report stating that she has been a part of the DEI committee and its large committee of 19 trustees from across the state along with the Washington Association of Community and Technical Colleges to focus on the strategic plan goals, strategies, and accountability metrics. It is very powerful that these organizations are working together to produce outcomes as a group looking through the DEI lens.

Consent Agenda:

MOTION 01-11-2020 Trustee Jerry Martin moved for approval of the minutes for September 22, 2020, October 27, 2020 Study Session, and October 27, 2020 Special Meeting as presented. Trustee Bob Bolerjack seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

General Public Comments:

Jeri Pourchot, Senior Executive Assistant to the President, informed Chair Dr. Betty Cobbs that there were 15 comments. All comments submitted are regarding the tenure process and probationers, and all comments are visible to all trustees and attendees. Per the Board's request for no repeat comments, she would read the first comment and stated that all comments that have been submitted will be transcribed into the official meeting minutes. Jeri Read the following:

Nina Benedetti- "I wanted to take a moment before your Action Items to make a statement as President of the largest employee unit at the college. I realize that the college is in a budgetary crisis, but I hope the college will not take any steps backwards and make decision that will rely more on our associate faculty who don't have any contractual obligations outside of their classrooms to help this college in areas such as committee work, improvement of our courses, etc. It would be shortsighted and downright wrong to not award tenure based on budgetary constraints will ultimately cost the college more than it could help financially. The current ratio of tenured faculty at EvCC is already well beyond a minimum threshold for the faculty group to properly perform the necessary administrative work required. It is my hope that the Board will not weaken the strength of our college

and make a decision that will have long term ramifications significantly impacting our current and future students.”

Trustee Bob Bolerjack stated he did not see 15 comments (some people hit return and submitted multiple comments that were really just one. There were actually 10 complete comments submitted). It was determined that comments made before he joined the meeting were not visible to him. He stated he was ok with reading them in the minutes.

Submitted Comments:

- Life Science Faculty (Rene Fester, Jackie Hedgpeth, Rick Dooley)- In today’s economic climate we recognize the importance of maintaining financial stability, but supporting full time faculty recruitment, especially after completing a nationwide search, is critical to maintaining high standards of education and longevity of a successful program. Our department is experiencing growth, however, our ratio of full time to part time faculty is well below the president’s desired 60/40 ratio. All of these reasons highlight the need to approve the tenure of probationary faculty in order to support our program.

The Life Sciences faculty are in full support of Dr. Greg Crowther in his completion of the tenure process today. We believe that he and the other faculty who are completing the probationary period have demonstrated excellent work and strengthened our department. We believe that it is fundamental to our success that these faculty receive the tenure they have worked so hard to achieve.

- Rachel Escoto- I am tenured faculty in Transitional Studies. I am commenting today because the word around campus is that, as a way to save money during this time of budget concerns, you are considering not granting tenure to our outstanding probationers who have successfully completed the tenure process. I am here to ask you to reconsider should this be true. As part of my faculty duties, I currently serve on the Appointment Review Committees for three probationers. I was also on the hiring committees for three others. These probationers are ambitious, energetic, and creative contributors to our campus. The work they do in their classrooms with our students humbles me and inspires me to become a better teacher. I would be remiss not to point out how their committee contributions help to shape our students and our campus. For example: one is the advisor to our chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. Another is leading the behemoth project of revamping our campus English placement tool. Another shares her technology expertise with fellow faculty and is leading in Innovations Academy. They are continue doing all of this while undoubtedly suffering the stress and exhaustion of pivoting to online learning in a pandemic that has pulled the rug of certainty out from under all of us. They are amazing, they are unstoppable, and given the opportunity, they will continue to contribute greatly to our campus.

When we hired these valuable and valued members of our faculty community, we offered them security upon successful completion of the tenure process. We brought them in, we trained them up, we cheered them on, and we invested in them. In turn, they have done everything we have asked of them – and more. The thought that you would break their trust, and by extension the trust of your entire faculty body, by pulling back on your end of the commitment is short-sighted. The pandemic and the budget concerns will be rectified, but trust in Everett Community College, once broken, will be difficult to reestablish. I wonder what caliber of faculty we will be able to attract to our campus in the future if we are seen as an institution with a faithless administration. In sum, a move such as this one seems counterproductive and damaging. I ask, please, that you consider the long-term ramifications of such actions.

- Michelle Barnes- I am here in support of our probationers. I also want to say something about the integrity of our process and practice at EvCC. We made a promise, if a probationer works hard to

become an excellent instructor, works hard to serve the college and community, then they would attain tenure. When we pull back on this, we lose our integrity as an institution. More importantly though, one of our goals as a campus should be to offer a robust diversity of instructor voices to our students. In doing so, we serve them at the highest level and offer them an opportunity to consider multiple perspectives. Letting our probationers go reduces the voices they hear in their time at EvCC. I strongly urge you to retain all of our probationers at the recommendation of their committees.

- Mike VanQuickenborne-I would just like to remind the Board that RCW 28B.50.856 makes it very clear that the President of the college is to have NO input to the Board on tenure decisions. I also want to strongly urge the Board to follow the recommendation of the tenure committees with regard to all probationers. To vote against their recommendation would show a great deal of disrespect to the YEARS of work students, faculty, and administrators put into making sure we have the best faculty for our students. Thanks!
- Sharon Moore-I want to thank the BOT for giving me a few minutes to share my thoughts today. I was recently awarded tenure this past spring by the BOT in attendance today. I appreciate the opportunity to serve this college and I am proud to be a Trojan. To be honest, I was afraid to share my voice tonight, as many are, in the face of job insecurity. However, I am inspired by the work of Cynthia Clarke, and I know that if I was able to seek her advice today, she would encourage me to use my voice and use the privilege of my tenure status to support others. I am making this statement in support of the probationary faculty that are up for tenure today, and for those who are currently in process. I think it is important to remind ourselves that probationers are initially chosen through a rigorous vetting procedure. After that they are asked to demonstrate how they will serve the college through a process of observations, evaluations, participation on committees, professional development engagement, and reflection. Being awarded tenure status is an honor and responsibility. Historically speaking the purpose of tenure was to ensure the right to academic freedom. Tenure status is what encourages faculty to inspire, create, and innovate without the fear of retribution. In my ten years at EvCC, this college has always prided themselves in being pioneering and original. The probationers that are here tonight have proven themselves to be forward thinking and imaginative. To not award them this status, or the many others that are in the probationary process, would be disingenuous to the tenure process and to the core themes and values of EvCC. I strongly urge the members of the BOT to award tenure this evening and in moving forward to retain and promote those currently in process as they are demonstrating their commitment to the college.
- Mike Nevins- At the behest of the Faculty Senate, I present the following statement to the board, in the public comments. "During her interview process, Dr. Willis stated that the ratio of full time to part time faculty is a big opportunity for the college and that she would like to see the ratio be closer to 60% full time faculty. With this in mind, the faculty strongly believe that full time faculty and probationary faculty need to have their positions protected in this time of budgetary crisis. To be clear, this is not to say that we don't support associate faculty, it is to say that we believe the majority of those long-term associate faculty positions must be turned into full time positions. With this as our direction, the faculty believe the most efficient way to move towards a goal of the 60% ratio is to protect our current probationary faculty. The faculty believe that hiring and retaining high-quality full-time faculty is in the best interest of both students and the college as a whole."
- Jennifer Beebe-This college must continue to invest in tenured faculty. While we are facing difficult times, they will not last forever. The work and contributions tenured faculty bring to our college and to our students will.
- Gina Myers-Please continue to support tenure faculty positions. There is concern that these positions may be in jeopardy. We need to have a system that safeguards academic freedom...to

allow for dialogue and open discussions.

- Brian Platt-Making faculty jobs more precarious by denying tenure is short-sighted and contrary to the goal of providing quality education. I hope that the board will support the goal of moving toward 60% faculty with tenure.
- Kathy Bentson-I'm writing to urge that Greg Crowther be granted tenure. I am a part time Physiology instructor. Dr. Crowther is a talented instructor and a colleague who adds so much to our department and to the teaching of Physiology. Thank you for your consideration.

Action Items:

A. Review and Take Action on the 2020-2021 Board of Trustees Priorities

Dr. Willis presented the 2020-2021 Board of Trustees Priorities

MOTION 02-11-2020 Trustee Bob Bolerjack moved that the Board of Trustees approve the 2020-2021 Board of Trustees Priorities as presented. Trustee Toraya Miller seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

B. Review and Take Action on the 2020-2021 ACT Transforming Lives Nominee

John Olson, Executive Director of Government & Community Relations and EvCC Foundation College Advancement presented to the Board the EvCC 2020-2021 ACT Transforming Lives award nominee.

One student from each Washington state community and technical college is nominated by the local board of trustees for the ACT Transforming Lives Award. Six awards are given statewide.

Nominations must come from the student's Board of Trustees; the nominee must be either a current or former Washington community or technical college student who has completed or has made significant progress toward completing a degree or certificate. The nominee must have a compelling story about how he/she overcame barriers to achieve his/her higher education goals and how the education and support he/she received at a Washington community or technical college transformed his or her life.

This year's prospective EvCC nominee is Ashley Kay Smith. Ashley was very active on campus during her time here – you may recall her involvement in student activities, as a volleyball instructor, and as an advocate for student rights.

Ashley spoke of her experiences as one of the college's commencement speakers in 2018. Her enthusiasm for what the college has to offer, and for higher education in general has led her to enroll at the University of Washington with the goal of becoming a teacher.

MOTION 03-11-2020 Trustee Toraya Miller moved that the Board of Trustees approve the 2020-2021 ACT Transforming Lives Nominee as presented. Trustee Jerry Martin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

C. Review and Take Action on Tenure Recommendations for Third Year Tenure Track Faculty

Dr. Cathy Leaker, Vice President of Instruction, present to the Board:

Per Section 8.70 of the faculty contract:

A. The appointing authority shall provide for the award of faculty tenure following a probationary period not to exceed nine (9) consecutive quarters, excluding Summer Quarters and approved leaves of absence.

1. Provided, the appointing authority may award or withhold tenure at any time, after it has given reasonable consideration to the joint recommendations of the appropriate review committee and the College President.
2. The probationer shall be deemed to have been awarded tenure if no official notice is sent to the probationer by the last day of the probationer's eighth probationary quarter.
3. The probationary period may extend in accordance with RCW 28B.50.852.

Probationers recommended for tenure by appointment review committees:

Greg Crowther, Biology

Tracy Schuetze, Cosmetology

MOTION 04-11-2020 Trustee Jerry Martin moved that the Board of Trustees, after having given reasonable consideration to the recommendations of the Appointment Review Committee and College President, grant tenure to Greg Crowther. Trustee Bob Bolerjack seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

MOTION 05-11-2020 Trustee Toraya Miller moved that the Board of Trustees, after having given reasonable consideration to the recommendations of the Appointment Review Committee and College President, grant tenure to Tracy Schuetze. Trustee Mike Deller seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Reports to the Board:

Faculty Representative

Nina Benedetti shared with the Board that the passing of Cynthia Clark was a huge blow to the college, she was an amazing and unbelievable force on this college. Nina reported that the Contract Administration Committee has been working to finalize some mutual agreements. One MOU clarifies the process on how classes should be offered each quarter. Approximately 70% of our classes are taught by associate faculty compared to the opposite ratio during the 1970s and 1980s. Associate faculty are paid less and have less guarantees. They need to get enough classes from our college that will allow them to dedicate their time to the college instead of being "Freeway Fliers." The other MOU, COVID-19 Pandemic Adjustments and Consideration outlines agreements regarding health and safety, procedural errors or omissions in the context of COVID, equipment and supplies required for online conversion and remote teaching, enrollment adjustments, instructional modalities, mentoring, services to the college, contractual workloads, benefits continuation, sabbatical, and filling vacancies related to turnover.

Nina continued that the faculty realize the difficult budgetary restrictions the college is having to face, and given that, they have agreed to forego faculty applying for sabbaticals for the remainder of their contract. They have also agreed that any vacancy by full-time tenured faculty will not be refilled

during the life of this contract. The MOU states, “There is an anticipation that in the future, based on funding available, both parties will consider filling faculty vacancies.”

Nina stated that the Executive Council calculates the head count for faculty to be at a 19% decrease since the Fall 2019. They relate this number to represent the silent layoffs of many associate faculty not being awarded contracts to teach. She informed the Board that the defiance and pushback they are getting from the faculty is because their numbers are decreasing. Decrease in faculty along with the increased class caps are ways the instruction is helping the college save money.

Nina asked the Board to consider recording the Board meetings so that those who cannot attend from the community and the college can view it.

Student Senate Representative

Hannah Williams reported that Student LIFE has been working very hard to make sure students feel heard and welcomed. ASB Executive Council along with Araceli has brought back “Snack & Chat.” In the past students would come to the table to ask questions or give comments and grab a snack. Now they attend virtually. There are open chat times 4 days a week where students get assistance/help or can connect just for the feeling of community.

Mattie, ASB Vice President of Budget has processed two contingency proposals. One is for the Writing Center to provide for tutors helping students, and the other proposal is for funding uniforms for the baseball team.

Exempt Union Representative

Kelsey Lindstrom had technical difficulties and was unable to attend. She stated she would send a report to the Board.

Classified Union Representative

Max Phipps reported that they are now in Step 2 of the process over the layoffs of classified staff, and are continuing with the approach to an unfair labor practice. In regards to Dr. Willis stating in the Trojan Talk that a classified staff person would be appointed to the Strategic Planning Core Team, Max put forward Laura Little.

Faculty Senate Representative

Mike Nevins shared that Cynthia Clark was a woman of force and it was a catastrophe to have lost her.

The Faculty Senate met yesterday where they discussed two big topics. The first topic was transparency, layoffs and program restructuring in an effort to build trust between faculty and administration. What concrete actions can administrators do to demonstrate to faculty greater transparency and actions on budgetary matters, restructuring, and layoffs. They voted and would like for the administration to publish a new organizational chart, which is easily accessible to everyone in the college, and that is updated regularly; or even one that can be live in Google docs. Not knowing where to send things is slowing down communication and progress, and they feel that a clear organizational chart will help them. The other topic was protecting probationary faculty. Mike referred to Dr. Willis’ interview where she stated the ratio of full-time to part-time is a big opportunity for the college and she would like to see the ratio closer to 60% full-time. Faculty strongly believe that full-time faculty and probationary faculty need to have their positions protected in the time of budgetary crisis.

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
November 17, 2020

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Board Chair Dr. Betty Cobbs at 7:02 p.m.

Dr. Betty J. Cobbs

Dr. Betty Cobbs, Chair
Board of Trustees



Daria Willis (Jan 21, 2021 11:31 PST)

Dr. Daria J. Willis, Secretary
Board of Trustees