

# Board for State Academic Awards

Charter Oak State College  
Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium

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## Minutes of Meeting March 25, 2010

- Members Present:** L. Winkler, E. Janney, J. Long, M. Nicastro, J. Padilla, K. Richards, L. Wildman, J. Whitcomb
- Staff Present:** E. Klonoski, S. Adams, G. Claffey, K. Corcoran, D. Goldsmith, C. Williams
- Guests Present:** C. Rogers-Ward (AFSCME President), Scott Ciecko (DHE)

### 1. Call to Order

L. Winkler called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m. noting that the current Agenda requires adjustments as there are revisions in the Personnel Committee's Report. There will be a new Resolution for the Personnel Committee.

On a motion made by K. Richards and seconded by J. Whitcomb, the Board APPROVED AMENDING the Agenda.

### 2. Approval of Minutes of January 21, 2010 Meeting

On a motion made by J. Long and seconded by J. Whitcomb, the Board APPROVED the Minutes of January 21, 2010.

K. Richards abstained as she was not present at the January meeting.

### 3. Action Items

#### COSC

#### A. Conferral of Degrees

On a motion made by J. Long and seconded by J. Padilla, the Board APPROVED Resolution 10-9, Conferral of Degrees.

#### B. Faculty Salaries for FY 2011

L. Winkler reported that the College did not provide faculty salary increases in FY 10 given the State's economic crisis. Beginning July 1, 2010, the staff is recommending slight adjustments for faculty in order to allow for a three-credit course rate to be equally divided.

C. Williams noted that the majority of these revisions are technical adjustments.

On a motion made by J. Long and seconded by K. Richards, the Board APPROVED Resolution 10-10, Faculty Compensation for FY 2011.

#### **C. Fees for FY 2011**

L. Winkler reported that the Board of Trustees would normally review fee increases during the biennium budget process. The last adjustments occurred on July 31, 2008. Because of the economic downturn that is gripping the state and the nation, staff is proposing that some fees be decreased and others fees have only a 2.5% increase.

C. Williams explained that higher education, prior to adjusting tuition, reviews the HEPI (Higher Education Price Index) as well as the Consumer Price Index (CPI). In 2008, HEPI's rate of inflation was around 5%. At this point, HEPI is down to around 2.1% to 2.5%. Therefore, at this time, the College is suggesting raising only some of its fees to around 2.5%; others will decrease and some will remain the same.

On a motion made by E. Janney and seconded by K. Richards, the Board APPROVED Resolution 10-11, Fees Revisions for FY 2011.

#### **4. Personnel Committee Report**

J. Long explained that after deliberations, the Personnel Committee recommends not approving the Clerk Typist position at this point. The Personnel Committee is recommending that the Board approve the revised position description for the Assistant Director's position which was held by Jason Jakubowski. Mr. Jakubowski resigned his post to take a position at the Hospital for Special Care.

On a motion made by K. Richards and seconded by J. Long, the Board APPROVED the AMENDED Resolution 10-12, Approval of Position and Position Description for the Assistant Director of Corporate Recruitment and Alumni Relations.

#### **5. Reports & Discussion Items**

##### **A. CTDLC Presentation (*How Today's Technology Impacts the CTDLC*)**

L. Winkler called on D. Goldsmith.

D. Goldsmith explained the origin of the CTDLC to its current status. The CTDLC has experienced a myriad of technological changes and advances over the last ten years and continues to see constant transformations. Currently, the CTDLC has six learning management systems (LMS), a myriad of *virus* providers, a K-12 partnership, a GED online adult diploma program, along with a variety of technical devices, and much more.

D. Goldsmith reported that the CTDLC's largest revenue source is its LMS hosting and technical support. Collaboration has been the mantra of the CTDLC – from various FIPSE grants to the STEM project and more. The CTDLC has formed collaborations with consortiums across the country such as the Northeast Consortium, Northwest Consortium and Ohio Learning Network. The CTDLC also presents best practices around security training and instructional design.

D. Goldsmith conveyed that within the next few months, the CTDLIC will launch its new website which will outline more of its selling services. Because the CTDLIC is more of a service provider and sells products, the economic downturn has caused it to experience more revenue setbacks than the College.

## **B. Legislative Update**

M. Woodman provided an update about the legislative session:

- Given the state's fiscal problems, only a few bills have been reported out of the Higher Education Committee. Any legislation containing possible funding needs are not likely to be acted upon.
- Some legislation speaks to the Board of Governors for Higher Education developing and implementing a strategic plan for all of Connecticut's public institutions, including setting benchmarks for achieving goals by 2015 and 2020, requiring the Board of Governor's for Higher Education to review current programs as well as mergers and closings of public institutions.
- Another bill speaks to the constituent units including results based accountability measures being included in the annual accountability reports.
- Tuition increases have prompted the Committee members to request that all public institutions come before the Higher Education Committee prior to initiating those increases to inform the General Assembly of its actions. This is a timing problem for all public institutions given that the General Assembly is not in session during the summer months when publications and potential tuition increases might occur.
- In terms of state workforce shortages and needs, other legislation speaks to recommendations concerning the need for academic programs required to address workforce shortages and career ladders.

M. Woodman further reported that given the Federal Stimulus dollars that the state accepted, no further cuts to higher education in FY 2010 permissible. But that does not preclude the General Assembly from requesting additional reserve dollars from public institutions. In fact, for FY 2010, the Community Colleges, UCONN and the CSU system have already been required to return some of its reserves for balancing the budget.

## **C. Affirmative Action Update**

L. Winkler noted that every March C. Williams provides the Board with an overview about the College's Affirmative Action report.

C. Williams explained what it means to meet Affirmative Action goals and reported on the BSAA's six program goals. He noted that staff purchased new job search software in order to obtain better data about applicants. Last year, the BSAA's short term hiring goal was to achieve 70%. Unfortunately, although one African American female and one Hispanic female were offered positions, both declined. The BSAA did complete is SBE and MBE set-aside for purchasing.

C. Williams went on to report that next year's goals include: increasing the number of goal candidates but reducing the 70% of goal candidates to a more attainable goal of 50%.

J. Padilla responded that if goals are in place, the BSAA needs to meet those goals in hiring underserved populations. His concern is that the staff articulated a 70% goal for short term hiring and is now recommending decreasing that goal to 50%. According to J. Padilla, The BSAA should meet its goal, not reduce it.

**D. CTDLC Report**

The Board received the report.

**E. Marketing Report**

The Board received the report.

**F. Enrollment Management Reports**

The Board accepted the report.

**G. Financial Reports**

L. Winkler reported that C. Williams has the February financials in the Board's white folders.

**H. Financial Aid Reports**

C. Williams reported that most of the financial aid has been awarded for this academic year. The requests for aid are 31% higher than this time last year.

The Board accepted the report.

At this point in the meeting, L. Winkler announced that the Agenda would need to be amended to add an item concerning discussions and information around a recent IRS ruling.

On a motion made by K. Richards and seconded by E. Janney, the Board VOTED to AMEND the Agenda to add an item concerning IRS Rulings.

L. Winkler called on C. Williams to provide an overview about the IRS ruling and the financial impact it might have on the College.

C. Williams explained that the College hires its distance learning faculty as independent contractors. Those contracts were approved by the Attorney General's Office. Recent new changes in IRS rulings, coupled with the College's increases in the number of distance learning courses and faculty, have prompted staff to review how we remunerate our distance learning faculty. Recently, it was brought to staff's attention that that there

are significant rulings around payments to faculty, specifically for institutions of higher education.

C. Williams went on to explain that Charter Oak State College's distance learning faculty could be considered employees and not contractors as set forth by recent IRS rulings. Furthermore, case law has been determined around this issue and could therefore be a potential problem for the College. The College may be required to put the distance learning faculty on its payroll; meaning that the College would be required to pay for fringe benefits. The cost could be upwards of \$150,000, with fringes costing around 8% of the overall salary. Additionally, because 20% of the faculty are state employees, the fiscal impact could be even larger.

C. Williams further explained that staff is bringing this issue before the Board because at the September meeting it could mean a fee increase for the distance learning courses as well as a request to the Board for approval for distance learning faculty to be treated as College employees.

J. Padilla noted that the IRS has a test for determining whether or not an individual could be considered a contract or employee.

C. Williams responded that staff has reviewed this "test" and concluded that with the growth in the distance learning courses and numbers of students taking the distance learning courses, staff believes that the College is subject to this ruling.

After discussions, the Board members suggested that staff not wait until the September meeting to address this issue, but instead make proposals at the May meeting that would include position costs and course fee increases. Additionally, staff should bring to the meeting any revisions that would be needed to the Bylaws.

## **6. Chairman's Report**

L Winkler made the following announcements:

- Graduation is Sunday, June 6. Please inform M. Woodman if you are able to attend. Graduation begins at 2 p.m. Frank Ridley, who is Chair of the Board of Governor's for Higher Education, will attend the College's brunch and graduation.
- Jerry Long was just appointed to the Board of Simsbury Bank (The CEO, Martin Geitz also sits on the College's Foundation board).
- Mike Nicastro, Kathleen Richards and Eric Janney were approved by the General Assembly's Legislation and Nominations Committee to serve as members of the Board.
- Delores Bell, Coordinator for the WIT and CT WAGE programs, was at the General Assembly manning a table for COSC in February during Black History month. She was invited to be a guest on *Spotlight*, a program on WIN TV (Cable channel 5 out of Windsor). The program aired on Tuesday, March 16. From that, Delores, has been able to get E. Klonoski scheduled on the program.

- There is an article in the Board's folders about the College's Credential in After School Education and the need for the state to produce high quality programs for our children and youth. Carole Weisberg runs this program.
- The Board retreat will be held on April 15 beginning at 8:30 a.m. at Water's Edge in Westbrook.

## **7. Executive Director's Report**

E. Klonoski reported on the following:

- Presented information about the College's Corporate to the CT Hospital Association.
- With E. Janney's assistance, presented the Corporate Program to the Human Resources staff at Foxwoods.
- With M. Nicasastro's assistance, spoke before the Bristol Chamber.
- The March 4 event at the Bushnell was well received and brought together faculty, staff, alumni and Foundation and Board members.
- Attended Goodwin College's Board retreat to speak about our Board and its functions.
- Attended the Metro Hartford breakfast meeting.
- Attended the New Britain Chamber's breakfast sponsored by the Rock Cats baseball team.
- The Foundation's fundraising event will be held on May 14 from 6-8 p.m. at the Connecticut Science Center.

## **8. Other Business**

No further business.

## **9. Adjournment**

On a motion made by E. Janney and seconded by K. Richards, the Board ADJOURNED at 2:15 p.m.

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**Secretary**  
**March 25, 2010**