



**MARICOPA COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
GOVERNING BOARD
MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF CONSULTING TEAM
FOR THE HLC COMPLAINT
SEPTEMBER 22, 2009**

MINUTES

A meeting with members of the Consulting Team for the HLC Complaint and members of the Maricopa County Community College District Governing Board was scheduled to be held at 4:30 p.m. at the Emerald Point Building (Maricopa Community Colleges Foundation Building) Foundation Board Room, 2419 West 14th Street, Tempe, Arizona, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.02, notice having been duly given.

PRESENT

GOVERNING BOARD

Colleen Clark, President
Randolph Lumm, Secretary
Debra Pearson, Member
Don Campbell, Member
Jerry Walker, Member

CONSULTING TEAM

Dr. Peg Lee
Mr. Darrell Shumway
Ms. Pearl Washington
Dr. Michael Chipps
Dr. Gerald "Jerry" Baird

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m.

Welcome and Overview

The meeting was called to order by Board President Colleen Clark. President Clark stated that members of the consulting team would introduce themselves and would provide an initial report of the findings to the anonymous complaint filed with Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Board members would listen and hear what was necessary to be in compliance.

RECAP BY DR. PEG LEE

Dr. Lee introduced members of the Consulting Team as follows:

- Ms. Pearl Washington, a former trustee from Illinois
- Dr. Gerald Baird, Executive Vice President of Administrative Services from Johnson County Community College
- Mr. Darrell Shumway, a former trustee from Kansas
- Dr. Michael Chipps, President of Mid-Plains Community College
- Herself: President of Oakton Community College

Dr. Lee informed those present that the services of this consulting team had been requested by the Chancellor at the suggestion of the Higher Learning Commission to investigate and interview

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individuals within the Maricopa Community College District with reference to the anonymous complaint that had been filed alleging micromanagement by the Board. They met with more than 117 people during this visit and the purpose of the meeting with the entire Board was to discuss their initial thoughts and findings.

Individuals interviewed were asked questions related to Criterion One and Core Components 1d and 1e related to Criteria for Accreditation.

- Criterion One: Mission and Integrity – The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff and student.
 - Core Component 1d. The organization’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.
 - Core Component 1e. The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

Ten questions were formulated and individuals were asked different ones. Regardless of the questions asked, similar responses were made by most people.

Dr. Lee stated that they had received responses to one question in particular from all board members with the exception of Mr. Lumm who would visit with them after the evening’s Governing Board Meeting. The question, “How do you define the board’s role and responsibility in terms of meeting the needs of students?” was then addressed to Mr. Lumm for his response. Mr. Lumm responded that he came onto the Board based on Arizona Revised Statutes 15-341 which defined the legal responsibilities of the Board. As a board member it is his responsibility to oversee and gain information for making decisions and to use the Chancellor for that source of information. The Board is responsible for setting policy, hiring and firing, assessing taxes as outlined in statute, and approving or disapproving the budget. The Board does not write policy but does get suggestions from the Chancellor.

Mr. Shumway commented that they understood that statutes govern community colleges in the state of Arizona. There are two parts to the equation: state statutes and accreditation criteria that a college needs to abide by. Nowhere in statute does it say an individual board member has authority but rather the board as a whole does. In their interviews with 117 individuals, with none knowing what questions were to be asked, the responses revealed that it was apparent staff were operating under a climate of fear and intimidation, often due to time elements.

This board needed to realize that it operates as a board and not as individual board members. Employees are operating under fear and intimidation because the board is not operating as a board. Threats come from some board members. In addition there were comments about going around the structure of the organization to deal directly with staff and faculty. A system this size cannot operate this way. Demanding information on a Friday or Saturday and needing it Monday is inappropriate.

Governing Board Member Jerry Walker inquired which board member was involved, as well as which employee. Dr. Lee responded that this meeting would not turn into a debate but it was rather intended to globally focus on responses from the Board.

The following questions were asked with reference to Core Component 1d.

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3. Is there evidence that the responsibility for governance is understood and implemented by appropriately delegated authority throughout the organization?
5. Is there evidence that effective communication supports collaboration and facilitates governance processes and activities?

Ms. Lee commented that apparently there was a lack of thoroughly established governance policies and communicating with respect. Ms. Clark responded that a meeting had been held the previous week where governance policies were discussed and there was a need to honor that model and understand specifics as to the Vision/Mission/Values. She asked for counsel on how to obtain that.

Ms. Lee remarked that the team reviewed the mission documents that have been adopted by the organization, as well as the strategic plan and strategic directions that the organization has been guided by. Over last 9 months, as DVDs demonstrated, it seems that there is no Vision/Mission that is guiding priorities. They had board members' top ten lists and they are not aligned with the goals of the colleges. Maricopa has grown to be the largest district in the country and the team was here to affirm the scope and value to the actual community, the good that Maricopa does for the students. They were amazed that the governance policies of this board seem to be ignored. The overriding strategic directions of the organization seem to be overtaken by the complaints of the day.

Ms. Clark remarked that the Board takes these comments seriously and will rectify any issues. She questioned how to monitor the expansion of these areas if we want to have confidence with those directives. Ms. Washington responded that it would be necessary to review the vision/mission/values, modify, and then redesign what they would want the Chancellor to do. A decision would need to be made on how to monitor. No specificity regarding MCCC was given. Performance indicators would need to be determined to see if the Chair is having a conversation as a Board or an individual board member. Permission must be granted. Board must operate as one. They need to build trust.

Dr. Baird commented that there are many sources about setting strategic goals and how to measure. Need to revisit the Vision/Mission/Values and see how they could be measured.

Mr. Shumway stated that there is an environment of mistrust not just at the board level but also at levels below the Chancellor and Vice Chancellors. He recommended working on developing trust using policies that had worked before. He stated board members were board members and there was not one on this board who is qualified to run an institution this size. Professionals are needed to do this and there are no professionals that know how to run educational institutions on the board. When board members go around the Chancellor, mistrust develops. The Board Chair and Board Members are the same. The Chair set the agenda and runs the meeting. The Board Chair does not have any special authority.

Ms. Clark clarified if the role is not to be meeting with individuals around the district, things must be discussed with the Chancellor.

Ms. Lee stated that as they looked at the Vision/Mission/Values, small changes that don't seem to be accommodating have been made. Board members are elected and committed to the social contract to provide education for all students not just for one certain area. The Chancellor is the

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Board's only employee. Education will help raise the performance of the economy. People that will help solve tomorrow's problems are sitting at their desks and listening to students on a one-on-one basis. The role of the board is macro management, not micromanagement. Maricopa is the flagship of community colleges in the United States and it was the team's desire that it remain such. The problem was that the board was not going to allow that in this present condition. The board was in a crisis.

Mr. Lumm raised concerns about audits received and things that need to be done. Should questions not be asked? Is that micromanagement? Dr. Lee stated that answers should be provided by the Chancellor. Ms. Washington answered that information should always be filtered through board members operating as a unit. Mr. Walker raised the issue of open meeting laws. Outline what you are going to do to correct problems. Mrs. Pearson reiterated that the Chancellor should always be part of the conversation. Ms. Clark stated that when specific information is requested, that information is requested for all board members. There is communication that has to be engaged in on both sides. Other party needs to communicate that. Mr. Shumway asked if the board has policy regarding information from the organization. Staff spends a lot of time putting together information. The President needs to put a stop to this. If the Board feels that board member requests have validity, that information will be put together. One request resulted in 2100 pages. There is fear and dread about what is going to come next. Staff spends weekends gathering information. People are being diverted from the mission to respond to individual board members.

Dr. Chipps asked the Board Members if they believed they were a collective agent? Does this organization deserve a collective board? College deserves an effective board. Does that exist? Mr. Walker responded, NO! Some people go out of their to create problems. Board members need information to understand what is going on. They are curious and want to learn all they can learn. He wants information now, does not want to wait. Dr. Chipps responded that it was very good for board members and members of the community. Ms. Clark asked if the curiosity was based on Vision/Mission/Values or individually. Dr. Lee stated there was a difference between need to know and wanting to know. This is an intrusion on the work of individuals. This was inappropriate. The role is as a governing body, not as an individual board member.

Mr. Lumm responded that he believed this board could be a board that works together once it decided how to do this and what is best. Board can be unified. We all want to be effective and make the right decisions. Dr. Lee cautioned that the board could survive together or die separately. MCCCCD is flagship and board is not going to allow that. Ms. Clark asked what could be recommended to unify? Ms. Washington stated that egos needed to be put aside and respect for each other needed to be displayed. Ms. Clark inquired about disciplining for lack of respect. Dr. Chipps stated board needed to hold each other accountable for that. Work with the Chancellor and get trained.

An organization of 4500 fulltime employees and \$1.45 billion was hinging on two votes and a split. Trying to find out who is going be the third vote. Need to start role as a board. Treat each other respectfully and kind. Show a commitment to students. Act as one. When one member enters into conversation with someone, they may want to be friendly or intimidating. The role is always as a member of the board. Give respect always. Commitment to the students who live in Maricopa County. Empower the people who deliver the education. Students, not politics, governed by board members.

Mrs. Pearson commented that no board member was going to disagree with everything that had been said. However, behavior demonstrates thoughts. Same script with a different bent. Everyone has the same goal but delivers differently and that is where the disconnect occurs. Instead of coming with those agendas separately and individually, there are five minds that need to be driven by goals. Rhetoric does not match the goal. Ms. Washington responded that this young board needs education and training. Need to develop governance policy that allows board to work with the Chancellor, not be out of control. Need to treat people with respect and civility. Need training on teambuilding. You have to be the change you want to see. Identify training needs and put a plan in place.

Adjournment of Meeting with Consulting Team and Move into Executive Session: The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Randolph Elias Lumm
Governing Board Secretary