

**Rogue Community College Board of Education**  
**September 24, 2015 Special Board Meeting Minutes (Retreat)**

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**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Dr. Kevin Talbert, Chair, welcomed everyone to the retreat and introduced Lois Schlegel, Facilitator. Meeting participants, including those listed below, provided self-introductions.

Board members: Pat Ashley, Ron Fox, Brett Johnson, Tim Johnson, Claudia Sullivan, Kevin Talbert and Dean Wendle

Staff: Peter Angstadt, Kori Ebenhack-Bieber, Kirk Gibson, Curtis Sommerfeld, Grant Walker and Denise Nelson

**2. Orientation (Ms. Schlegel)**

- A. Review retreat agenda and goals – The agenda and intended outcomes were reviewed.
- B. Ground rules – Guidelines for the meeting were reviewed.

**3. Teleconference with Preston Pulliams – Presidential Search**

There being time for discussion prior to joining the teleconference, Ms. Schlegel asked for input regarding specific items Board members would like to discuss with Dr. Pulliams. The following items were noted:

- How competitive is the current presidential search market?
- What real differentiating elements would make RCC different from other community colleges?
- What mistakes can we avoid?
- The option of prospects from other industries.
- What style would fit RCC the best?
- How do you balance making a popular choice with making the right choice (popular vs. effective)?

The teleconference with Preston Pulliams, President, Gold Hill Associates, Inc. (consulting firm) was initiated at 1:30 p.m.

Dr. Pulliams was asked to provide an overview of his firm's proposal and the steps to proceed. Preston provided the following information:

- He believes in an open search process.
- The process will also be inclusive to obtain input from internal and external community members for building the profile.
- He will hold three (each) internal and external community forums.

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- A meeting with the Search Advisory Committee will be held after the forums for the purpose of building the profile and determining the search calendar.
- The profile and calendar will be submitted to the Board for approval.
- He will talk with RCC's human resources staff regarding placement of advertisements.
- He will begin his own e-mail campaign and will work hard to get the word out about the position opening.
- Once the position closes, he will work with the committee to first narrow the search to seven or eight candidates.
- Ultimately, the Committee will recommend four to six finalists (or a number predetermined by the Board) to the Board of Education. The Board has the authority to accept the candidates as recommended or to make changes.
- Upon selection by the Board, finalists will be invited to spend time at RCC and meet with employees. He strongly recommends the final candidates, along with their spouse/partner, have dinner with the Board. In conclusion of the visit, the Board will hold formal interviews and will ask direct questions to the finalists. If the Board chooses to do so, the Board could travel to the final candidate(s) location.

At this time, Board members were invited to direct their questions to Dr. Pulliams.

Question: How can RCC differentiate itself from other colleges?

Answer: The key is receiving good input toward developing a strong profile. He recommended, when developing the profile:

- Think about RCC's priorities and goals
- Determine the skill base of the future president
- Include the specific interests and strengths we want to see in the president
- Include RCC's current strengths and challenges
- Make sure the challenges and opportunities are reflective of what the College is looking for. Listen to what people have said at the forums and also listen closely to the Search Advisory Committee (he recommended at least two Board members serve on the Committee)

Dr. Talbert reported the Board met last week to select a sixteen (16) person committee including three (3) Board members.

Question: What do we say about RCC that influences who will apply? Should we prepare a website?

Answer: The best/strongest candidates will do their homework. We need to put our best foot forward. This is currently a very competitive environment. There is a shortage of qualified people ready to step into the position of community college president. Although we still need to advertise in the right places, the best candidates

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are those who are personally recruited. The strongest candidates are those who are actively recruited. Top performers, ethical, hard-working candidates are a good fit for RCC.

Question: Umpqua Community College is also conducting a presidential search. Their community is of similar size to RCC's. Will this create competition for RCC? How important is compensation?

Answer: Over the last three to four years, when searches have come down to the finalist stage, he has found that candidates are often involved in another search. Candidates are looking very closely at each college. Compensation is an important part of the package. Younger candidates seem to be more interested in salary, while seasoned applicants are more interested in other parts of the benefits package. The best candidates are looking for a good fit. The best candidate says, "I can go to this college, do good things, and be successful."

Dr. Pulliams commented that RCC does not have current conflicts, poor morale or political issues. RCC is a solid performer within the Oregon community college system. The retiring president is leaving the College in good shape.

Question: How do you handle seeking out prospects from other industries?

Answer: This begins with building the profile of the next president. Again, it is important to listen carefully during the open forums and to the Search Advisory Committee. If people are interested in non-traditional candidates, the university sector, and/or business/industry, the profile needs to be designed in a way that includes this. A determination also needs to be made if a doctorate is "required" or "preferred but not required." The profile will be key to attracting non-traditional candidates.

Question: Could you address the issue of confidentiality?

Answer: The search itself, even though it's open, needs to be completely confidential until people are identified as finalists. The work of the Search Advisory Committee is confidential and they must swear confidentiality. The Board should be able to read/discuss applications. Again, the process reaches open access when finalists are identified. Public announcements are made at that time.

Question: Can you recommend how to inform the Search Advisory Committee of the need for confidentiality?

Answer: It is important for Committee members to sign a confidentiality agreement. This should be completed at the first committee meeting. If RCC Human Resources does not already have one, an attorney could draw this up. This has not been a problem in the searches Preston has been involved with over the last five years, as

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people understand the need for the agreement. In addition, it is important to remind Committee members about confidentiality throughout the process.

Question: What are your thoughts about a qualified candidate who does not have family roots in the area?

Answer: It can be good to find someone with a background in the area or that has been brought up in a similar area. In addition, it is good to make note of longevity in previous positions. He recommended being careful about candidates that move through positions. We want people that have been in prior jobs three to four years. Stable candidates that haven't moved around a great deal, or if they have, it makes sense. Someone genuinely interested in being active in our community.

Question: What is the role of the Human Resources department?

Answer: They play an important role and will be very involved with the process. They understand the profile and the advertisements. (Preston will help with the timeline for the Chronicle of Higher Education as he is familiar with this.) They will set-up applications to be secure and in-place. Human Resources will also be handling the entire online application process.

Question: What mistakes should we avoid?

Answer(s):

- a. Let the process work itself out. The steps of the process are there for a good reason.
- b. Handle everything openly and fairly.
- c. There should be no shortcuts for internal applicants. In the end, we want people to feel they have had an open and equal process.
- d. Once we get to the point of semi-finalists, move quickly. He has seen good places lose great candidates.
- e. Build a comprehensive profile. Don't let the profile be so narrow that we might not consider someone (i.e. doctorate).
- f. Most importantly, keep an open process and don't cut the process short.

Question: When it comes time to check references, what are the expectations for others to be involved?

Answer: Once we are in the finalist stage, Preston is responsible for checking references. He will make 25 to 30 calls per final candidate. He does this himself and does not contract it out. He talks with employers, supervisors, peers, faculty, staff, Board of Trustees and sometimes goes back in work history as far as three jobs. The criminal and financial background checks are handled through Human Resources.

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Preston commented this is an important and exciting time for the College. He encouraged the Board to keep an open mind. In a way, this is similar to strategic planning/long range planning. Be sure to communicate to the community. Keep the website up to date by posting where we are in the process.

Board members thanked Dr. Pulliams for his time. The teleconference concluded at 2:20 p.m.

Dr. Talbert asked Denise Nelson to send the President Search Advisory Committee list to Board members once all members are confirmed. In addition, Denise Nelson was directed to coordinate a Telephonic Board meeting for the purpose of selecting the Faculty and Classified representatives to serve on the committee.

Dr. Talbert asked Grant Walker to work on the press release for the Search Advisory Committee and to provide Dr. Talbert with an opportunity to review the press release prior to distribution.

Dr. Talbert requested Denise Nelson contact the Search Advisory Committee members and request a brief 25 word bio from each member prior to Preston's first meeting with the committee on 10/8.

**Break** – Dr. Talbert called the meeting into a break at 2:22 p.m. and returned to session at 2:40 p.m.

#### **4. Discussion – Preston's Presentation/Search/Profile**

Ms. Schlegel welcomed thoughts and ideas regarding the information discussed during Dr. Pulliams' presentation. Peter Angstadt and Kirk Gibson did not participate in this segment. The following items were noted:

- Placing the position opening in advertisements via newspapers/publications is good, but a lot of people have moved to Internet based resources. A suggestion was made to post the position opening on Facebook and other social media outlets.
- It was suggested to identify employee groups that each internal Search Advisory Committee member would be responsible for. The approach should be strategic with each internal member of the Committee assigned particular populations to communicate with. Communication needs to be consistent. (It was decided to wait until the Search Advisory Committee selection process was complete before moving forward with this suggestion.)
- The general consensus of the Board is that a Ph.D. should be preferred but not required (and the Ph.D. should be from an accredited university). More information on this topic will be gathered during upcoming forums and also at the Search Advisory Committee meeting.
- If finalist site checks are completed, it is important to plan for this in advance.

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- Due diligence in the search process is very important.

Potential characteristics of the future president were discussed. All participants will have an opportunity to provide this information with Preston Pulliams at the upcoming open forums.

Ms. Schlegel recessed the meeting for five minutes.

## **5. Discussion – Community Engagement**

Ms. Schlegel reviewed the “topics to consider” (as listed on the agenda) for discussion about the community engagement effort:

- How does the goal of community engagement fit now that hiring a new president is the current focus and priority?
- What is the timeline for creating and implementing the plan?
- What is the marketing department’s role in delivering a desirable message to the community during the process of hiring?
- What is the message?

President Angstadt reviewed the history of the community engagement effort to date. In summary, we’ve encountered multiple circumstances leading to delayed progress.

It was noted we used the model from Clackamas Community College for how we might do something similar; however, we do not have an internal champion to make it happen.

Pat Ashley commented she does not believe we should start the community engagement process during the presidential search, as this would cause confusion throughout the community. She believes the community engagement process should begin when a new president is hired. This would provide the College with a springboard to talk to the community. We will have a story to tell and a purpose for the community to be engaged with us. She agrees we need a champion/leader designated to this process.

Peter updated the Board that Grant Walker, Director of Marketing and Recruitment, has rewritten the proposal to include just the marketing and recruitment process. Peter suggested this would allow Grant to move forward with obtaining the data he needs while providing us with a good foundational analysis of our current potential markets. Once the data is available, the new president can also use this information to learn about the communities we serve. Peter believes it is important to receive the data before we start moving the community engagement effort forward again.

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Dr. Talbert advised the new proposal is more clearly defined and something consultants can more easily respond to. He believes this will position us well once the information is received. While he is disappointed, he still wants to move forward with the marketing survey. He believes this will be useful in the hiring process for the next president and also for the new president once in the position.

Dean Wendle provided a reminder that it is important to receive participation buy-in from each Board member, as the community engagement process will require extra time. He estimates at least one Board member will need to be available for one meeting per week once this effort is initiated. This creates a need for each Board member to agree to this time commitment. Pat Ashley agreed, when the time comes, it will be important to receive a clear picture of who is willing and who is not, as this must be a group effort. Dean Wendle agreed we need a designated champion to coordinate this effort.

Ron Fox agreed it will be important to hire someone to work with the Board in order to execute the community engagement plan.

An excerpt of the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan, specifically the goal related to the community engagement process, was distributed via handout (see file). It is important to note the community engagement effort is included in the Strategic Plan.

Peter was asked to draft a new schedule/timeline for the community engagement process for review by the next president.

Ron Fox recommended placing this important subject on an upcoming Board meeting agenda since this is something that can't be resolved within the time remaining, and subjects yet to be discussed, at this meeting. Claudia Sullivan appreciated the conversation regarding this effort as she is a newly elected Board member and was not involved with previous discussions. She would like to receive more background regarding this. Grant Walker recommended, for future Board discussion, asking the questions, "What is the outcome we are looking for?" "What is the goal of the conversation?" As an example, the goal of Clackamas Community College was to pass a bond.

It was determined to place this item on the November Special Board Meeting agenda (work session).

**Break** – Ms. Schlegel called the meeting into a break at 4:12 p.m. and returned to session at 4:30 p.m.

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**6. Visioning the Future Exercise**

Ms. Schlegel asked participants to make a list of things they thought were accomplished over the last year and prioritize the items.

**7. Sharing the Vision – Board Goals for 2015/16**

At a previous Board meeting (May 19, 2015) the Board developed draft goals for fiscal year 2015/16. The draft goals were provided as an attachment to today's meeting agenda (see file), and briefly stated as follows:

- Hire president
- Community engagement
- Fundraising
- Student success
- Budget/planning
- Innovation

Ms. Schlegel asked participants to move into small groups and discuss their lists (from agenda item 6). Given a few minutes for this process, participants were asked to discuss what they noticed. The following comments were noted:

- Each member of one group had an item that was not accomplished. They were envisioning things yet to be solved.
- It would be nice to receive more staff collaboration toward decision-making.
- Completing an effective community engagement process is critical and might mean having to spend money to accomplish. A decision needs to be made and clearly communicated.
- One group had areas they all agreed on, and because each person represented a different sector, they all had something else to add.
- Raising additional funds for the state match is a priority.
- Increasing enrollment capacity is important.
- Some of our initiatives have been achieved. We have realized goals we set for ourselves. Student success is strong.
- Everyone communicated very well. It was interesting to consider goals that could happen within a 12-month period of time.

**8. Board Goals for 2015/16 – Sharing the Vision (continued)**

Ms. Schlegel asked if there is anything to be changed, added, refocused and/or reprioritized at this time.

- With funding for the state's match a high priority, how should the Board participate in fundraising? President Angstadt provided an overview of the



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fundraising conducted to date. Having raised \$1.7 million of the \$8 million match, he reviewed various options with the Board including a) continue fundraising through the 2019 deadline, b) deciding on a less expansive/less expensive project, or c) consider a bond election. Dr. Talbert commented we are not alone in experiencing a challenging time with fundraising. Other Boards live in areas that are having a difficult time raising match funding. He suggested this should be a future discussion item of the Board as there are options to consider in detail such as Certificates of Participation (COPs), bond elections, etcetera. A suggestion was made to clearly establish our fundraising goals.

- No other comments were noted regarding the draft goals.

**9. Conclusion and Notes for Further Work**

Each participant commented on something he/she would like to remember from today's retreat. In conclusion, Ms. Schlegel thanked the group for their participation and full engagement during the meeting. Dr. Talbert thanked Ms. Schlegel for her excellent work facilitating the retreat.

**10. Adjournment** – Dr. Talbert adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.