

**NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Thursday, April 9, 2020

EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Del Ames, Chairperson	PRESENT
Dirk Petersen	PRESENT
Julie Robinson	PRESENT
Nicole Sedlacek	PRESENT
Steve Anderson, ex-officio	PRESENT

STAFF

Dr. Leah Barrett
John Blaylock
Amanda Nipp
Coleen Bressler
Dr. Michele Gill
Dr. Tracy Kruse
Dr. Karen Severson
Jim Curry
Brian Paulsen
Stacy Dieckman
Diane Reikofski

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS

Donovan Ellis	PRESENT
Arlan Kuehn	PRESENT
Terry Nelson	ABSENT
Jeff Scherer	PRESENT
Carol Sibbel	PRESENT
Gene Willers	PRESENT

MINUTES

1. Prior to the meeting being convened, Steve Anderson expressed his appreciation to board members, President Leah Barrett, and staff members for making the best of a difficult situation and learning to utilize Zoom to conduct the board meetings.
2. Del Ames, Chairperson of the External Relations Committee, convened the meeting at 12:17 p.m. via Zoom video conferencing, pursuant to the Executive Order issued on March 17, 2020 by Nebraska Governor, Pete Ricketts.
3. Recommended approval of the Minutes of the February 18, 2020 meeting as distributed.
4. President Barrett publicly thanked members of the response team, John Blaylock, Brian Paulsen, Amanda Nipp, Michele Gill, Karen Severson, Jim Curry, and Coleen Bressler. The excellent work of this group has helped to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19. Their efforts include preparing faculty to teach online and then moving all of our instruction to distance delivery formats, canceling or postponing all events and activities on the Northeast campus, implementing new cleaning and sanitizing measures across facilities, providing remote desktop access for key employees to be able to perform their duties at home, providing students and staff with laptops as needed to work remotely, closing all buildings to the public, reducing the occupants in student housing, providing all employee and student services in a virtual format, interpreting and implementing new federal legislation, and creating a new web page, www.northeast.edu/cononavirus that includes updates and information, and links to agencies, e.g., Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health

Mission

Northeast Community College is dedicated to the success of students and the region it serves.

Department, Center for Disease Control (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), that have the most accurate information on COVID-19. We are currently in the process of moving from a response team to an operations and recovery team. Brian Paulsen will lead the work of the operations team and the President's Cabinet will switch from recovery discussions to planning for summer and fall.

Registration for summer classes has begun and fall registration begins next week. The majority of summer classes will be online or in some type of asynchronous format. Julie Robinson raised a question on how registration will work. Dr. Barrett reported that all advisors are working from home and students are being advised using Zoom, texting, or phone conversations. The summer registration process that traditionally occurs is being evaluated and analyzed for options. Student Services staff are confident that there is a way to successfully advise and register freshmen students.

Dr. Tracy Kruse, Dr. Karen Severson, Amanda Nipp, and Stacy Dieckman led discussion on the COVID-19 Federal Stimulus package that was recently passed by Congress and includes:

- Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act
 - \$8.3 billion to Health and Human Services, State Department, Small Business Administration
 - Funds vaccine development, small business disaster loans, emergency preparedness
- Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)
 - Purpose is to protect all employees' positions regardless of length of service, with paid sick leave and/or emergency leave due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 - Provisions apply from April 1 through December 31, 2020
 - Covers all employees, faculty, designated temporary employees, and specific student employees
- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act
 - \$2.2 trillion bill was passed by the House of Representatives and signed into law by President Trump on March 27
 - \$30.75 billion earned for education
 - \$14 billion for higher education (\$3.3 for community colleges)
 - \$13.2 billion for K-12 education
 - \$3 billion to Governors to award at their discretion for K-12 or higher education
- CARES ACT: Emergency Stabilization Fund
 - 90% of funds are distributed directly from the U.S. Department of Education to institutions:
 - To prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19
 - Based on formula of 75% PELL FTE/25% NON-PELL FTE
 - Students attending 100% of their classes online are excluded from calculation
 - Northeast's portion is estimated at \$1,778,000
 - 50% of these funds must be awarded directly to students for things such as food, housing, course materials, technology, childcare, etc.
 - 10% to grant program for smaller institutions and those with the greatest need
- CARES ACT: Campus-based Provisions
 - Waives non-federal share for institution's Federal Work Student (FWS) and Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) for 2020 and 2021

- Allows institutions to transfer up to 100% of unexpended FWS funds to FSEOG during qualifying emergency
 - Allows use of FSEOG funds for emergency scholarships to students
- CARES ACT: Satisfactory Academic Progress and Return to Title IV
 - Allows institutions to exclude from the Satisfactory Academic Progress quantitative component any credits not completed, without requiring an appeal
 - Waives the Return to Title IV requirements for schools or students to return unearned grant of loan assistance
 - U.S. Department of Education will cancel a portion of the Direct Loan for payment period from which student withdrew
- CARES ACT: Borrower Relief
 - Suspends payments and interest accrual until September 30, 2020 for Direct Loans and Department of Education-held FFEL loans automatically
 - Suspends involuntary collections such as wage, garnishment, tax refund reductions, and reductions of federal benefits such as Social Security benefits through September 30, 2020
- CARES ACT: Other Provisions
 - \$150 billion state emergency fund (\$1.25 billion, minimum, to each state)
 - \$350 billion will be made available in SBA loans and grants for small organizations with fewer than 500 employees
 - Loan program for mid-sized organizations with 500-100 employees
 - Expanded unemployment provisions (including part-time workers)
 - Charitable Giving Incentive
 - Creates a new above-the-line deduction for total charitable contributions of up to \$300
 - Increases existing cap on annual contributions for those who itemize
 - Payroll Tax Credits
 - If leave costs exceed payroll taxes normally owed, the difference will be refundable to employers at the end of each quarter. Public institutions are not eligible.
- Future Legislation
 - Discussion already revolving around a 4th stimulus:
 - Worker training programs
 - Student loan forgiveness
 - Infrastructure
- Next Steps
 - Streamlining the process for receiving student assistance requests
 - Creation of a web form for receiving student assistance requests
 - Distribution of student funds as quickly as possible
 - Soliciting funds for the Foundation's emergency grant fund; used to aid students

Steve Anderson stated that he has understood that some colleges are providing 50% or 60% refunds which are based on the completion of a semester and inquired if Northeast is in compliance with that. Stacy Dieckman advised that it is a decision that each institution needed to make. Northeast is prorating the amount for housing and meal plans. These funds had to be refunded to the students within 14 days.

Board members inquired how this affects students who live off campus. Ms. Dieckman reported that she had reached out to this cohort group and many of these students have a lease on their apartment that they must continue to pay. Other costs include utilities, internet connection, etc. Northeast has a small amount of Kiewit funds that can be utilized to assist students until the federal funds are released.

Recently, a mother from Steve Anderson's district contacted him about their son who is a student in the Northeast plumbing program. The parents are very pleased to have their son at home so they know where he is and very appreciative of what Northeast is doing to assist their students.

President Leah Barrett publicly acknowledged Residence Life staff for their work in organizing students to come to campus and move their belongings out of the residence halls.

5. President Barrett introduced discussion related to the Madison County Proclamation which is attached to today's agenda. As a higher education institution within Madison County, Northeast and its Governing Board are declaring a local emergency under the Emergency Management Act and setting the stage so that Northeast could potentially receive Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds. Following the 2019 flood, Northeast Community College did not seek FEMA funds, however, Brian Paulsen has completed research and there is a good potential that Northeast may be eligible for funds. Steve Anderson questioned why the Extended Campuses were not included in this Proclamation. President Barrett stated that she would reach out for guidance on the extended campuses and would proceed with submitting necessary documentation to cover the extended campuses.

If approved by the Board of Governors, the Proclamation will be forwarded to the Madison County (Nebraska) Clerk for consideration by the Madison County Commissioners during their April 14th Commissioners meeting.

Following discussion, a consensus was reached by the External Relations Committee to recommend to the Board of Governors to approve the Madison County Proclamation for Northeast Community College pursuant to the Emergency Management Act (NEB. REV. STAT. §§ 81-829.36 to 81-829.75) and other Nebraska Laws and Issued to Northeast Community College (Northeast), 801 East Benjamin Avenue, Norfolk, NE.

6. With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned 12:45 p.m.