



Minutes
Advisory Board Meeting
The Ohio State University at Newark

Thursday, October 19, 2023 – 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Reese 255

1. Call to Order

Board Chair Tara Houdeshell 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 May 18, 2023 Board Meeting

The minutes of the May 18, 2023, board meeting were approved as distributed.

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as distributed.

4. Public Comments

Tara expressed appreciation to former chair Alexa Robinson-O’Neill and Dean/Director Bill MacDonald and staff for helping with the transition to her new role as advisory board chair.

5. Central Ohio Technical College (COTC) Board Report

Rob Montagnese, Chair of the COTC Board, reported that they met earlier in the week, and Sally Heckman has been appointed as a trustee. Rob stated that Sally is the last COTC trustee appointed by a schoolboard caucus because the legislation has changed. Now, instead of a school board caucus, there will be a trustee selection committee which will be made up of local business, civic, or non-profit leaders who will be identified by COTC’s board. There will continue to be three governor appointees as before, but now there will also be the appointment committee. COTC had their Legacy of Leadership dinner on September 22 to honor members of their Legacy Society and to present Legends of Loyalty awards. The Legends of Loyalty awards were established to recognize individuals and organizations who have made a significant impact on the history of the college and have gone above and beyond their required duties and have proven unselfish allegiance. Rob congratulated David Brillhart as one of the recipients of that award. Lastly, Rob said that Dr. Berry presented the new bus route at the recent local chamber leaders’ meeting. He was joined by Joyce Malainy (C-TEC), David Lewis (Newark High School), and Derek Rosenberg (Johnstown) in his presentation to the chamber.

6. Board Committee Reports

- ***Finance Committee report.*** David Brillhart, Senior Fiscal Officer, provided an overview of The Ohio State Newark financial report which was distributed prior to the meeting. He

mentioned that there was a finance committee meeting with Matt Miller and Todd Ware and expressed his appreciation for their guidance. The report contained enrollment projections which in turn guides fiscal operations. He said that prior to Covid, enrollment had been steady and projecting enrollment had been fairly straightforward. Today, changes in the economy have made it more difficult. David compared autumn enrollment headcounts for the past two years, which were below budget. The good news is that for the coming year it has rebounded, which will help financially next year.

In the current year, student fees are down around 9% as a direct result of the enrollment decrease. Instructional subsidies (SSI) decreased even more due to a calculation error in Columbus. These factors resulted in a \$3M revenue decline. This was anticipated, so actions were taken proactively by eliminating employee positions as they became vacant and using reserves to pay off the line of credit for the Alford Center. These actions have helped to absorb some of the deficit. Money was saved in the operating budget more than expected because employee vacancies always happen but are not included in the budget, and the travel and operational expenditures remained lower than usual. The combination of these factors has resulted in a surplus, but not as much as in the past several years. In the coming year, the SSI error will have an increasing impact because the payments to Columbus will steadily increase. Fortunately, the projected enrollment will offset some of that. As enrollment increases, our campus will receive more subsidies. As of June 30, 2023, investment income was 29.3% of projected budget, but the savings from paying off the Alford Center debt helps to offset that. In the coming fiscal year, there will be challenges in keeping up with employee compensation. The “rainy day” fund is steady at \$6M. Money has been set aside for designated capital projects such as equipment and the lease for the temporary offices in the old State Farm building. The account for future building expansion has a shortfall but this is due to the Alford Center debt payoff.

- ***Student Life report.*** John Davenport, Director of Student Life, reported that more students are beginning to show up on campus and participate in campus activities. There were 600 students at convocation in August. In September, the Veterans Lounge space had its grand opening on the second floor of the Warner Center. This was done in conjunction with COTC’s Columbus’ Veteran Services. It is a place where veteran students and their families can study and relax. There has been consistent great use of that space. In Career Services, Tim Goetz has been in his role as manager for less than a year and has already coordinated an engineering career fair. It was well attended with 11 employers and 60 students. Disability Services continues to be Student Life’s best utilized service. There have been 108 new registrations and in total there are over 430 Ohio State students registered to receive accommodations. Student activities (programming, multicultural affairs) have done 13 programs and have had approximately 645 students participating. Currently there are 25 registered student organizations. There is a new staff member at the Adena recreation center who has been very creative in using existing equipment, for example, fencing equipment. Overall, students are engaged in campus life, involved, and trying new things. The food pantry has moved into its new, larger location. As of this date, there have been 73 orders coming through the food

pantry. John is working on software to help track requests and inventory. Any student can use the food pantry, they do not need to be living on campus.

7. Dean/Director's Report

Dean/Director Bill MacDonald began his report by introducing the new student representative to the board, Acacia Rhodes. Acacia has been active on the Newark campus, having participated in the Study Abroad, LeFevre Fellowship, and OPEEP programs. She has also been the recipient of several awards including the Dean's Award and OHMS scholarship. She is an Environmental Science major. Bill also introduced the new Faculty Assembly Chair, Feride Tiglay. She is a professor of mathematics at Newark and has been very involved in the PACE project (Pedagogy, Advising, Curricular Excellence) by working with associated faculty to analyze math courses with high failure rates. The goal of this program is to improve teaching, learning, and success in these historically challenged courses.

- ***Appreciation for the board's work.*** Bill thanked board members for establishing a scholarship in his name. He expressed his gratitude and sincere appreciation. He also thanked Kim Manno, Laura Walsh and Pat Whilding for the work they did to set up the scholarship.
- ***Update on enrollment.*** Bill presented slides detailing the enrollment shifts for the Autumn 2023 semester across the regional campuses. Overall, the campuses maintained stability or experienced slight increases. Newark showed a remarkable increase in new first-time beginning students, up from 1,140 in Autumn 2022 to 1,403 in 2023, which is an increase of approximately 23%. (*Source: 15th Day Enrollment Report, OSEM Analysis and Reporting*). Some of that increase is due to demographics/birth rates, but Bill gave most of the credit to the staff in enrollment and in marketing and public relations. Bill acknowledged the influence of the university's strategic enrollment turnaround plan working group, foreseeing even more substantial increases in the coming year. Notably, Bill highlighted a significant shift facilitated by the advisory board, particularly Kathy Lloyd, who advocated for regional campus students to receive the President's Affordability Grant in their first semester. This change was implemented at the beginning of fall 2023 semester and may have influenced some students to commence their studies earlier. Those students might have delayed starting until the spring semester due to financial considerations. At Newark, 45% of students are first generation, which is almost twice the percentage for the Columbus campus. There has been a tremendous increase in the racial and ethnic diversity of the Newark student population. Diversity is a defining feature of the Newark campus and the student experience here. Bill believes this campus will be even more diverse in the future.

Retention rates are the highest they have been in 10 years. There is still a retention gap between underrepresented minorities and all other students, but it continues to move closer to the goal of 75% retention for all students. Six-year graduation rates have improved to its highest level over the past 10 years. There are also some disparities in

graduation rates, and work is being done to close that gap. It is much narrower than it was in 2013.

- **21st Street deviated/fixed bus route.** Bill reported that the Licking County Transit Authority's Blue Line will start very soon. This is a deviated fixed-route pilot, so riders can request a detour off the route (pending approval from the operator or dispatch based on availability.) The route runs from 6am to 6pm daily and completes one loop per hour. The route runs the section of 21st street from West Main Street to Price Road. Some of the stops along the route include Licking Memorial Hospital, Ohio State Newark/COTC Warner Center, Walmart, Kroger, C-TEC, and the Miller Branch Library. The pilot will run for one year, and all rides will be free during the first year. This will be very beneficial to Ohio State and COTC students, especially those in the engineering technology program who must take classes at C-TEC.
- **Super RAPIDS grant proposal.** Ohio State, including the regional campuses, has been awarded a Super RAPIDS (Regionally Aligned Priorities in Delivering Skills) grant from the Ohio Department of Higher Education. The program was developed to support collaborative projects among qualifying institutions to strengthen education and training opportunities that maximize workforce development efforts. Ohio State Newark will use its portion of the money to purchase equipment for the Engineering Technology degree program. Currently, students are learning on equipment being leased from and housed at C-TEC.
- **General updates:** Bill updated board members about the College Student Inventory (CSI), which is being conducted in partnership with the other regional campuses and the Columbus campus. There will be a survey to gather data about student perceptions and experiences to better serve students. University Dining Services has acted upon some of the changes that were suggested by a sub-committee of the board which met last spring. Lori Garrabrant and Aaron Malcom in Newark Dining Services had already recognized some of the challenges and were working with Zia Ahmed, the director of dining services in Columbus, to upgrade the food service on our campus. Better menu selection and traffic flow are top priorities. Plans are already in place to redesign the physical space in Warner, and these changes are expected to be ready for spring semester.

Members of the board will be invited to participate in a focus group being conducted at the direction of the Office of Academic Affairs. All the regional campuses are having these focus groups, which are being moderated by the Office of University Extension. In addition to the advisory board, there will be sessions for faculty, staff, alumni, and community members. The purpose is to gauge the perceptions of each of the regional campuses to help the next set of deans with strategic planning. Network outages continue to be a problem on campus, which cause major disruptions and are unacceptable. The Office of Digital Innovation is working on a solution to have a backup fiber optic line. The renovation of

Hodges Hall is moving along on schedule, and the target for move-in is May, 2024.

- **Update on dean search.** Bill asked Vice Provost Ryan Schmiesing if advisory board members will have an opportunity to provide input into the search for a new dean. Ryan said that at the point when finalists are brought in, the board will be invited to meet each candidate.
8. **New Business.** Bill explained the role of the advisory board **nomination committee** and the process for filling Kathy Lloyd's position on the board when her term ends in June. The nominating committee is made up of the chair, vice chair and secretary of the board. Board members are being asked to provide names of potential candidates. These will then be discussed among the nominating committee with Bill and a finalist will be selected to start in the fall. Tara stated that with her elevation to board chair, she is no longer able to serve as **enrollment committee chair and representative to the COTC Board**. Therefore, two volunteers are needed to fill these roles. There was discussion as to the role of the enrollment committee chair, and Tara explained that Diane Kanney effectively leads that committee. During Tara's time as chair, she has had conversations with Diane or exchanged emails to process her input. Committees are not required to meet on any particular schedule. With enrollment committee, the work the university is doing on the strategic enrollment turnaround plan, the board could work with Diane to offer ideas. Tara said the position lacks a defined role and it would be worthwhile to see if this committee is a necessary or not. The representative to the COTC board requires attendance to COTC's monthly board meetings. The dean's office provides updates for the representative to take to the COTC board meetings. It is optional for the representative to stay for the whole meeting, or they can leave if they wish. Tara asked board members to consider these two opportunities and contact her, Bill, or Nichole.
9. **The Next Board meeting is March 21 from 9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.**

2023-2024 upcoming meetings:

- March 21, 2024
- May 16, 2024
- October 17, 2024
- January 16, 2025

10. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Nichole Lenglé

Executive Assistant to the Dean and Director

The Ohio State University at Newark