

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD RETREAT
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

May 30, 2013

Minutes

The Board of Trustees of Houston Community College held a Special Meeting (Board Retreat) on Thursday, May 30, 2013 at The Houstonian, 111 North Post Oak Lane, Houston, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Bruce Austin, *Chair*
Sandie Mullins, *Vice Chair*
Eva Loreda, *Secretary*
Herlinda Garcia
Carroll G. Robinson

ADMINISTRATION

Renee Byas, Acting Chancellor

OTHERS PRESENT

Jarvis Hollingsworth, System Counsel, Bracewell & Giuliani

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Bruce Austin, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:58 a.m. and declared the Board convened to consider matters pertaining to Houston Community College as listed on the duly posted Meeting Notice.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL GOVERNANCE TRAINING

Mr. Austin apprised that the purpose of the meeting was to continue the Board training on Governance. Mr. Austin introduced Dr. Belle Wheelan, President of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Schools.

Dr. Wheelan elaborated on the purpose of the Board and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) relations. She acknowledged that HCC is about to take on one of the most important tasks of the college, which is hiring a CEO.

Dr. Wheelan discussed the following:

- Effective Strategies
- Imperative to make certain the budget is provided upfront during the hiring of CEO
- Good working relationship with the CEO is vital as the CEO is the only person hired by the Board

Houston Community College
Special Meeting – May 30, 2013 - Page 2

- Effective Board and CEO relations is imperative; must work through the CEO
- The Board works as one; each member loses its individualism when they become a Trustee
- Retreat with the new CEO is vital so that expectations are set
- The Board Chair should represent the Board in the community
- Encourage CEO to have a presence in the community to build relationships in the community
- There are no secrets in higher education; discuss things openly
- Open communication is imperative as well as style of communication
- Discuss expectations of the Chancellor prior to hiring and arrival; however, the Chancellor should be able to voice his/her expectations as well
- Must be prepared for the meetings by becoming familiar with information prior to the meeting
- Trustees should be concerned about the budget as they have the fiduciary responsibility of the institution
- Board makes the policy and pay the Chancellor to implement

Goals of Workshop:

- Understanding the basics of accreditation
- Understanding the structure of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
- Understanding the role of the institution's Board in the accreditation process
- Understanding the requirements of each of the Principles of Accreditation

Types of Accrediting Agencies:

- National Agencies - Accredite institutions of higher education that have a single focus irrespective of location
- Regional Agencies - Accredite all aspects of an institution of higher education in specific regions
- Specialized or Professional Agencies - Accredite programs within institutions

Characteristics of Regional Accreditation:

- Comprehensive, Periodic Review
- Focus on Institution-Wide Goals, Processes, Outcomes
- Related to Institutional Purpose and Mission
- Regional in Scope
- Voluntary
- Non-Governmental
- Decentralized National System
- Non-Profit

Regional Accreditation Purpose:

- Improve Quality throughout the institution
- Assure the public that institutions meet established standards
- Serve as a "gate-keeper" for federal financial aid

SACS Structure:

- SACS Commission on Colleges Structure (Colleges)
 - SACSOC Board of Trustees
 - Executive Council
 - Appeals Committee
 - Committees on Compliance and Reports
 - Process for Taking Action on a Member Institution
- SACS CASI (K-12)
- Six Regional Accrediting Associations
- Number of Institutions Accredited
- Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC)
- Oversight of Commission Activities
- College Delegate Assembly

Mr. Austin recessed the meeting at 10:43 a.m. and reconvened at 10:51 a.m.

Dr. Wheelan continued with the overview as follows:

Principals of Accreditation:

The requirements and standards, which institutions must meet to become members and remain members; developed by committees or task forces consisting of representatives of member institutions; can be changed only by vote of College Delegate Assembly

- Principle of Integrity
- Core Requirements (CR) - Governance, Administrative Structure, Mission, Curriculum, Learning Resources, Student Support Services, Financial and Physical Resources, Faculty, Evaluation and Planning, Quality Enhancement Plan
- Comprehensive Standards (CS) - Same as above but in further detail
- Federal Requirements (FR) - Student achievement, complaints, publication of policies, student authentication, credit hour, state authorization

Reaffirmation Process:

- Compliance Certification
- Off-Site Committee Review
- Focused Report
- On-Site Committee Review
- Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)
- Non-Compliance Issues
- Selected Issues for U.S. Department of Education
- C&R Committee Review
- Executive Council Review
- Board Approval

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP):

- Addressed by two Principles (CR 2.12 and CS 3.3.2)

Houston Community College
Special Meeting – May 30, 2013 - Page 4

- Assesses how well an institution is doing what it says it is doing, including the identification and assessment of student learning outcomes, and improvement based on the results

Substantive Change:

- If a member institution undertakes a change that is significant (“substantive”) such as a level change or change of ownership or developing off-campus sites, it must go through an approval process

Roles of the Board:

- Policy-making body
- Hire, Evaluate and, when necessary, Fire the CEO
- Oversee fiduciary responsibility

Understanding Your (Board) Role:

- Complementary but separate duties - Clear and appropriate distinction, in writing and in practice, between policy-making function of Board and responsibility of administration and faculty to implement policy (CS 3.2.6)

Board Status/Structure:

- Is the legal body with authority over institution
- Minimum of five members
- Not controlled by a minority of Board members or by organizations/interests separate from it (CR 2.2)

Roles of the Board:

- Responsibility and authority of faculty - Policies on the responsibility and authority of faculty in governance and academic matters (CR2.2 & CS 3.7.5)
- Academic freedom - Ensures adequate procedures for safeguarding and protecting academic freedom (CS 3.7.4)
- Protect institution from undue influence - Maintain freedom from undue influence from political, religious, or other external bodies and protects the institution from such influence (CS 3.2.4)
- Conflict of interest - Presiding officer of the Board and a majority of the other voting members of the Board are free of any contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution (CS 2.2)
- Select and evaluate the CEO - The governing Board is responsible for the selection and the periodic evaluation of the chief executive officer (CS 3.2.1)
- Board member dismissal - Policy whereby board members can be dismissed only for appropriate reasons and by a fair process (CS 3.2.5)

Houston Community College
Special Meeting – May 30, 2013 - Page 5

- Ensuring adequate financial resources and stability (CR 2.2 ; CR 2.11.1; CS 3.10.1); provide appropriate financial statements (CR 2.11.1; CS 3.10.3; FR 4.7)

Institutional Issues:

- Student Success - Planning and assessment; remedial education; completion/graduation rates; retention rates; program review; transfer of credits

National Issues:

- Completion/Graduation Rates
- Employability
- Accountability
- Affordability and Cost
- Remedial Education
- For-profit Institutions

The following questions and concerns provided by the Board were discussed:

- How can you form a team with administration, Board, and the Community? Dr. Wheelan informed that there needs to be a discussion as to what the Board wants to do as an institution. She noted that the goals identified in the agenda book are right on target. She recommended that there be a level of trust and equality meaning both Board and CEO are on the same level.
- What do you do when an individual provides inquiry but does not want to be identified? Dr. Wheelan recommended that a whistle-blowing process is used and if the complaint is anonymous it should be trashed because non-identify. She noted that it is all right to notify the Chancellor of the issue. Dr. Wheelan informed that the Board must be careful that an overload is not placed on the Chancellor.
- How do you handle issues by the community members desiring to express their concerns? Dr. Wheelan apprised that there is no problem with listening to the concerns but the problem comes when the Trustee tries to resolve the problem rather than passing the concerns to the CEO to be addressed.
- Mrs. Renee Byas, faculty, and staff were commended on their diligent efforts to keep things together in the mist of the transition. Dr. Wheelan responded that this is why it would be recommended that if possible, an interim is not brought in but the focus should be on the permanent or full-time Chancellor. She noted that the less change during the transition, the better.

Mr. Austin expressed appreciation to Dr. Wheelan for her willingness to present to the Board and an outstanding presentation.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business coming before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

Minutes recorded, transcribed & submitted by:
Sharon Wright, Manager, Board Services

Minutes Approved as Submitted: June 25, 2013