

June 15, 2017 Meeting Minutes Clark College – Vancouver, Washington

Members attending:

Karen Lee, Jessica Murillo-Rosales, Marty Brown, Paul Francis, Susana Reyes, and Violet Boyer.

Staff attending:

Michael Meotti, Rachele Sharpe, Aaron Wyatt, Becky Thompson, Crystal Hall, Gray Sterling, Kristin Ritter, Maddy Thompson, Marc Webster, Noreen Light, and Randy Spaulding.

Commencement

Vice Chair Karen Lee called the meeting to order at 8:40 p.m. and a welcome was provided by Clark College President Robert McKnight.

Consent Agenda

Motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion seconded.

Motion carried.

April, 2017, Meeting Minutes

Motion was made to approve the minutes as presented.

Motion seconded.

Motion carried.

Executive Director's Report

Michael Meotti, Executive Director

Meotti previewed the meeting agenda. WSAC invited several regional experts to share their perspectives of the economic and educational challenges and opportunities in the Southwest Washington region.

Southwest Washington Regional Economy Overview

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James McCafferty, Center for Economic and Business Research

Western Washington University

The economic growth and employment is strong in SW Washington, a result of multiple national, international, and regional economic variables (e.g. the housing market, trade regulations, tax policies, etc.). Clark County, the fifth most populous in Washington State, is expected to continue its trend of above average economic growth. Discussion included an acknowledgement of evolving student demographics and the need for effective policies and an education system responsive to Washington students.

Employer Needs for a Skilled Workforce in Southwest Washington

Jeanne Bennett, Executive Director, Workforce Southwest Washington

John McDonagh, CEO Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce

Kimberly Pincheira, Director of Communications and Strategic Partnerships, Columbia River Economic Development Council

Natalie Pacholl, Training Specialist, SEH America

Panelists gave an overview of their work, acknowledged workforce needs, and discussed partnership and engagement opportunities that could benefit the employee and employer alike. Though it is perfectly appropriate for many young people that come through our schools to go directly to college, alternative pathways are critical. As seventy percent of jobs in the Southwest Washington region market do not require a bachelor's degree, these alternative programs (e.g. training, apprenticeships, certificates, etc.) will ready SW Washington students for SW Washington jobs.

Discussion:

When asked about needed policy supports, the panelists recommended the following:

- Educators should start talking to students early and often about their educational and career aspirations.
- Educational institutions should continue to offer classroom and credit opportunities that account for the needs of working adults.

Meotti reminded folks that engaging the returning student is the topic of the meeting following this meeting and all are welcome to join the discussion.

Representative Vicki Kraft and Senator Lynda Wilson discussed issues from their points of view as business owners in Southwest Washington.

Educational Pathways to Support Student's Career Success

Mel Netzhammer, Chancellor, WSU-Vancouver

Ted Feller, Executive Director, SW Washington STEM Learning Network

Chris Bailey, President, Lower Columbia College

Bill Beldon, Vice President of Student Affairs, Clark College

Panelists provided an overview of their work in student success and the promising opportunities in the region. The workforce community and the higher education community have a good working relationship and have together developed curricula that is responsive to local business and industry, institutions in the region have developed highly successful programs to serve their students, and SW Washington residents continue to show strong support for the value of STEM education.

Discussion:

There was much discussion around what areas of focus would make the biggest impact on returning adults to get them through to completion. Possible areas of impact include robust student services (including transportation and counseling), enhanced funding, and more. There was also discussion around stackable certificate programs.

Special Recognition for Marty Brown and Jessica Murillo-Rosales

Brown and Murillo-Rosales were recognized for their outstanding contributions to Washington State students and service on the Washington Student Achievement Council.

A Message from Jessica Murillo-Rosales

Murillo-Rosales gave an overview of where she's been and where she's going. The June 2017 Council meeting closed Murillo-Rosales' membership term.

Public Comment

No public comment was given.

Vice Chair Karen Lee adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.