



Minutes
Advisory Board Meeting
The Ohio State University at Newark

Thursday, November 18, 2021 – 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Reese 255

1. Call to Order

Board Chair Talya Greathouse called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in the Executive Conference Room of the John Gilbert Reese Center.

2. Approval of Minutes of September 16, 2021, Board Meeting

The minutes of the September 16, 2021, board meeting were approved as distributed.

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as distributed.

4. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

5. Central Ohio Technical College (COTC) Board Report

Rob Montagnese, Chair of the COTC Board, reported that COTC continues its celebration of their 50th anniversary with Dr. Berry and Kim Manno’s “road show.” From October through January, they are giving presentations to various organizations in Newark, Coshocton, Mount Vernon, and Pataskala to reflect on the last five decades and honor the many stakeholders who have helped shape the institution. The hope is to bring public awareness to the college’s role in strengthening the surrounding communities which COTC serves. Dr. Berry also recently hosted a town hall discussion at the Knox Opera House in downtown Mt. Vernon to help maintain purposeful dialog with that community. Dr. Berry provided a state of the college address and shared highlights of the 50th anniversary followed by a presidential reception. He also presented Mark Ramser, a former COTC trustee, with the legends of Loyalty award. Lastly, COTC will have their in-person commencement ceremony in Adena gymnasium on Friday, December 17 to honor their summer and autumn 2021 graduates. Attendance will be limited, and live streaming of the ceremony will be provided for those who are unable to attend in person. Rob also announced that although his term as president of the COTC board is due to expire, he will continue for another year because the current vice chair is unable to escalate to the role of president.

6. Faculty Assembly Report

Niles Johnson, faculty assembly chair, reminded board members of the role of faculty assembly. Faculty assembly meets monthly to discuss matters of professional interest related

to faculty roles in teaching, service and research. The assembly convenes various committees focused on particular aspects of their work including academic affairs, cultural arts and events, professional standards, and student matters. For several years there has been an ad hoc committee on diversity, equity and inclusion, and the assembly is working on amending the constitution to make it a standing committee. Niles stated that the initiatives that the campus has taken have been based on recommendations that the committee has made. Niles stated that Dr. Morris will have more to say about this committee.

7. Update on Newark Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Tiyi Morris, Committee Chair for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEI), stated that the DEI Committee started as an ad hoc committee in 2017 following increases in racial violence in this country. Students needed a space to talk about what was happening nationally as well as in the local community, so several student forums took place to give students that opportunity, and the committee's task was to create initiatives to address student concerns. One of the things the committee discovered was that over the past 10-15 years, the diversity of the student body had increased dramatically at Newark campus, but the diversification of the surrounding community and of the Newark campus faculty and staff did not keep up. The ad hoc committee was created to work on improving racial, cultural and socio-economic diversity on campus and is now in the final stages of becoming a standing committee.

One of the initiatives of the committee was to create DEI statements to be included on syllabi to make it clear that we are concerned about diversity and inclusion on the campus. Time and space has been made during the faculty forums every spring to address DEI issues and in spring of 2019, there was an implicit bias training for faculty to keep updated on current issues. The committee also submitted an action plan to obtain funding for an external review, which was fully funded. An outside company did a review in autumn of 2020 and hosted focus groups for students, faculty and staff. The reviewers compiled and submitted a report which the committee now uses to provide a basis for future initiatives. Search committees for hiring faculty and staff receive training on diversity, and a diversity representative is appointed to each committee as part of a university-wide requirement. In summer of 2020, the DEI committee prepared an anti-racism action plan and is working with Dean MacDonald to implement those measures focusing on students, faculty, and staff as it relates to teaching, curriculum, and training. Last academic year the committee applied for two seed funding grants which were not funded by the university and are under consideration for funding by the Newark campus. One was for a three-tiered mentoring program whereby high school students would be mentored by college students and college students would be mentored by faculty. The second initiative was for changing the curriculum. In October, two professors from Columbus Teaching and Learning and one from another university who is an OSU alum gave a workshop at the faculty assembly. Follow up workshops are also being planned for next semester and over the summer. The committee plans to work closely with the new DEI Officer once that position is filled.

An update on the DEI Officer position was requested, and Tiyi stated that although she is not on the search committee, the DEI committee does have a representative helping with the search. As of now, four candidates have been brought to campus for interviews. Evaluation forms were due earlier in the week, so it is expected that there will be an update soon regarding the initial round of interviews. Jackie Parrill, chair of the search committee, added that it has been narrowed down to two candidates and the search committee is working with Dr. Berry and Dr. MacDonald on next steps. There was a question about the composition of the committee and whether it includes COTC. Although the composition of the committee is all Ohio State Newark, the COTC community is encouraged to participate in focus groups and provide feedback. There was a question about the findings of the external review, and Tiyi stated that although there were no surprises, the review provided data to support what was suspected in terms of the diversity gap between students and faculty/staff, and also the way students are treated in the community. Many students have reported hostility in the community and that they do not feel safe. Dr. Greathouse asked if the DEI committee also covers gender issues, and Tiyi stated that yes, it does, and this also came up during the external review. Tiyi said that the committee's charter explicitly states "all forms of oppression" is their focus.

8. Board committee reports

- ***Enrollment Committee report.*** Diane Kanney began her report with a fun "pop quiz," where board members were challenged to name one of the top 10 feeder schools. (In other words, from which area high schools does Ohio State Newark enroll the most students?) It was interesting to learn that New Albany and Gahanna Lincoln were at the top of the list. Diane shared other enrollment statistics such as how many "first choice" applications Ohio State Newark typically receives for any given autumn semester. As a reminder, students can only have one first choice. If they choose Columbus and do not get in, they are automatically enrolled at one of the regional campuses. If they choose Newark as their first choice, they cannot simultaneously apply at Columbus or any other Ohio State campus. In Autumn 2021, there were 1,116 first choice applications and 584 first choice enrollees at Newark. This is below the average of first choice applications from the past 5 years, which averaged around 1,500. This may be due to the pandemic, but Diane believes it is more likely the result of Columbus deciding to change criteria to "test optional." This means applicants can opt out of submitting their SAT and ACT test scores. This is especially beneficial for students who simply do not test well, but also could have affected the number of students taking their chances at Columbus if their test scores were not being taken into consideration. Newark is test optional, and also does not consider test scores for scholarships. This is because the test is only an indicator of the student's abilities on one day rather than their overall engagement and performance. Diane displayed a graph showing overall applications vs. enrollees and stated that in general, around 6,000 applications will result in approximately 2,800 enrollees, which is the goal for this campus. Diane hopes there is still a chance for that to happen this year, but the trend would indicate that it might still be flat for 2022.

Diane continued by displaying the Buckeye Visit Day attendance since 2013. The trajectory going into 2020 was to hit 1,000 visitors but then the pandemic drastically limited the number of people who could visit the campus. Unfortunately, the number dropped from 950 in 2019 to 274 in 2020, and the 2020 visits were converted to virtual. Even so, Autumn 2021 total enrollment was 2,730, which is only a 5% decline from the 2,873 in Autumn 2020. This is a tremendous compliment to the admissions and enrollment team and demonstrates their remarkable hard work and persistence. Other enrollment numbers show that the decline was fairly evenly spread across the board when comparing 2021 to 2020: 1,352 new first year students vs. 1,404; 111 transfer students vs. 154; 1,043 continuing students vs. 1,092; 115 non-degree seeking students vs 134; and 36% first generation students vs. 37%. Compared to the other Ohio State regional campuses, Newark outperformed all of them, showing a 10% increase since 2015 vs. other regionals all in decline. Newark is on a good path for picking back up once we start emerging out of the pandemic restrictions.

Diane introduced the next topic with another quiz question: “How much is our merit-based scholarship award?” and the answer is \$4,000. Diane went on to explain how the scholarship has taken shape over the years. Last year it was doubled because it had stayed the same for many years, even though tuition had gone up. Currently there are not as many awarded as in the past, but the amount is greater for those who do receive it. Last year 22 were awarded. The criteria for selection includes grade point average and class rank across four years of high school. The student's curriculum is carefully considered to make sure they are taking high-level courses. Once students are selected as candidates for the scholarship, they are required to write an essay before they can receive it.

Bill had a question about long-term enrollment projections. According to data released by the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education, the number of high school graduates is projected to have a sizeable decline in 2025-2026 due to the lower birth rate. One scenario is that Columbus campus could take more Ohio students in order to meet their target for new first-year students, which would mean fewer students being diverted to Newark and the other regional campuses. Bill asked Diane her thoughts on how to be prepared for that. Diane said she is exploring ways to capitalize on the transfer-student market to offset the expected decline in the traditional market. Additional residence halls would also help because then students from outside the immediate region would be able to attend at Ohio State Newark. Online learning has been a byproduct of the pandemic, but if it continues to be an option going forward it does offer more flexibility to traditional as well as non-traditional students. Evening and weekend offerings have been tried, and they do not attract non-traditional students.

- ***Finance Committee report.*** David Brillhart, Senior Fiscal Officer, provided an overview of the Ohio State Newark year-end financial report through June 30, 2021, which was distributed to board members prior to the meeting. David reported that it has been a challenging year due to enrollment decreases, but an increase in state subsidy helped to offset the reduction in tuition dollars. Instructions from Columbus at the beginning of

the year were to expect no increase in the instructional subsidy, so it was budgeted at \$8.4 million. The campus received State Subsidy higher than originally budgeted for the year, \$9.8 million, or 116.7% of budgeted dollars. Enrollment was down by 7.4%, so student fees were 92% of the original budget. The increase in subsidy, combined with a small increase in out-of-state student tuition, helped to make up for the difference. Investment income is way down, but it does not make up a large part of the budget, so this did not have a big impact on the campus. The reason for the decrease was that the transition to the new enterprise resource planning software, Workday, caused interruptions in all areas of finance. Processes were interrupted, resulting in investment income not being received from the treasurer's office. Corrections are being made and payments will be received retroactively.

Additionally, university-wide reductions, Newark campus vacancies, and a reduction in professional development and travel expenses during the pandemic contributed to a year-end budget surplus. The financial statements reflect a variety of effects due to the pandemic, both in enrollment challenges as well as operating variances. The university institutes guidelines for spending reductions and, combined with natural underspending in operations due to remote operation, there was a surplus in the amount of \$5.2 million. Plans for the surplus include \$1 million for the Founders Hall renovation (the remaining \$22+ million will come from donors and state capital); \$800,000 for leasing and furnishing swing space, or temporary classroom and office space, during the time that Founders is being renovated; and the remaining surplus will be held for a rainy-day fund and future initiatives. Newark now has debt from borrowing for the Alford Center, and future reserves may be used to pay down that debt. The efficiency fund is part of a university-wide initiative to save money through various operating efficiencies. The money is put into a fund that can be used for initiatives based on guidelines from Columbus. David said that Bill would have more to say about the efficiency fund during his report. The financial packet that David delivered prior to the meeting also contains a breakdown of all endowment funds with a line-by-line description of each one. Some funds have been advanced for the Alford Center because pledges have not come in yet. When those funds are received, they will be returned to the university. David recognized Todd Ware and Matt Miller for their time and hard work serving on the Newark Finance Committee.

9. Dean's/Director's Report

- ***Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicators.*** Dean/Director Bill MacDonald demonstrated to board members how to access the Strategic [Plan Key Performance Indicators and Metrics](https://newark.osu.edu/strategic-plan/key-performance-indicators-and-metrics) on the website (<https://newark.osu.edu/strategic-plan/key-performance-indicators-and-metrics.html>) and talked about some of the highlights. Bill explained that around the same time that the enrollment report comes out, the official report on retention and graduation is also published and the metrics are updated on this website. The big surprise was that despite all the stressors of the past year, the first-year retention rate in autumn 2021 was the highest it has been in the past 10 years. First-year retention at Newark rose to 72% in autumn 2021 from 71% in autumn 2020. It has been an exceptional year, and Bill credits the students first for their resiliency, but also credits

the faculty and the staff for their tremendous support throughout this past year. A decrease would have been expected, so seeing the rate go up is very remarkable. The same was true for the four-year graduation rate, which would not have been surprising if it went down but it also went up. The four-year graduation rate increased to 25% from 22%, which is also a 10-year high for the campus. The Strategic Plan metrics are designed to look toward the future, but Bill stated that if you could look back over the past 10 years, a pattern of continuous improvement would emerge. Over the course of time it has been a profound increase. The chart also shows that Newark has not yet reached its goals but is getting closer. The goal for retention rate is 75%, and the goal for four-year graduation rate is 30%. Retention and graduation disparities between underrepresented minorities and all other students, a distinction that comes directly from the university's strategic plan, is improving. The gap between these two groups was significantly equalized, with retention of underrepresented minorities increasing from 68% to 71% and retention of all other students remaining at 72%. Regarding graduation disparities, there has been some change in a positive direction for underrepresented minorities moving from 12% to a 13% graduation rate, and all other students moving from 25% to 28%. Bill encouraged board members to review the complete [strategic plan on the website \(https://newark.osu.edu/strategic-plan/\)](https://newark.osu.edu/strategic-plan/) including the most recent new strategic priority, "*strengthening our commitment to social justice.*"

- ***Debt free Bachelor's degree.*** Bill reminded board members that President Kristina Johnson's investiture ceremony will be (tomorrow) Friday, November 19. At some point during the event, there will be an announcement about the debt free Bachelor's degree. It is anticipated that there will be questions about how it would work and how the money would be raised to do it. Bill believes the university will provide a match and there will be more details tomorrow. It is conceivable that campuses and colleges within the university will need to put funds into the account that the university builds to match the donations that come in. It is possible that the efficiency funds mentioned during David's finance committee report could be used for this purpose. Bill stated that part of the university guidelines for using those funds is that they are used to support the strategic plan, and this meets the criteria. The debt free Bachelor's degree initiative is slated to be fully implemented within the next 10 years.
- ***President's Investiture reminder.*** Board members are invited to a live-streaming of the president's investiture with food and refreshments at the Reese Center (tomorrow) Friday, November 19.

Katheryn asked if the debt free Bachelor's degree program means just for tuition or does it include all college-related expenses. Bill does not know for sure but he believes it is for the full cost of attendance, both tuition and room and board. He also believes students will be required to make some sort of investment, possibly through internships, but he does not know how that would work.

10. New Business

- ***Vacancy: Secretary to the board (seeking a volunteer).*** Talya reminded board members that the position of secretary to the board is currently vacant. Anyone wishing to volunteer for that role can contact either Talya, Bill, or Nichole to express their interest. Talya added that the role is not a huge commitment of time and it is the next step to becoming vice chair and chair of the board. Board members are encouraged to volunteer.

11. Next Board meeting – January 20, 2022 – 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Nichole Lenglé

Executive Assistant to the Dean and Director

The Ohio State University at Newark