MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SANTA BARBARA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

March 2, 1979
8:30 a.m. - Faculty Lounge
(Campus Center)
Santa Barbara City College
Santa Barbara, California

The special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Santa Barbara Community College District was called to order by President Joe Dobbs on Friday, March 2, 1979 at 8:36 a.m. in the Faculty Lounge (Campus Center) of Santa Barbara City College, Santa Barbara, California.

Members present:

Dr. Joe W. Dobbs, President
Mrs. Joyce H. Powell, Vice-President
Mrs. Kathryn O. Alexander
Mr. Sidney R. Frank
Mrs. Ann Gutshall
Mr. Benjamín P. J. Wells
Mr. Tim Clarke, Student Member

Member absent:

Mr. Eli Luria

Invited guest:

The Honorable Omer L. Rains, State Senator, 18th District

Others present for all or a portion of the meeting:

Dr. David Mertes, Superintendent/President and Secretary/Clerk to the Board of Trustees
Dr. Donald K. Sorsabal, Asst. Superintendent, Business Services, and Asst. Secretary/Clerk to the Board of Trustees
Mr. Jim Williams, College Information Officer
Mrs. Elsie Brandt, Secretary to Superintendent/Board of Trustees

Dr. Dobbs stated that the special meeting had been called to conduct an informal discussion with State Senator Omer L. Rains.

Dr. Mertes extended a cordial welcome to Senator Rains and expressed appreciation for the time being given to this institution and his willingness to participate in today's discussion.

Upon motion of Mrs. Alexander, seconded by Mrs. Powell, Dr. Dobbs adjourned the special board meeting into an informal basis for discussion purposes.
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Board of Trustees - SBCCD
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Dr. Mertes opened the discussion by stating that probably the No. 1 issue for this district is what will be the eventual impact of Prop. #13. Passage of Prop. #13 last June caused a decrease in income and changed the manner in which community colleges would be financed. Staff is in process of dealing with that as it affects the mechanism of governance.

This district is in a holding pattern as S.B. 154 took funds from state funds to make up losses. That is a one-year activity -- where it will be next year is open to question and also the following years. This district has taken a very strong leadership position in the state in terms of representation by Board members and staff on a number of organizations to follow closely the current activity in the state.

Senator Rains commented that everything in the aftermath of Prop. #13 is in a state of flux. There is more talk about educational financing than other issues. A number of bills have been introduced but an administrative approach is very vague at this time. It is incumbent upon legislators to assure the state educational system some support of on-going state funding.

A general discussion then began between Board members and Senator Rains.

Mrs. Alexander stated that the legislative staff members who visited the previous week said that what was hampering our cause is we are coming on with a divided voice. She asked if the legislature is clear on what the community colleges see as their role in the state, their purpose, their needs.

Senator Rains replied that those persons may have more expertise in the area than himself, but to bear in mind that they were researching within one area. Insofar as Sacramento is concerned the educational lobby and community is together. That may sound strange here, as the general thrust elsewhere is to get as much money as possible. When money is brought back to the community, there are some fights between segments in other districts. There is a great deal of interplay for control, balances in other areas. He thought that most of education works close together.

Mrs. Alexander stated that Dr. Mertes had presented an excellent case to the visitors in that the great concern is local control. She asked if the Senator got the impression that the legislature is aware of that concern, even though he stated that money is the most concern.

Senator Rains replied that there is division. He believed long-term funding is more important -- and there is a split to that. There should be some sort of stable funding on which you can rely. He disagreed with the Governor's position in that the Governor is quite willing to allow the state to 'nip along' on a year-to-year basis, regardless of who it affects until the presidential primary elections. By then, Senator Rains felt the state surplus would be exhausted - that is frightening. We should start today to look at a long-range program - we have let valuable months slip by but without coming up with a long-range program. Whatever program is proposed will stir up many controversies. Each is a powerful entity.
Mr. Frank said that the Senator is seeing education as a whole, if you have a concerted viewpoint. Community colleges are different than other institutions. This is our concern in terms of funding. Our concern in distributing the money is how we are being viewed by the legislature. In that division of money, we find the local control part is last in the shuffle. The question is how do we make this particular point felt in the process.

Senator Rains replied that there are a number of subsidiary questions. Community colleges are hybrid in nature -- a tri-part system. Funding system for community colleges is really attached to K-12, so we have K-14. Local control is an issue I am very sensitive to. Historically, "he who pays the piper, plays the tune". He continued that there will be pressure from Sacramento to adhere to certain rules. He was against that. We are up against history in that fight, he said, but given the fact Prop. #13 passed June 6 and went into effect July 1, it was very unusual two-thirds of the house agreed on anything.

Mrs. Powell asked what chance there was for the bill to pass establishing a special super-board.

Senator Rains thought the matter is of real concern. It won't pass this year but there will be increasing pressure in years to come. Those in the know, know history repeats itself.

Mrs. Powell then asked if it would be to community colleges' advantage to start lobbying?

Senator Rains answered in the negative and felt that they should agree on certain issues - not divide up their power.

Dr. Mertes stated that the unique feature for community colleges is the local control. By their very nature, if you carry that to fruition you end up with different institutions around the state. That diversity among community colleges we look at as being a statement that local control is working. When that is looked at, opt with those that are carrying out state mandate.

The legislature is seen as a problem to be dealt with. The bureau puts out a one-page law and committees put out 50-page implementation. Most of those are causing us to become more or less standardized. That was going on prior to Prop. #13, although it was not as intense then. Prop. #13 would appear to come down so hard that we will have to address that - governance and local control, not as a slow process but all of a sudden. He thought the bills coming out will be governance bills - not just money bills. He asked how this district might go about to make a case for local control.

Senator Rains agreed that it is correct to recognize that there are differences throughout the state. The problem lies not so much with legislature not failing to recognize as it does with State Department of Education. What happens is we pass a law which is rather broad, and an administrative agency issues rules and regulations - very elaborate -- and sometimes opposite to the general intent of the law. He thought that legislators are cognizant of the problem in that area and that the problem is regressing. One
piece of advice he offered was: as you go about your lobbying efforts in most cases much that you have to complain about comes not as a result of legislation but as a result of rules and regulations. Many of the programs that have been thrust upon legislators did not come from legislation; came from people in the State Department of Education — some of whom are very persuasive.

Mrs. Alexander thought it would be very important if legislature could see community colleges as something that is not part of the tri-part system of K-14. They don't know which we are — we are neither — nationwide community colleges enjoy a fantastic reputation — some states tried it, but it did not work.

Dr. Mertes had commented to the visitors that a bottom line could be established — do you have a community college? If not, you have failed. This is a more basic posture of accountability. If legislature could see that for community colleges to be a community college, they have to have this local control. Then perhaps we could be getting at what we need to do. This would permit each district to be what they are supposed to be; the accountability would be all ours.

Mr. Frank said that from a political point of view, these are representing the communities because the Board is elected by the community. The electorate is delegating the power to those elected to the Board.

Dr. Dobbs stated that that may not be the most cost effective way; that our district is more concerned about local control than other districts. He had heard Rodda speak in Sacramento and legislature does not want to take over local control. Do we want to be part of one or the other? This is the time to decide where we want to be. The only other thing would be the State Regional Board. Community college trustees don't feel the Chancellor speaks for community colleges. As far as local control, he did not think we are getting at the right issue. He asked for a viewpoint on the Rodda bill and financing.

Senator Rains said that as far as the Rodda bill is concerned, he will probably with great reluctance end up voting for it. He did not believe they should be looking at another year's bailout. That is a disservice to the community colleges and the state in general. Neither the administrative, assembly or senate has done a good job in coming up with a long range plan. He suspected he will be faced with voting 'no' on everything or voting to bail out this district and others for the next year. From his own standpoint, he had been remiss in being overly optimistic with Alan Post and the commission appointed by the Governor. He had thought the report would contain far-reaching proposals. He was disappointed in that report and did not see one good idea. Most of the votes were split votes; there is no real direction given; and everyone needed to share in the blame. Getting to Prop. #13, he did not want to lay all the problems against it. The only common denominator he sees as he travels the state is 'less is best, except for me'. As far as his own thoughts, except in a general way, he did not think he was prepared to state specifically what should be in a bill or not in it.
Dr. Dobbs commented that there seems to be no leadership coming from the Governor. He wondered who would be providing it.

Senator Rains stated that the Governor has let everyone down. Mr. Post let us down because of the weakness of the report. Each house is very aggressive now at trying to deal with a long range plan.

Mrs. Powell stated that the complicated issue is what do the legislators think when they hear the phrase 'local control'. We are not being specific about it. Dr. Dobbs says he is not as concerned as others - seems to me we all recognize what it is if we talk about being accountable, but if someone else tells us what to do, we are not glad to do that. Are they getting tired of hearing 'local control'?

Senator Rains replied that he did not think they are tired of hearing of it, and they seem to believe in some concept of it. Most of us think we have to recognize the difference between cities, towns that can only be recognized by the individuals living there.

Mrs. Powell asked - they are thinking of it not in terms of what money they will get?

Senator Rains said it depended on where you are in the state. In this district, there is more concern. He shared that view. In the high urban areas, the concern is how much money.

Dr. Dobbs commented that you don't hear K-12 talking about local control.

Mrs. Gutshall replied that that is a different entity. K-12 and state universities are different than community colleges. Our role is quite different.

Dr. Dobbs added that he was talking about finance. There is no difference as community colleges and K-12 are financed the same.

Senator Rains asked how he thought they ought to be financed.

Dr. Dobbs replied that a tax on property tax should be directed to education with some to county and water districts. Then you have the money coming from your own area.

Senator Rains stated that he did not like sales taxes. He asked if Dr. Dobbs was suggesting that we should leave it up to local community colleges and impose an additional sales tax.

Dr. Dobbs stated that you have to use other local agencies assuming 1c sales tax would provide funds for schools and other agencies. Someone would have to decide what percentage would go to college and what percentage to other agencies. He did not think the local agencies would set the sales tax.

Senator Rains did not think the sales tax will be increased. He said the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) has suggested their getting a 1c or 2c with their being delegated to distribute the money.
Dr. Dobbs asked where the funds will be coming from for education.

Mrs. Alexander said the response is coming from the state. To me that is not the primary concern. She agreed with Dr. Dobbs in that the community colleges are not going to be broken out of the tri-part system. We are in a total plan — believe we belong in it. A particular mission is given to the community colleges. The state can say something in that master plan that separates us from universities. Without local control, the community colleges can not be what they are. As state sets money aside for universities, state colleges, etc they can set aside for community colleges and expect them to produce what the Master Plan says they will produce. It recognizes we are different. The problem is, as we see it, money comes from the state, then feel willing to turn over the whole control. If that happens, we won't have community colleges. We get our money from the state, just as universities get it. She disagreed with Dr. Dobbs that local control is not important. Part is to have ability to respond to problems involves your college in the community. Where they have been successful for just this reason. This is the place where people feel attached to their society. Thirty percent of adults travel through this program in a year; 85% some time in their lifetime will come to this college because of the Adult Education program and local control. We have something we can export to other communities. In other areas, it is different. In this time when everything is up for grabs, it is important that this concept be protected. It is suggested that it is important to be in the Master Plan. Since early 60's, education has been in the Master Plan. If we could get this into the Master Plan, it would work.

Dr. Dobbs maintained it cannot be both ways — cannot have money and local control, that is what the legislature says.

Senator Rains interjected that "I don't say that".

Dr. Dobbs continued — you cannot say every state that does not have local control is not successful. One state, Michigan, has specifics on local control included in their constitution. This is being considered in our state, too.

Mr. Frank asked what fund provides finances to universities and state colleges and universities?

Senator Rains replied that for the most part it comes from the General Fund.

Mr. Frank continued — are we then really finding we are a part of this — to get a basic part for community colleges.

Senator Rains replied that he did not think it it would be impossible; he urged the group to move in that direction. It will take an educational process on their part — a lot of lobbying — require some basic changes — talking about very sweeping changes.

Mr. Frank stated that if community colleges were apportioned on the same basis as universities and state colleges, we may save the whole thing.
Mr. Tim Clarke, in remembering the concerns of last Fall, believed in representing to students the bottom line of Prop. #13 - of what is to come for future funding. Community colleges are offering services -- final risk is student's scholastic record. Community colleges offer to those what they can not enhance themselves. State has deemed this a priority. Thinking in bringing governance and fiscal in perspective and have the two come into one with allocation of funds. Who can better judge what the community values are better than a local Board of Trustees. He disagreed with a centralized board. He thought for community colleges to succeed in their mission, the priorities have to be determined by a local board. If stipulations were put on the board, they will not be able to operate. It will be question of lack of power. He will be a final product this summer of this college - students following him will not be in the same position. They will be curtailed in the future - what classes available. This is a place for individuals to find themselves as to whether or not to go on or go through a vocational education program and then enter the community. He really hoped that Sacramento in allocating funds will take some of these things in account.

Senator Rains commented he had no response - "you advanced my thesis".

Mrs. Powell interjected that Mr. Clarke may come back to school sometime in his life. You think of your constituency of the 20-22 age group. We are providing services to people of all ages. On the practical idea of lobbying, can you give us a brief course - don't want to spiral off as far as lobbying is concerned. How do we impress people that we are different? We are neither fish or fowl.

Senator Rains said you have to approach that in two ways. To bear in mind that we have more and more groups of interests competing for dollars. Collectively along with other community college districts you have a lot of muscle. There is a lot of personal contact by Board members and students. It will require on part of you concerned, an indepth educational program in each of the districts. The citizens will have to be sufficiently concerned that they take an active interest in writing and calling their legislators. It is not easy to move people. You can't act like insurance companies, utility companies -- you don't have the money for that -- but you can generate a lot of people power. I don't know how much organization you have with other community colleges. Is it just paper organization? Do you really inter-relate throughout the state?

Mrs. Powell responded that 'we send each other resolutions'.

Senator Rains considered that an inactive method.

Dr. Dobbs stated that he hoped the senator would understand that the Community College Trustee organization is more effective. We are representative for all the state and will get our message across; legislation is our No. 1 priority (Dr. Dobbs is a member of the Board of Directors). He continued that at Santa Barbara the trustees feel fortunate to be able to talk to Assemblyman Hart, Senator Rains. He asked also how does the legislature see the community colleges. He thought some of them think of the community colleges as trade schools.
Senator Rains replied that he was not sure but he knew how he felt. He knew that some legislators do not relate with their trustees and students — most don't go to campuses, or campus does not reach out to them. Those very rural areas pay no attention to it — appears that those representatives are not involved and don't have as much understanding. He continued that it is not sufficient to lobby me or Mr. Hart — only collectively throughout the state. It is quite understandable that some legislators don't understand their own areas. It is incumbent upon the constituency to educate the legislators.

Mrs. Powell said as to a way in which we should be lobbying, if we try to divorce ourselves from K-12, would we do ourselves harm?

Dr. Dobbs added that the only thing that ties us to K-12 is finances.

Mrs. Alexander said that it is not sufficient in the first place as we don't have several years — may be only one year — not just carry your school boards — has to be through entire administration. One way out is to be in Sacramento. This is the year we have to do something. We are in a district in between urban and rural. If we don't have leadership, we will be dead a year from now. Let's put our efforts where it will be doing most good.

Dr. Dobbs repeated that the input is greater from trustees than from administration. The CCJCA group is a self-interest group, he thought.

Mrs. Alexander added are we coming across as a divided voice? Do we see ourselves that way? We must get someone up there speaking for us. We are fortunate to have Dr. Mertes in this district with his background of having been a northern administrator. This is the year we have to do something.

Senator Rains said that throughout the state, legislators hear of faculty fighting board members and administration. In Sacramento there are a few of you speaking a common view — not sufficiently strong; you can't rely on any one organization.

Dr. Mertes, in conclusion, stated that he had agreed to close this discussion about quarter to ten. In summary, it would appear to me that this talk is valuable; it pointed out the important aspects, funding, governance, accountability. In my view, Prop. #13 is a very significant challenge to people generally. It is forcing us to make some long term decisions as to how we will govern ourselves. Community colleges can't think of any other system that is more likely to do a good job with local control than the community college system. Still hold to a position that it would be possible to develop a fiscal procedure that would bring funds to a local level and keep the decision-making with the accountability without going to a system where the funds carry control.
Dr. Mertes thanked Senator Rains on behalf of the trustees and staff for taking the time today to meet with the group.

Senator Rains expressed appreciation for the opportunity. He indicated that after the meeting is closed, he would stay on to meet with a group of faculty members.

Upon motion of Mrs. Alexander, seconded by Mr. Frank, Dr. Dobbs closed the informal discussion period and adjourned the Board of Trustees special meeting at 9:54 a.m.

Attest:

JOE W. DOBBS
President, Board of Trustees
Santa Barbara Community College District

DAVID MERTES
Superintendent/President and Secretary/
Clerk to the Board of Trustees

Approved by the Board of Trustees on March 29, 1979.