

SOLANO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
GOVERNING BOARD

UNADOPTED MINUTES  
Special Board Meeting Retreat

August 10, 2009

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Board Retreat of the Solano Community College District Governing Board was called to order at 8:10 a.m., on Monday, August 10, 2009, in the Fairfield Room of the Courtyard by Marriott, 1350 Holiday Lane, Fairfield, California 94534, by Board President A. Marie Young.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

At the request of Board President Young, Special Trustee Henry led those present in the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

3. ROLL CALL

Members Present:

A. Marie Young, President  
Denis Honeychurch, J.D., Vice President\*  
Sarah E. Chapman  
James M. Claffey  
Pam Keith  
Phil McCaffrey  
Rosemary Thurston  
Lillian M. Nelson, Student Trustee  
Tom Henry, Special Trustee  
Jowel C. Laguerre, Ph.D., Secretary

*\*Arrived after roll call.*

Members Absent:

None

Others Present:

Dr. Pam Fisher, ACCT Consultant  
Jay Field, Vice President, Technology and Learning Resources  
Trudy Largent, J.D., Interim Director, Human Resources  
Ms. Susan Rinne, Interim Director, Fiscal Services  
Robin L. Steinback, Ph.D., Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Lisa J. Waits, Ed.D., Vice President of Student Services  
Judy Spencer, Executive Coordinator, Superintendent/President and Governing Board

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Trustee McCaffrey and seconded by Trustee Keith for approval of the Agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from members of the public.

6. BOARD RETREAT (NO ACTION REQUIRED):

(a) “Board/New CEO Relations”

*Facilitated by Dr. Pamila Fisher, ACCT Consultant*

Dr. Pamila Fisher, ACCT Consultant, after welcoming the Board to the Retreat, stated it was precisely seven months ago today when the Board met at the Courtyard by Marriott in a Board Retreat to decide “if we were going to sink or swim.” Trustee Thurston was new at the time, and Trustee Chapman is new to the Board this time, together with Special Trustee Henry.

Dr. Fisher stated that she has been following the progress of the Board. She has regularly read the minutes and was just as anxious as the District to see what the ACCJC would have to say about the College. Dr. Fisher extended congratulations to the Board for their efforts (and that of the campus community) in getting off Show Cause and moving to Probation. “There is still work to be done. You aren’t out of the woods yet.” Most colleges would be upset because they are on probation, but Solano College should feel very happy with what has been accomplished in the last seven months. People are saying, “Wow, they are doing it. They are turning it around.” The purpose of the meeting today is to discuss how we can continue to move the institution forward, and a huge part of that was the hiring of your new Superintendent/President, Dr. Jowel Laguerre. You have ended up with someone who enjoys challenges and is ready to take them on.

Dr. Fisher asked for a statement from each Board member that would reflect how they are feeling today about Solano College and the future of Solano College. The following represents comments made:

- I am concerned about budget, but optimistic about the future. The College is moving in the right direction. The Board, faculty and staff have done a lot of work to move the College forward.
- Dr. Jensen did a good job in helping the College move in the current direction by showing us where we could improve.
- We are heading in the right direction, and there is more cohesion among the people at the College, even though there is more work to do.

- The College needs to be more involved with Solano County and help in its economic recovery. I am concerned about the number of students being turned away because of budget issues.
- The Show Cause status has galvanized the College to be more conscious of being evidence-centered.
- Early on we met with the editorial boards and the leadership of the various newspapers to say where we were and what we needed to do to move forward. We got a good reaction. Reporters were appreciative of the transparency. Our efforts to work with editorial Boards and newspapers have paid off. To change people's perception is difficult, and the Board has done a great job in doing that. *Dr. Fisher commented that Solano College is becoming a case study—at some point we are going to have lessons learned.*
- I believe, as a Board, we have “jelled.” Conflicts are nonexistent and the Board loves the institution.
- Once the Board jelled, and once we got an individual who had skills and talent to communicate effectively with faculty, staff, and the Board, it brought about structure that was lacking. Accommodating the needs of the students and needs of community is key at this time. Enrollments are up, but I am hearing from the community that they are looking for something new. The community is expecting more from us.

Dr. Fisher extended “kudos” again to the Board for making huge progress. You must continue to behave well and let the President lead the College as you do the work that still needs to be done.

*Vice President Honeychurch arrived at 9:40 a.m.*

The following handouts were distributed to the Board and referred to as needed throughout the Retreat:

- Guide to Trustee Roles and Responsibilities (ACCT)
- Solano Code of Ethics Policy 1020 and Violation of Board Code of Ethics 1021
- Guide to Self-Assessment (ACCT)
- Coordinated President and Board of Trustees' Evaluation and ACCT Presidential Evaluations and Description of Services (ACCT)
- Solano College Governing Board Code of Conduct
- How Do We Rate Checklist PowerPoint of April 1, 2009, and Checklist Summary of July 15, 2009.
- Draft Goals for Superintendent/President – Year One

The Board identified future plans and goals needing immediate attention as follows:

President's Challenges:

- Economic challenges

- State's fiscal crisis
- Accreditation
- Communication - Board, staff, and community
- Community relations (press)
- Keep positive momentum going (attitude)
- New-need programs (community needs and assessment)
- Transparency
- Partnerships

Dr. Fisher asked each Trustee to share with Dr. Laguerre one or two things that they most want from him this year (their single biggest expectation for him to do or be).

Expectations of President:

- Would like the Superintendent/President to get together with his team and Board to successfully get off Probation prior to June 2010. The second biggest concern is the plan for reorganization and who is going to fill those positions, which is a huge challenge.
- Resolve accreditation.
- Secure a senior leadership team.
- We promised the public when we did our Bond campaign and built the Vallejo Center that we would have an agreement with Sonoma State University—a partnership relationship with a four-year institution.
- Land purchase in Vallejo.
- Center status at Vallejo.
- Improved campus climate (atmosphere of cooperation), keeping in mind our major focus which is students.
- Don't lie to me and don't try to deceive me. I need information in a timely manner in order to make effective decisions.
- Don't drop the multiple balls that are in the air and have the ability to make the tough decisions. The Board must stay with the S/P when that happens.
- Do what you say you are going to do, and expect that from the team and hold them one hundred percent accountable for actions or inactions. Hold staff accountable as well.
- Manage effectively with staff and the Board. Stay focused and modify the organization climate and culture.
- Fiscal stability.

- Greater communication is needed. Stay ahead of what is happening, and then everyone can relate to what is happening. Help improve the campus climate.
- Address how we can improve the image of the College in the community.
- Stay focused on the Educational Master Plan. When staff comes before the Board, how does what they are presenting fall within the plan? The Board needs an update on the Educational Master Plan.
- It is important that the S/P tell the Board what they need to hear versus what they want to hear. The S/P's big challenge is going to be keeping the Board informed every step of the way. Concerned about administrative stability. It is easy to end up with less and pay more. Up and down the state the field is thin.
- The S/P needs to come up with multiple ways of how to communicate. (The Board discussed ways they prefer to communicate with the S/P, which included phone calls, e-mails, FAX, and face to face). The SP Gram is much appreciated.
- Concern was expressed that everyone gets the same information in a timely manner.
- If the Board decides to move to one Board meeting a month, with one study session, the SP Gram will become more important.

The Board discussed the Evaluation of the Superintendent/President Board Policy and need for a procedure. Also discussed was the need to update the Board Self-Evaluation policy and to eventually eliminate the existing instrument, replacing it with a new one, from the associated administrative procedure. The Board was advised that Board policies only need to be informational for purposes of shared governance. These two policy items need to be in place before the next accreditation visit.

Dr. Laguerre submitted a lengthy list of personal goals for the Board to consider, and the Board considered the suggestions made by Dr. Laguerre. The President was asked to bring back a set of goals based on that discussion for the Board's consideration at a future meeting.

The Board discussed and identified possible Board goals to be considered at a future meeting. There was agreement that the Superintendent/President's goals and Board goals need to work together.

Dr. Fisher asked the Trustees how they were feeling at this stage of the Retreat. Discussed during the Retreat was Board history and issues, accreditation standards, recommendations and the College response; Governing Board and CEO Roles and Responsibilities; the work in progress, Board and CEO relationships, plans for the future, and goals. Dr. Fisher asked what steps are necessary to continue the momentum of moving forward, and what final piece of advice would they give to their Superintendent/President as he tackles the items discussed during the day. Comments were as follows:

- Need good CEO relations. Keep the Board informed on a regular basis.
- In terms of reorganization, surround yourself with strong people.
- Promote transparency and communication.
- Let us know as a Board what we can do to help you and be supportive of you in implementing your goals.
- We all want the S/P to do a good job. Don't make us feel foolish that we trusted you. We have put our faith in Dr. Laguerre and we believe in him. Try not to let us down.
- Don't hesitate to call a special meeting if something important comes up and needs to be addressed before the next regular meeting.
- Keep open communications with everyone. If everyone knows the direction you are headed, we can support you better. Hire good people. (Dr. Pam encouraged the Board to support him when he does.)
- The institution is fortunate to have Dr. Laguerre. I would ask him to continue to trust his own judgment because he comes with a strong background and experience. I appreciate his poise on campus. "You either have it, or you don't."

Dr. Laguerre encouraged as many Board members as possible to register for the ACCT Congress scheduled in October, which will be held in San Francisco, and suggested car pooling.

*Vice President Honeychurch and Trustee McCaffrey left the meeting at 2:00 p.m.*

*The Superintendent/President Cabinet (SPC) arrived at 2:00 p.m.*

## 7. INFORMATION ITEM – NO ACTION REQUIRED

### (a) Administrative Reorganization and Elimination of Positions

Dr. Jowel Laguerre, Superintendent/President, advised the Board that the information being presented is the work that was begun by Dr. Robert Jensen as a response to the 2009/10 budget. This information was originally shared with the Board and community in a document identified as "People and Things." This item before the Board is meant to confirm the decisions and proposals made relative to elimination of positions and the creation of new ones that replace some of those gone and realize savings to balance the 2008/09 budget and begin the 2009/10 budget. The Executive Cabinet, working with FaBPAC and the Shared Governance Council, decided to slightly modify the structure of the organization to absorb some budget cuts. The changes were reflected in organizational charts that were distributed to the Board members. Several positions were eliminated and activities were combined. Other changes were brought forward to simply realign activities. The reorganization affects primarily three areas: Office of the Superintendent/President, Academic Affairs, and Student Services. Associated with the reorganization are job descriptions, which will be shared at a future meeting. The Director of Research and Planning is being reassigned to the Superintendent/President (reporting originally to the Vice President of Student Services) and this does not affect the budget. The second job description change is the reassignment of one Executive Coordinator to help with more special projects and grants. As a result of the reorganization and reporting structure, other job descriptions will be revised in the future to reflect appropriate supervision. The proposed changes will take effect following Board approval.

Dr. Robin Steinback, Vice President of Academic Affairs, presented the organizational chart for Academic Affairs for 2009-10, which identified the proposed changes made to divisions and their level of support. Dr. Lisa Waits, Vice President of Student Services, presented the organizational chart for Student Services for 2009-10, which identified the changes proposed to be made to that sector and the associated level of support. Both vice presidents addressed concerns and answered questions from the Board.

Board President Young thanked Superintendent/President Laguerre, and Vice Presidents Steinback and Waits for providing more clarify. Staff was asked to bring this item and associated items back to the Board for approval.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

JCL:js

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING RETREAT MINUTES.08.10.09.FINAL

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A. MARIE YOUNG  
BOARD PRESIDENT

APPROVED

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JOWEL C. LAGUERRE, Ph.D.  
SECRETARY