

**NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**January 8, 2024 – Immediately following the Annual Board Meeting – BH 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Board Room**

**Call to Order**

     Action       X   Information

**Recognition, Awards, and Information Items**

- Faculty Emeritus (*Dr. Rittle*)
- 2024/2025 Sabbaticals (*Dr. Rittle*)
- Respiratory Therapy Program Success Rate (*Dr. Rittle*)
- NWACC Eagle View Students Receive National Honors (*Dr. Rittle*)
- NWACC ACUE Course Completers (*Dr. Rittle*)
- Accreditation Update (*Dr. Rittle*)

  X   Action          Information

**Attendance**

  X   Action          Information

**Approval of Minutes**

- Regular Board Meeting – November 13, 2023

  X   Action          Information

**ENDS Monitoring Report**

- E-101: Learner Community Update (*Dr. Jennifer Swartout*)

  X   Action          Information

**Executive Limitations Monitoring Report**

- EL-204: Treatment of Staff

     Action       X   Information

**Committee Reports**

- Land Use Committee (*Mrs. Rachel Harris*)
- Finance Committee (*Mr. Ron Branscum*)
- Residential Housing Committee (*Mrs. Amber Latimer*)

     Action       X   Information

     Action       X   Information

     Action       X   Information

**President's Report**

- College Master Planning for Bentonville Campus
- College Budget Planning
- College Rebranding

     Action       X   Information

**Chairman's Report**

- Statement of Financial Interest
- Board Self-Evaluation
- Committee Chair Appointments

  X   Action          Information

**Other Board Action Items and Considerations**

- Approval of Provisional Position

**Adjourn**

For upcoming events, please see the Board of Trustees Calendar of Upcoming Events document located in the front pocket of binder.

**NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING  
Monday, November 13, 2023**

**MINUTES**

Chair Mark Scott called the Board of Trustees of NorthWest Arkansas Community College meeting to order on Monday, November 13 at 4:37 pm in the SCGBD Peterson Auditorium.

**Members Present:** Mark Scott (Chair), Todd Schwartz (Secretary), Rachel Harris (Vice Chair), Ron Branscum, Jonathan Woods, Amber Latimer, Lori Frank, and Joe Spivey

**Also in Attendance:** Dr. Dennis C. Rittle and Student Trustee Sammy Massri

**Absent:** Dr. Carolyn Reeves

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**MINUTES**

**October 16 Regular Board Meeting**

Mrs. Harris moved and Mr. Schwartz seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on October 16, 2023. The motion passed unanimously.

**RECOGNITION**

**Student Government Association Trip to Washington D.C.**

The NWACC Student Government Association's Vice President, Jarred Chieng, and Treasurer, Kelly Smothers, presented a timeline and photos of their recent trip to Washington D.C. for the Student Government Association Conference. They shared the many different sessions they attended at the conference and learned various aspects of senate structure, secretary duties, and financial transactions. The students made connections with other students from other institutions such as Purdue University, American University in Cairo Egypt, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, and so many more. The lessons learned from the overall trip include managing meeting minutes, funding projects, working with other departments within the institutions, working together as a team, and serving their community. Kelly Smothers informed the Board that the members of the Student Government Association left the conference with a renewed sense of purpose and an action plan to promote the association's presence on campus.

**Adult Education**

Dr. Rittle congratulated NWACC's Ed Rogers for being named the Arkansas Outstanding Adult Education Teacher for 2023. Mr. Rogers has been an ESL teacher in the Adult Education program since 2014.

## **Grants**

Dr. Rittle congratulated Kim Syverson and her team for their hard work during the annual compliance review for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Program grant. Compliance was reviewed for the areas of program implementation, fiscal management, and results accountability. NWACC was determined to be compliant in all areas.

## **Athletics and Student Athletes**

Dr. Rittle recognized Mrs. Brooke Brewer, Coach Josphat Boit, and volunteer Coach Dwight Canfield for their hard work and dedication to student-athletes. NWACC's Cross Country team competed in the NJCAA Cross Country Championship in Huntsville, Alabama where the women's team placed 23<sup>rd</sup> and the men's team placed 14<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Rittle congratulated both teams for their tremendous efforts.

## **ENDS MONITORING REPORT**

### **E-102: Business Community Update**

Mrs. Brooke Brewer presented to the Board that the NWACC Athletics Department plans to meet the Business Community ENDS by educating business partners on the benefits of intercollegiate athletics for both the business and the institution, framing athletics as the "front porch" of the institution, capitalizing on opportunities unique to athletics, enhancing opportunity for business partners to connect on campus, and collaborating to connect athletes and athletic staff with business partners. She continued by outlining the why's and how's of educating business partners including sponsorship opportunities, connecting business partners with potential employees, inviting business partners to athletic activities, and social media and college marketing. Mrs. Brewer quoted Scott Barnes in her description of athletics as the "front porch" of the institution; she stated that "it's not the most important room in the house, but it's the most visible." She further explained that this idea will be envisioned by utilizing athletics to benefit the entire institution, demonstrating the impact of the institution as a whole, and opening the door to business collaboration across all departments. Mrs. Brewer shared some examples of capitalizing on opportunities unique to athletics including website advertisement to launch in Spring 2024, frequent public events allowing business leaders opportunities to advertise their brand on campus regularly, and in-kind donations and collaborations to meet a variety of needs across programs. Mrs. Brewer finished by outlining the ways NWACC can connect athletics with business partners including volunteering with community partners like with the Mercy Foundation events, community events such as the spring fundraiser at TopGolf, and connecting with community leaders such as Visit Bentonville, new businesses in Northwest Arkansas, and area networking events.

### **Approval of E-102 Monitoring Report**

Mr. Schwartz moved and Mr. Branscum seconded the motion to approve the END 102 Monitoring Report. The motion passed unanimously.

## **EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS MONITORING REPORT**

**None**

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**None**

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Rittle thanked all the Trustees who attended the Presidents and Trustees Celebration events and filled out the survey. He explained that based on the survey responses, he aims to tweak the timeframe for next year's event but overall the event was well-received by all. Dr. Rittle then informed the Board that he had been appointed to an Arkansas Community Colleges Committee called the Future of Arkansas Higher Education Committee. He explained that the goal of the committee is to consider what the next 10 years of higher education could look like for Arkansas. Dr. Rittle concluded by wishing the Board a joyous holiday season.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chair Scott presented takeaways from the Presidents and Trustees Celebration including the opportunity to meet and speak with Trustees who have previously served on the Board, and the food was well-prepared. He thanked Trustees Harris, Spivey, Reeves, Schwartz, and Woods for representing the current Board at the event and opened it up to them to add any comments. Mrs. Harris said the presentation from Dr. Megan Bolinder was a valuable addition to the event. Mr. Spivey also complimented how good the food was. Chair Scott then reminded the Board of the Annual Board Meeting on January 8, 2024, at 4 pm with the January Regular Board Meeting to immediately follow. Chair Scott also reminded the Board of the upcoming Association of Community College Trustees National Legislative Summit in February 2024 and told them to notify Sammantha if they wish to attend by December 1, 2023. He then encouraged the Board to fill out the annual self-evaluation survey and send them to Sammantha by December 1, 2023.

### **OTHER ACTION ITEMS**

#### **Nomination and Election of 2024 Board Officers**

Chair Scott announced that the Board will hold open nominations of officers. He opened the nominations for the office of Chairman of the Board. Mr. Branscum nominated Mr. Scott for the office of Chair and Mr. Spivey seconded. There being no other nominations, by acclamation Mr. Scott was elected as Chair of the Board of Trustees for NorthWest Arkansas Community College. Chair Scott opened the nominations for the office of Vice-Chair of the Board. Mr. Branscum nominated Mrs. Harris for the office of Vice-Chair and Mr. Spivey seconded. There being no other nominations, by acclamation Mrs. Harris was elected as Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees for NorthWest Arkansas Community College. Chair Scott opened the nominations for the office of Secretary of the Board. Mr. Branscum nominated Mr. Schwartz and Mr. Spivey seconded. There being no other nominations, by acclamation Mr. Schwartz was elected as Secretary of the Board of Trustees for NorthWest Arkansas Community College.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m.

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Mr. Mark Scott, Chair

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Mr. Todd Schwartz, Secretary

**POLICY TYPE: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS****EL-204****POLICY TITLE: TREATMENT OF STAFF**

**Policy 204:** **With respect to the treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the President shall not cause or allow conditions, which are unfair, undignified, and unclear or present a conflict of interest.**

*Definition: Conditions are defined as official actions, policies, and procedures. Unfair refers to legally defined discriminatory acts, policies, or procedures. Undignified refers to disrespectful treatment or language. Unclear refers to ambiguously written or oral presentation. A conflict of interest is defined where a party shall receive direct personal monetary gain, or an advantage in the workplace as a result of official college decisions they are in a position to make.*

**Narrative:** NWACC administration encourages the development of a campus culture that exemplifies a spirit of mutual support, respect and civility. This expectation of a collaborative spirit is projected throughout the college in meetings, Expanded Cabinet, Deans Council, Faculty Senate, Staff Council and in open forums.

Employee recognition occurs often and is celebrated both formally and informally as a means of acknowledging individual and team accomplishments. Examples include: the New Employee Luncheons, Celebrate Learning Days, Administrative Professionals Day, an annual recognition of outstanding faculty and staff at the Arkansas Community Colleges Association and various national conferences, Summer Employee picnic, and Holiday gatherings. Open Forums occur twice a year on each campus and Final Friday Forums, held virtually, will begin in 2024. Additionally, a new “Employee Recognition and Awards Ceremony” to recognize outstanding faculty and staff, as well as new retirees started in 2016 and will continue.

In order to promote lifelong learning, all full-time college employees or their dependents are eligible to receive up to twelve hours per semester of tuition assistance at NWACC. Part-time employees and Early College Experience faculty are eligible for three hours of tuition assistance per semester.

Full-time non-faculty employees with ten or more years of service as a state employee receive a “career service bonus” annually in recognition of continuous service; faculty receive additional compensation based upon higher level academic achievement.

Mandatory, as well as elective training programs are available to all employees through the College’s online learning management compliance training platform, to assure that employees receive the required compliance training on HIPAA, FERPA, Title IX, Clery, and other important laws and safety issues.

To help create awareness and promote ethical accountability, the College strives to maintain an atmosphere of acceptance for employees to openly express concerns and issues regarding the College without fear of retaliation. The College does not condone any unfair or illegal discriminatory personnel actions or the existence of a conflict of interest within any college department. The Human Resources Office has an employee relations’ contact who is available for all faculty and staff to express concerns regarding College-related issues. To ensure a healthy conducive work environment, this person has the autonomy to address any issue that may arise. The College also utilizes a third-party online anonymous reporting platform, “EthicsPoint”, for

any member of the college or the public to use to report ethics violations. The link is located on the main NWACC website:

<https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/15781/index.html>.

The College also promotes ongoing professional development training and continued review and updates of College policies and procedures in order to foster a values-based culture.

**Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not:**

**1. Operate without written personnel policies, which clarify personnel rules for faculty and staff, provide for the effective handling of grievances, and protect against wrongful conditions.**

*Definition: Personnel policies, which address these provisions, are included in the online NWACC Policy and Procedures database.*

Narrative: The policy database, “Policy Stat”, contains college-wide policies affecting employees and students; it outlines the operations framework for the College. Included in this manual are policies related to the management of grievances, identification of processes and regulations, and protection for employees from wrongful conditions. College administrators are expected to operate within the parameters of these policies and procedures. To ensure that each policy is clearly defined and legally sound, policies are reviewed regularly and updated as needed.

**2. Fail to make available to staff in a timely manner all personnel rules that affect them.**

*Definition: Making policy and procedure available to staff in a timely manner refers to having a complete copy of the NWACC Policy and Procedures manual available online for all employees. This electronic format supports open access and also ensures that policy and procedure updates are completed regularly and communicated efficiently.*

Narrative: As policies and procedures are updated, they are reviewed by Cabinet, Expanded Cabinet, and Deans Council, as needed. If required by the policy process, information on potential policy changes are provided by email in order to allow employee feedback immediately. Instructions for locating the policies and other key informational resources are included in new employee orientation.

A comprehensive benefit package is available to employees, which includes a wide range of health and wellness benefits, voluntary products, and paid leave. Benefits are explained to eligible employees in both verbal and written formats. Additionally, annual forums may be held for employees every year to discuss health care changes and other topics pertinent to employees.

In order to enhance employee’s understanding of their total compensation package and to assist them during their initial employment period, new employees are required to attend new hire orientation.

**3. Continue in employment or employ any person serving on the Board.**

*Definition: Employees who are elected to the Board will be asked to resign immediately upon election. The college may not employ any current Board members.*

Narrative: The College does not employ any current members of the Board of Trustees.

**I am reporting in compliance with Executive Limitation #204.**

Dennis C. Rittle, Ph.D.  
President