

Regional Advisory Board Meeting
9/21/23
Minutes

Members present: Bob Thibeault, Windham Central S.U.; Ruth Barton, Community Member; Anne Beekman, BUHS Board; David Clark, Bellows Falls Board; Hannah Parker, BUHS; Anne Doran, WRCC; John Barth, Hinsdale H.S.; Kathy Larsen, Twin Valley Board; Linda Quay, WRCC; Mark Speno, Windham Southeast S.U.; Rhonda Winegarner, WRCC; Bob Woodworth, Chair, Community Member;

The meeting was called to order at 11:35 am

1. Welcome and introductions

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved.

3. Approve meeting minutes from April 11, 2023

Anne B. moved to approve the minutes of the 4/11/23 meeting. Ruth B. seconded the motion. Minutes were approved as written.

4. Administrative Report

Nancy reported that we currently have 211 students enrolled at WRCC. Twenty-two students are in Exploratory and ten are only in English. English is a dual enrollment course. Opening went very well. A few student drops and a few additions. Bob W. asked how that compares to a year ago. 5-10 less. Would like to see numbers get higher. Students are hesitant to commit to a two year program. Bob T. asked how it compares to full capacity? Nancy replied that the second year levels are low. Anne D. said that 16 is capacity in programs. Would be better if more students would take the 2nd year. Could be sixty to equate to thirty FTE's. Anne D. said that there are a lot of factors. Course requirement to be a minimum of two hours all year. Enrollment is the best this year since COVID. We have a group of L&G and Bellows Falls students.

5. Budgeting

Nancy spoke about the large Google spreadsheet that we have been using for admissions. This year we will be using a new enrollment system. Have been working on implementing the new program - fingers crossed. This program will track everything. Anne D. added that we can also schedule tours and visits through this program. Hopefully this will help with retention. Bob W. asked if programs have been dropped and/or added. Nancy said that the Film program has ended. A new program is Aviation. Fire/EMT is on hold. An agreement with the Vermont Fire Academy hasn't been reached and the program has had very low enrollment. We can keep the program on hold for two years. Aviation has eight students. Chris Hodsden is the instructor for this program and is also our math teacher. The curriculum is free and we will be purchasing simulators through grants. WRCC Auto instructor has completed training to build an EV kit. John B. said that this is great. They have used it. The car is street worthy after it is completed. The grant is for \$73,000. The TIME grant gives us another \$140,000. for Machining to purchase a 3D printer. Also Perkins grants have been completed. All shops and programs have everything they need at this time.

Mark S. added that Open House is tonight.

The Health program has two instructors. Students end this program with six college credits. Nancy would like to offer the program with just one teacher. Researching animal science and plumbing. There is a shortage of both. Hannah P. questioned offering a program every other year and scheduling. Nancy said it would be during the ACE timeframe and 4th block. Lowest number of AP courses during that time slot. Anne D. added that not one student signed up for Human Growth & Development and Nutrition. Nancy W. said that this is a prereq for the nursing program at VTC. Ruth B. noted that Nutrition can be a very boring subject. Bob W. expressed what a challenge it is to find a plumber. Anne asked if it would be helpful to obtain input. Nancy stated that HVAC needs to be included in the write-ups. Nancy will add the question about offerings in the CLNA survey.

Nancy informed the board that she is on the state team and will be attending a training for the CLNA process in Baltimore, Maryland. Kathy L. asked who the survey goes to? Nancy answered that the survey goes to parents, board members, adv. board members, community members, teachers and students. Kathy asked how often the survey is given. Nancy said every other year. Mark S. said that HVAC and plumbing have a clear career path. Nancy added that we need to advertise as HVAC/Plumbing. It's not just toilets anymore. Leads to an apprentice program and very liveable wage. Anne D. asked what if the survey shows a need for both HVAC/Plumbing and Animal Science. Can it be worked into the budget? Nancy responded that the question is space. Mark S. said that Frank would support it if there is clearly a need.

6. Scholarships

Nancy reported that the Career Center awarded \$15,000. In scholarships this past June. Many are for students going to college. With our economy and poverty level, we need to build our resources and begin to think about students living independently. Would like to contact the local industry to donate to the fund. Nancy will make contact once a plan is in place.

David C. asked to offer a motion for this request to get a clear direction for Nancy. David made the motion that the RAB Board endorse this request for the director to seek funds from the business community. Ruth B. seconded the motion. David said he thinks it is a win, win. Ruth feared that the community would question it. Robert W. added that when businesses give money, they can use it as a tax write-off. David C. agreed. Kathy L. asked what is in place currently? Nancy said the issue becomes that as numbers grow, you have few scholarships. Mark S. felt that businesses would be eager to do this. Nancy said we could pool the money into a fund to give a portion each year. We can come up with a creative way to do this. Bob W. mentioned that some students walk away with most of the awards. Nancy went to each school's graduation this year except for Hinsdale. Smaller schools spread it out more.

Ruth mentioned that no one applied for the Windham County Farm Bureau scholarship. Nancy asked if they were registered with VSAC. Anne added that we have given that scholarship in the past. Has anyone reached out to the instructor? Ruth wanted everyone to know that this student could still apply. Anne said to make sure it is listed.

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Hannah P. said that she is approving scholarship information daily. Robert W. said that sometimes the scholarship reads very specific and students think they don't qualify.

Woody said that it is great to get input and hopefully more normal.

Ruth B. made the motion to adjourn and Anne B. seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 12:27