



## SEWARD COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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### **SCCC Board of Trustees will expand to seven pending research, public election** *First accreditation review gives college thumbs-up*

The Seward County Community College Board of Trustees will likely expand to a seven-person panel in the next year, following a unanimous vote at the first meeting of 2019.

“We’ve talked about this for a few years, and I’d like to get a decision from the board tonight,” said Chair Ron Oliver. “Things are going well, and that is the time to address something like this.”

When the state of Kansas established two-year colleges, then known as “junior colleges,” the standard structure required a six-member board. Oliver and Chance noted this sometimes resulted in evenly split votes that in turn divided communities.

“Over my 27 years on the board, we’ve only had a few tied votes, but nothing major,” Oliver said. “In the future, it would be good to avoid that possibility, as we have seen with some other colleges.”

Longtime trustee and vice chair Marvin Chance Jr. made the motion, seconded by John Engel, to move ahead with establishing a seven-member board.

“This is just a decision by this body to move ahead,” Oliver said, noting the process involves several legal requirements. Board counsel Kerry McQueen will research and report to the trustees about the particular details, which will include official, legal notification for the public of the new structure, and selection of a trustee by voters as part of the regular election process.

For the new calendar year, the board reviewed offices and committee assignments, with no changes made. Oliver remains chair, Chance is vice-chair, college president Dr. Ken Trzaska remains clerk/secretary, community members Tina Call and Mike Brond serve as college treasurer and assistant, and trustee John Engel will be the official voting designee at the American Association of Community College Trustees.

The college appears to be on track for renewal of its accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission. Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Todd Carter said the first response to the HLC portfolio the college submitted in October was largely positive.

“The review we received lists us as compliant, meeting the criteria with some areas for improvement,” Carter said. “The next step will be for us to dig into the areas where they noted we can improve, and address how we have followed up.” When the commission visits in October, he said, “they will want to verify that we’ve made those improvements. So far, we’re in good shape.”

Carter said the college also received approval from KBOR for performance measures that had initially been recorded as lower than expected.

“There is an appeal process, and I took it to them to show that in comparison, we are at or above the measures reported by our peer colleges,” Carter said. As a result, the college was granted a 90-percent potential funding approval for any new funds that might be allocated by the state. Although this would only happen if the Kansas Legislature

released further funding, Carter noted the approval is valuable in terms of accurately reflecting the college's performance.

"If they provide funding, we are eligible to receive the highest amount they grant," he said.

Security Supervisor Wendall Wehmeier provided a "Mover Team" update about campus safety and security measures. Several emergency drills for students and employees will be scheduled over the spring semester, beginning Jan. 11. Regular testing of the automated "RAVE" notification system using mobile numbers, texts, and emails, has continued.

Vice President of Student Services Celeste Donovan and Chief Information Officer Louie Lemert provided a quick update about new security cameras installed in the Student Living Center over the holiday break. The new cameras provide views of all doors in the dorm areas, and can be accessed "on the move" with iPad access for the resident assistants and the housing director. Further improvements to the campus-wide camera system are planned for the upcoming year.

As it does in all its regular meetings, the board continued a systematic review of policies, and voted to retire two:

- Policy 601, established in 1988, required the college to provide AIDS education for employees and students. With medical advances, the issue no longer demands special attention, the board concluded.

- Policy 616, "Grant Incentives," was established in 2003 to encourage and reward employees who sought out and successfully obtained grant funding for the college. The policy specified that a portion of such funds would be awarded to the applicants. Because the college has since added a full-time, exempt (salaried) grant coordinator position, the incentive system is no longer necessary.

VP Donovan reviewed changes at the Wellness Center, and asked for approval to move athletic trainer Liz Hill to the director position, with continuing trainer duties. With a new assistant, Hill will oversee treatment and rehabilitation of athletes, but will not travel as much for out-of-town athletic competitions.

"The change will save the college \$10,000 from the previous structure at the Wellness Center, and helps us provide more services to the community and our athletes," Donovan said. The board approved the restructure unanimously.

Reports to the board included:

- Update from Chief Development Officer Tano Tovilla, who provided information about the pending sale of two properties donated by the Colvin family, ongoing training opportunities, and a successful holiday appreciation dinner with scholarship donors and students.

- Vice President of Finance and Operations Dennis Sander brought information about the progress on the Colvin Family Center for Allied Health, which is in the dirt-work stage. He oversees meetings with the construction team and subcontractors every two weeks, and will bring regular updates to the board.

- Athletic Director Mike Davidson said 11 new athletes have joined the Saints family over the holiday, with additional members on the softball team, women's tennis, and men's basketball. The overall Grade Point Average among the more than 100 athletes was 3.1 for the fall semester, and 14 of the athletes achieved a perfect 4.0 GPA. Davidson praised instructors, tutors, and the coaches for "demanding excellence from the kids."

- The regular personnel report welcomed assistant athletic trainer Tanner Urban and Adult Basic Education secretary Leslie Munoz. Positions that remain open include instructional designer, diesel technology instructor, KSBDC Liberal business consultant, automotive technology instructor, math resource center coordinator, and GED instructor. New TRiO Director Joel Figgs attended the board meeting and was introduced to the trustees.

- CIO Lemert outlined challenges in the IT department, where much of the equipment has reached end of life.

- Donovan brought current numbers on enrollment, which is up eight percent in terms of head count, but down one percent in credit hours. The likely explanation is that more students must juggle work and school, and opt to take only a few classes rather than enrolling full-time, Donovan said, "but we will have to take a closer look at it in the retention committee."

- The first "desk review" of the Civil Rights Audit required by the Kansas Board of Regents has been submitted, and an in-person visit is set for Feb. 28. Donovan said the review team will speak with trustees, instructors, administrators and students to compile its final report.

- Dr. Trzaska said the executive team meeting generated a large number of complex issues that require attention, especially in the area of deferred maintenance on campus and bus safety. In February, the executive team will bring a condensed list of proposed investment projects to the board for consideration.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be Feb. 4, in the board room.