

## Minutes

### I. STUDY SESSION

#### 1. Call to Order

- A. The 1:00 P.M. special meeting was cancelled because there was not a quorum of trustees. No special board meeting took place.

### II. REGULAR BOARD MEETING

#### 1. Call to Order

Board Chair Frieda Takamura called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. and noted a quorum. Chair Takamura welcomed the group and wished everyone a happy new year. Lunar new year takes place on February 10, 2024. Chair Takamura welcomed meeting attendees to come forward and wish the group a happy new year. John Tong, ASG Events Coordinator, welcomed the group and wished everyone a happy lunar new year in Vietnamese. Dean Warren Takata wished everyone a happy new year from the Hawaiian Islands. Vice Chair Norouzi wished everyone a happy new year in Farsi and noted that Iranian new year is the first day of Spring. Chair Takamura thanked Dean Chris Carter for an informal mini tour of Allied Health. Trustee Zappone noted that students gave feedback about how happy they are to be at RTC. Dr. Harden talked about the power of RTC's faculty and reputation in the fields. RTC has offerings that are not offered anywhere nearby. Thank you to Instruction for making RTC a standout institution.

#### 2. Adoption of Minutes

##### A. December 13, 2023 – Regular Meeting

*Trustee Zappone introduced a motion to approve the minutes for the regular meeting held on December 13, 2023. Trustee Norouzi seconded, and the motion carried.*

#### 3. Communications

##### A. General Information/Introductions

Executive Director John Henry Whatley introduced the new Service Desk Manager, Joe Velasco. Joe started the second week of the quarter and is a first generation Mexican American from a large family. Joe has two daughters in the area and has a strong and varied technical background. Director Jake Swanke introduced Accommodations and Retention Specialist Stephani Wolfe, who joined RTC on January 2. Stephani has a strong background in education and in mental health services. She is excited to continue her career in higher education

at RTC. Vice President Dr. Stephanie Delaney introduced Samantha Nelson as the new Dean of ELA, IBEST, and the Bridge Program.

Chair Takamura asked about weather and facilities. Vice President Jackson noted that there have been some boiler issues and burst pipes that Facilities has been working to address.

Trustee Cooper asked about an update on the Health Sciences Building. VP Jackson stated that pre-design is scheduled for wrap-up in the next couple of months due to the funding biennium. Funding will likely not be until the 2027-2029 biennium. VP Jackson also noted that the amount that the Office of Financial Management accounts for inflation does not keep up with actual costs. There are not currently many available dollars to enhance and modify the instructional space.

Trustee Zappone thanked the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day committee for a wonderful keynote by Jesse Hagopian on "Social Movement Unionism: From the Poor People's Campaign to Educators on Strike". The keynote provided excellent national context for education around history and erasure of civil rights leaders in education.

B. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

C. Public Comments from the Audience

There were no public comments.

D. Student Leadership

Mica Hunter introduced members of the ASG including Saleea Cornelius, President, Leslie Wofford, Vice President, and John Tong, Events Coordinator. ASG gave a brief presentation. During Winter, ASG hosted a Pizza Event with fun games include bingo and old school Nintendo. Shout out to Trustee Zappone for attending. For Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, the ASG went to the Northwest African American Museum. On February 13, Women and Men of Merit will meet for a financial literacy and home buyer event. On February 14, there will be an open house for RTC. On February 15, there will be a Lunar New Year event in the Cafeteria. Trustee Zappone noted that the Pizza Event was a lot of fun, even though he didn't win at Nintendo. Dr. Harden thanked Mica Hunter and Student Leadership for taking time out of their days to come to the Board meetings, and for sharing their student experiences.

E. Renton Federation of Teachers

Donna Maher, Renton Federation of Teachers (RFT) President, wished everyone a happy new year and also hoped that everyone had safe travels due to the weather. President Maher expressed gratitude for a late start due to weather today and for early notice when campus needed to close due to weather on Friday. RFT is negotiating the Collective Bargaining Agreement this year. RFT thanked the Board for approving the academic calendar. Faculty items that are coming up are a return to a two-day a week on-campus schedule as well as program viability reports. Program Viability meetings are scheduled to start in February. Administration has not announced any decisions around program viability, however faculty are concerned about a reduction in force and are requesting clear and early direct communication. Accreditation is coming up. The Renton Promise has been successful in increasing enrollment. Some programs are reaching out to high school students as well as specific community groups in order to ensure growing enrollment. Faculty are enthusiastic about RTC's potential to become the best technical college in the state.

F. Written Communication Reports

Chair Takamura thanked the group for the written reports. These reports are a big ask, and help the Trustees get a sense of campus.

4. Discussion/Reports

A. President's Report

Dr. Harden wished the group a happy new year and acknowledged Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. She expressed thanks for Doris Martinez and the team that planned these week-long activities.

i. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Dr. Harden attended a virtual, informal group of regional Black presidents of 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities. This group will continue to meet. Dr. Harden met with Mayor Pavone and Superintendent Pattenau to prepare for the Renton Promise Launch and ensure that this program will continue after the proviso ends. RTC tested Pause Week, which is a week of no meetings so that employees can focus on projects and build out capacity. RTC had the first 2024 Community Potluck. Thank you to Gerald Bradford for his sweat equity!

ii. Strategic Equity Plan and Accreditation

The Strategic Equity Plan (SEP) is underway, as is Accreditation preparation, and budget. The SEP Steering Committee is beginning Phase 2 of the SEP, which will include listening sessions around the Campus Climate Survey. These listening sessions are divided into groups and will be facilitated by Be Culture. Be Culture is also anonymizing answers to monthly reflection questions. Chair Takamura noted that some of the reflection questions may be too esoteric for a wider audience. Executive Director Carrie Shaw has been working on a partnership template so that Executive Cabinet can have meaningful and broad conversations with community partners. Accreditation is moving forward, and preparation homework is forthcoming. There will likely be a campus clean-up day!

iii. Financial Stewardship

While enrollment is up 11%, enrollment is still about 600 FTE down from where it was in 2018-2019. Thank you to Instruction, Student Services, and everyone in the room for helping with enrollment. The Multicultural Center will go out for bid this month.

iv. Strategic Partnerships and Engagement

Dr. Delaney, Dean Shannon Matson, and Dr. Harden toured the Red Dot factory, which makes mobile HVAC units nationally and internationally. Conversations were around student recruitment as well as English language learning for current employees. Red Dot is entirely employee-owned. Next week, Dr. Harden and Executive Director Carrie Shaw are traveling to the American Association of Community Colleges Workforce Development Institute. The following week, Dr. Harden and other RTC members will be going to an Executive Retreat for Guided Pathways. After that, Dr. Harden, Vice Chair Norouzi, and Trustee Zappone will be in D.C. for the Association of Community College Trustees Legislative Summit. In the meantime, Dr. Delaney will be attending the Washington Association of Community and Technical Colleges Hill Climb with Trustee Zappone as well as students.

v. Legislative Update

There are currently some bills on financial aid and grant ability expansion. The current Governor's budget has some education items included, but none which align with RTC's stated goals. RTC also got approval to renovate Building J. House Bill 2171, which will allow incarcerated individuals to choose whether Pell Grants are applied has been heard. The Department of Corrections currently supports an opposing bill that will require incarcerated

individuals to use Pell grants. House Bill 2309 is scheduled for public hearing. This bill will provide for funding for up to 45 credits of service area community or technical college tuition for Washington high school graduates.

B. Financial/Budget Status

VP Jackson briefed the group on the financial status and budget update for the previous month. Revenue is trending at about 43%. State allocation is as expected. Tuition is up due to how tuition is now collected (modified accrual). Enterprise is trailing a bit but is holding okay. There was about \$19M collected this year as opposed to \$16M last year. The largest expenditure is salary and benefits at \$10.4M. Goods and Services are at \$2.6M. Equipment is slightly overbudget due to new computer purchases and a catering van using a COP. However, RTC will get those funds back from the State Treasurer's Office. There's about a \$3M increase in expenditures compared to last year. Regarding cash, RTC is at \$21M in cash and investments, which is slightly down from last month. This is expected to decrease as the projections in the Multicultural Center and Building J continue. Reimbursement and annual repayment is pending. For Winter, enrollment is ahead of last year for General Education, College and Career Pathways, Professional Technical programs, and apprenticeship compared to last two years at this same time. While enrollment numbers are looking better, enrollment is down about 600 FTE when compared to 2018-2019. During 2018-2019, the team was strategizing about how to increase enrollment. VP Jackson ran the group through High School, Running Start, and Worker Retaining FTEs.

5. Board of Trustees

A. Strategic Equity Planning Steering Committee

Vice Chair Norouzi reported on the last SEP meeting. A topic of discussion at this meeting was feedback from the first reflection question. Core themes around responses were about technology, program offerings, when instruction is offered, use of technology in instruction to meet student needs, polarized camps around DEI, and remaining student focused. Dr. Harden noted that we are on track with the timeline. Vice Chair Norouzi mentioned that it was helpful to hear reflections, and that a takeaway was that the Board needs to be able to take feedback into consideration while balancing the need to move forward. Chair Takamura stated that she is interested in hearing about how Board policies and procedures can keep up with what is happening in the college.

B. Foundation Liaison Report

Trustee Cooper called out that March 2 is the Student Success Gala and issued an informal race to fill tables. About half of the auction items and sponsorships have been procured. The theme is a Salute to the 70's – Come Together. Executive Director Shaw invited the trustees to an event in the Cafeteria honoring all of the Connell Scholars on February 2, 2024 at 5:30pm.

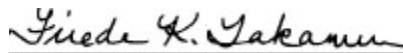
6. Meetings

A. Regular Board Meeting – February 21, 2024

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, Trustee Norouzi motioned to adjourn the Board of Trustees meeting at 4:32 p.m. Trustee Zappone seconded, and the motion carried.

FRIEDA TAKAMURA, Board Chair  
Board of Trustees



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YOSHIKO HARDEN, President  
Renton Technical College



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