

**VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**Meeting Number 332**

**Thursday, November 30, 2023**

**Location: ADM Boardroom**

The Virginia Highlands Community College Board convened at 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 30, 2023. Lunch was at noon, and the business portion of the meeting immediately followed at 1:10 p.m. in the ADM Boardroom.

**Members Present**

Dr. Doug Arnold, Washington County  
Don Ashley, City of Bristol  
Gwen Beattie, Smyth County  
Donald Bowman, City of Bristol  
Charlie Fugate, Washington County  
Pamela Hill, Smyth County  
Beth Rhinehart, City of Bristol

**Members Absent**

Dr. Brian Ratliff, Washington County

**Staff Present**

Dr. Adam Hutchison, President and Secretary to the Board  
Jessie O'Quinn, Executive Assistant to the President  
Christine Fields, Vice President of Finance and Administration  
Laura Pennington, Vice President of Institutional Advancement  
Robert Phillips, Dean of Workforce Development  
Dr. Derek Whisman, Vice President of Instruction and Student Services  
Karen Cheers, Director of EXCEL Program

**Call to Order**

Gwen Beattie, Chair, called the meeting to order.

**Approval of Minutes**

Board Member Don Ashley made the motion to approve the minutes for August 15, 2023 Minutes No. 331. Board Member Beth Rhinehart seconded the motion, and the motion carried by acclamation.

**Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

## Department Updates

Instruction and Student Services

Dr. Derek Whisman, Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, began his address to the Board by asking for approval of a Citizens Advisory Committee membership request. Board Member Pam Hill made a motion to approve the new member for the Criminal Justice Citizens Advisory Committee. Board Member Doug Arnold seconded the motion, and it carried by acclamation.

Dr. Whisman also asked for approval of proposed curricula changes as a part of the Transfer Framework Transition Plan, a statewide initiative. He began by explaining that the VCCS has mandated that all colleges discontinue the Associate of Arts and Sciences (AA&S) degrees and replace with either Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degrees. Some AA&S degrees being discontinued will just convert into either the AA or AS degree. To accomplish this, we will need to discontinue the old version and initiate the converted degree. And in other cases, some brand new programs will be offered. These changes will be a benefit because students will be able to have a more specific and planned major or degree instead of being lumped into one broad degree program. This will further help with transfer advising and having more accurate student data.

The VCCS colleges as a whole, with assistance from the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV), reached out to SACSCOC to inform them of these intended changes. Existing programs which require no new faculty and no new resources plan to be approved by SACS in one large move across the board. The new programs which may require new faculty, resources, or facilities will involve a more comprehensive process with SACS. Most of these changes will be implemented Fall semester 2024.

To summarize, the items for consideration for Board approval are:

- Discontinuing all AA&S degrees (10):
  - Science
  - Natural Resources
  - Engineering Specialization
  - General Studies
  - Education
  - Teacher Prep Specialization
  - Art Specialization
  - Theatre Specialization
  - Business Administration
  - IT Technology Specialization
  
- Establish new AA and AS degrees (19):
  - Liberal Arts, AA
  - Art, AA
  - Communication/Theatre, AA

- Music, AA
  - Social Sciences, AS
  - Psychology, AS
  - Sociology, AS
  - Education, AS
  - Business, AS
  - Science, AS
  - Biology, AS
  - Computer Science, AS
  - Chemistry, AS
  - Engineering, AS
  - Mathematics, AS
  - Medical Lab Science, AS
  - Natural Resources AS
  - Health Sciences, AS
  - Public Health, AS
  - Kinesiology, AS
  - General Studies, AS
- Shift to AS degrees and add content:
    - Business, AS
    - Education-Teacher Prep, AS (will require hiring a new faculty member)

Board Member Doug Arnold made a motion to approve the curricula changes as presented. Board Member Pam Hill seconded the motion, and it carried by acclamation.

Dr. Whisman also provided an enrollment update. For this Fall semester that is coming to a close, we held at 1,231 FTE. Some early data for Spring is showing 649 FTE, an increase of 39 FTE as compared to last year.

#### Workforce Development and Continuing Education

Robert Phillips, Dean of Workforce Development, shared a Workforce Development Report update. The short-term Fast Forward Workforce Training enrollment is at 62 and completions are at 29, which is about the same as last year. Mr. Phillips also reported that his department has hired a new Fast Forward Career Coach, because of the Virginia 529 Grant. He thanked Board Member Pam Hill for facilitating a connection with W-L Construction for a heavy equipment operations program startup, and also thanks to Board Member Don Bowman for arranging a meeting with BVU employees to help them enroll in the CDL program. The heavy equipment simulator and forklift simulator have been installed and ready to use. He also noted that his department has provided CPR training to students at the Washington County Career and Technical Center.

Institutional Advancement and Educational Foundation

Vice President Laura Pennington provided updates in her division. Construction on the new building is progressing, with all the exterior walls up. The building will be fully enclosed soon. VHCC received a grant from the United Company Foundation for \$50,000 to help with construction of the building. Also, we were awarded a Title III Higher Education Act Grant from the U.S. Department of Education for \$2.3 million over a five-year period.

Finance and Administrative Services

Christine Fields, Vice President of Finance and Administration, began her address to the Board by asking for approval of the 2023-2024 Vending Commission and Student Activity Fee Budget. Board Member Don Ashley made the motion to approve the budget. Board Member Beth Rhinehart seconded the motion, and it carried by acclamation.

Ms. Fields also asked for approval of the 2024-2025 Localities Appropriation Fund Budget Request. Board Member Don Bowman made the motion to approve the budget request. Board Member Beth Rhinehart seconded the motion, and it carried by acclamation.

Ms. Fields also provided campus projects updates as listed in the attachment. The Collins Student Center renovations were complete in August. A couple of projects that are next on the list are exterior door replacements and asbestos abatement.

Lastly, Ms. Fields shared the updated FY24 operating budget as listed in the attachment. This is reflective of our actual appropriations that were approved in September.

**President's Report**

President Dr. Hutchison began by saying he has invited another VHCC teammate to share in this meeting's "Department Highlights". Karen Cheers, Director of EXCEL Program, shared with the Board what her department is and how they help first-generation, low income, and transferring students.

Dr. Hutchison made a few brief remarks about the curricular changes that Dr. Whisman reported. This is the largest singular curriculum shift in VHCC's history and will require changing the catalog and reorganizing how we supervise those programs. We will need to align our supervisory roles to match the new degree plan structure. Some programs may move to a different academic division.

Dr. Hutchison provided several college updates to the Board. An interesting read that he will share in an email is that the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond has recently been focused on community college outcomes and released a report on rural community colleges as anchor economic development organizations. They are promoting a real revision in the way the State measures student outcomes. Two senior directors of research visited VHCC and talked with Dr. Hutchison and students. Secondly, he mentioned is VHCC is working on our Economic Impact Study. He will send the report to the Board when it is finalized. Another update is at the next meeting in February, the

Board will need to think about the annual President’s evaluation that will be sent to the Chancellor. Lastly, Dr. Hutchison reported that the Legislative Session begins in January. VHCC held a luncheon a couple of weeks ago and invited the Southwest Virginia colleges and local legislators that serve our areas to discuss our specific needs.

Dr. Hutchison shared some calendar items:

- Area Christmas Parades
  - Damascus – December 1, 7 p.m.
  - Glade Spring – December 2, 2 p.m.
  - Abingdon – December 2, 7 p.m.
  - Bristol – December 7, 7 p.m.
- Fall Final Exams – December 11-15
- VHCC Holiday Party at Heartwood – December 15, 11:30 a.m.
- College Closed – December 21-January 1
- In-Service Activities – January 2-12
- Spring Classes Begin – January 16

**Adjournment**

Board Member Don Bowman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Board Member Doug Arnold seconded, and the Board unanimously approved adjournment at 3:00 p.m.

Submitted By:   
Dr. Adam Hutchison, President

Approved By:    
Gwen Beattie, Chair Vice Chair Date