

President's Cabinet Meeting Minutes

June 6, 2022

1. State Board of Education Meeting: Dr. Whaley announced that the State Board of Education will hold its quarterly meeting at Roane State, October 27-28. This will be the first time that the Board's meeting has ever been held at a community college. It will operate similarly to a TBR meeting, with committee meetings the first day and the full Board meeting on the second day. Robert Eby, Vice Chair of the Board, would like us to feature our Middle College in the morning of the first day. After lunch, there will be committee meetings, followed by a reception and dinner that evening. Dr. Whaley asked Cabinet members to hold the meeting dates.
2. Inflation Concerns: Jamie Stringer, Lisa Steffensen, Kat Baker, and Robin Townson attended the meeting to express concerns that rising gas prices (and other inflationary pressures) would negatively impact the enrollment gains that have been made. (Marsha Mathews noted that employees are feeling the pinch as well.) A number of options to assist students were discussed to help them while they are on campus. Ideas include providing snacks or hot/microwavable meals, more comfortable places to rest/study between classes, additional charging stations, a more flexible Foundation gas card policy, shuttles between campuses. Many of these ideas can be funded with HEERF dollars; however, the extension of those funds only goes through May. Although the deans have developed a more student-centered schedule and there remain robust web offerings, Kat noted that some students are already meeting with their success coach to change their schedule to reduce the amount of time/days they need to be on campus. The Foundation Scholarship Committee is meeting today, and Scott Niermann asked Robin Townson to send him information about "cost of attendance," so he can advocate for higher scholarship amounts. A walk-through of campus spaces is scheduled for June 22, and student feedback will be sought.
3. Director of Middle College, Aaron Jones: The new director of Middle College was introduced to the Cabinet. Jones previously served as principal at Central High School in Wartburg. He has already been to four RSCC campuses for advisory meetings with parents and students. A formal orientation will be held in July.
4. Lenoir City Parklet Update: Susan Williams, Loudon County site director, joined Cabinet to give an update on Lenoir City's plans for the parklet adjacent to the campus. Concrete stamping has been done and picnic table installed. The next phase includes a portable stage, a place for trucks to come with stage equipment, an entrance archway, lighting, and an outdoor classroom. Cabinet will meet on site at Loudon County on July 25, and the Lenoir City manager will attend.
5. Knox County Facility Update: Dr. Whaley met with Covenant CEO Mike Belbeck last week. He has asked for a draft of the entire project timeline. Initial design drafts place the Simulation Center on the first floor, TCAT/Knoxville on the second floor, and Roane State on the third floor. Once more detailed costs of the project are determined, a decision will need to be made concerning infrastructure build-out for a future fourth floor. Land remediation costs have risen by \$200,000. Marsha hopes to have remediation completed by Labor Day. Johnson and Galyon has been selected as the project construction company.

6. Critical Processes: Marsha Mathews' departments have been through preliminary overview training with TBR for the new business continuity software. Following this virtual training, Marsha determined that a consistent naming protocol for critical processes, especially those that connect across divisions and department, should be established. (Payroll is an example of this kind of process.) The VP's were asked to look at their departments' functions for naming this summer, thinking about what other departments and external sources connect with these functions. Marsha will reach out to APSU, since they may have already done something similar and could serve as a model for naming protocol.
7. Deans'/Presidents' List Eligibility: Dr. Ward noted that current requirements for eligibility for these academic awards are enrollment in 12 college-level credit hours per semester. (There is an exception for students in closed programs whose schedule does not equate to 12 hours.) The requirement for only college-level credits makes students enrolled in co-requisite courses ineligible. Since there are no TBR policies that would prevent loosening this requirement to 12 hours, including learning support, Diane asked Cabinet to approve the change so these students can also be recognized for their hard work and academic achievements. Cabinet approved the change.
8. 4.0 GPA Recognition: Dr. Ward also reported that current practice for recognizing students with a 4.0 GPA only applies to those students who have taken ALL courses at Roane State. This, similarly, seems unfair to a number of excellent students. Since there are also no TBR policies governing this issue, Diane will consider the thresholds for eligibility and bring a revised set of requirements back to Cabinet for approval.
9. Veteran Wave: With flags currently on display, Dr. Ward asked Sarah Self if she could run some advertising to encourage purchase of new flags. (The current flags will be flown again for one more year, at which time they will be returned to the buyer.) Dr. Whaley and the Cabinet want to continue this initiative, and Marsha, Diane, and Jamie will meet to determine the feasibility of the institution continuing to purchase flags for student and employee veterans.
10. SAS Scholarship Update: Jamie Stringer reported that none of the four-year institutions are continuing to cover the last two years of the scholarship, which was the real draw for students. Jamie's team will draft a case for the scholarship, including budget and eligibility requirements for further study. He will also reach out to Walters State to find out how they are utilizing their SAS students.
11. Enrollment Update: Although we continue to be up in new students, the declines in continuing students persist. Some of the reasons are "life issues," but many are academic. Jamie's team is scheduling meetings with students to get more detailed information about why they didn't make the grade or have decided not to continue. Enrollment and marketing efforts going forward will concentrate on adult students with greater physical presence in the service area communities.
12. Salary Increase Update: Marsha reported that all of the community colleges in our east Tennessee area intend to use the approved 4% salary increase as an across-the board COLA. Although previous year COLA's have significantly helped to bring us closer to paying out the current salary equity plan, Marsha will calculate the cost to fully pay out the plan. Both a COLA and any supplementary pay out of the salary equity plan would be approved at the December TBR meeting and be retroactive to July. The full Budget Committee, including Support Staff President and Faculty Senate President, will be invited to President's Cabinet to help make RSCC's final decision.

13. Morgan County Correctional Complex Program: Dr. Ward reported that there will be a new funding stream for offering classes to qualified inmates. This money will come directly to Roane State. Although the state's goal is to increase the number of students and courses, Diane is still hoping to maintain a manageable schedule of two classes per semester.