Board of Trustees
Community Relations Committee

AGENDA

Lisa Macker (chair)
Marty Blum
Marsha Croninger

Tuesday May 17, 2011
5:00 pm

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1. HEARING OF CITIZENS

Members of the public at each meeting location have the opportunity to directly address the Committee on any item of interest to the public that is within the jurisdiction of this Committee whether or not it is an item noticed on this agenda.

Unless otherwise determined by the Committee, each person is limited to five minutes (20 minutes per issue). Those wishing to address the Committee at this meeting should complete a written request and return it to the Committee secretary prior to the Committee meeting (Govt Code Sec. 54954.3).
THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE FOR DISCUSSION AND NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN ON THEM AT THIS MEETING:

2. Discussion of charge of the committee (handout will be provided at the meeting)

3. Continued discussion of Board of Trustees community budget forum: outcomes, format, content, timeline, location, dates
Board of Trustees
Community Relations Committee

MINUTES

Lisa Macker (chair)
Marty Blum
Marsha Croninger

Tuesday 4:00 pm
April 26, 2011

Others present: Dr. Andreea Serban, Superintendent/President; Dr. Ofelia Arellano, VP Continuing Education; Dr. Peter Haslund, President of the Board of Trustees; Liz Auchincloss, President CSEA; Sally Saenger, Adjunct Instructor Physical education/Co-President of the Continuing Education Instructors’ Association; Ellen Stoddard, Instructor Continuing Education; Joe Sullivan, VP Business Services; Karen Sophiea, Marketing Director; Joan Galvan, PIO; Sally Gill, Continuing Education Public Information Specialist; Stefanie Davis, Director of Marketing, Foundation for SBCC; Phil Carter, Information Technology; Eleanor Burns, Continuing Education Student, ACES.

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Chair Lisa Macker called the meeting to order at 4pm.
HEARING OF CITIZENS

Ellen Stoddard commented on a couple of things that had to do with community relations. Attended the last Continuing Education Consultation Council meeting on April 15th and a few people had concerns about the white paper on the importance of maintaining enhanced funding. Dr. Arellano realized there was a section in there that could lead to some confusion or misinterpretation and took the initiative to clarify the part about the Continuing Education division’s support for enhanced funding. One of the students who was in attendance at that meeting asked Dr. Arellano to write a similar paper that would talk about the other parts of the importance of Continuing Education, and Dr. Arellano agreed. This paper would help the rest of the Continuing Education community feel embraced by the college. At this meeting there was also discussion about the importance of reaching out to Continuing Education faculty and students regarding all the budget discussions so that they could be brought along as part of the process and be able to contribute to the process. At the Continuing Education Instructors’ Association meeting an idea was fleshed out to have two or three meetings of faculty and students where they could talk about what the college is looking at with the budget, what the different recommendations are and get feedback and ideas from the instructors and students in the Continuing Education program. The meetings are being planned for Friday, April 29 and the second meeting is tentatively being scheduled for May 10. The plan is to have the meeting talk about it and then go away from it and talk to other people and then come back and they hope to have some recommendations from the Continuing Education faculty and students for the next study session.

2. Discussion of possible community budget forum: format, content, timeline, outcomes

Superintendent/President Serban reported that there have been scheduled two campus-wide budget forums, one on the main campus on May 9 and the other at the Wake Center on May 11 and everyone is invited. Superintendent/President Serban and Vice President Sullivan would provide the presentation. It is appropriate for CEIA who represents the Continuing Ed. faculty to engage with their colleagues, whom they represent. It was also noted that it was not the purview of CEIA to invite people campus-wide and as has been learned from past forums, complaints were received from some faculty because administration was not invited to the forums and misinformation was given that could not be corrected right away. The college Administration wants to make sure that the correction information is being provided at meetings regarding the college budget.

Trustee Macker noted that there was only one agenda item and she envisioned that it would probably take two meetings with perhaps open and free discussion today and some feedback in three or four weeks. The other thing before this committee is to come up with a written charge, there was a rough draft that needs to be fine tuned and, hopefully, that will be on the next agenda. The intention at this point is that this would be a committee, or it may be an ad hoc committee. One of the main purposes for this committee would be to draft policies that ensure and encourage and facilitate interaction with the community. There is no specific written policy for the Board that addresses those issues so the committee would work on that. After a year, the Board would revisit this committee and
decide whether they want the committee to continue. At the next meeting of this committee they should be able to flesh out that charge.

Trustee Macker presented some thoughts on how this committee could encourage discussion and to walk through the process of having an open community dialogue:

- One, two or three forums, how many is another item for discussion. Because of the time frame we’re looking at, the first one wouldn’t take place until after the tentative budget has been adopted.

- Perhaps have another forum later in August or early September, right before the adopted budget, that would give people time over the summer to digest the information, and we could do some more work with the community and stir up some interest in the financial problems we’re facing and educate people.

- Need to discuss the venue for the forums of whether they would be on site or off site.

- News and announcements, ask our public relations department for suggestions about how to publicize this to get the best turnout. Want to reach as many people as possible, to engage as many people as possible in Santa Barbara and reactivate their interest in our community college here. There is a budget crisis, but also a good opportunity for us to talk about ourselves.

- How will this be announced? News releases? Televiser it? Use the internal communication services, post it at Schott and Wake Centers?

- Use the website, or a specific part of the website that would relate to the budget and the budget forum?

The format of the actual forum is to have a lot less of our in-house acronyms, not many numbers and try to make this something to draw more people in. To get their interest staff should use more pie charts, graphs, and more importantly than that, actually get down to the human beings and the students and not just a bunch of numbers. For example, this is how much money we are looking at cutting, the way we are addressing it is by cutting these sections or cutting back on these services, and this is the impact it will have on students and individuals working here and the community. So rather than just being a pure numbers presentation, it would be something that will really address the human impact of these cuts and let the community see what may happen. Perhaps, opening up the forum with here is your community college kind of thing, getting people excited about this jewel we have and then working through the State budget situation, the cuts and describing the assumptions we have come up with to date for the tentative budget.

Trustee Macker noted that the next step would be to bring to a Board study session for discussion the forum outcomes and talk about the feedback received. Trustee Blum asked to hear what was planned for May 9 and May 11. What is planned so they can try to figure out a public presentation that they would like to do after the draft budget?
Superintendent/President Serban noted that this committee had a different purpose than what she and VP Sullivan want to achieve at the budget forums they will provide. What they want to achieve at the budget forums, is to make sure that the college employees and students have the facts as they are known to be and to have the assumptions that are being used to put together the package that will be presented at the May 12 study session. It is very important for the college employees and students to understand what the budget situation is. So the purpose is to ensure that everybody understands where we are.

The meetings scheduled for May 9, May 11, have a dual purpose. One is to make sure every college employee knows where we are, what is being proposed to the Board and why. Two, want to solicit and obtain feedback that is actionable. The feedback that was received in the past was reviewed and some of the ideas that could be implemented were. These meetings are geared internally. They are not a community forum and the purpose for the community forum would be to get an outside broader sense from the community. The committee may want to ask what the purposes of the community forums are, and what the desirable outcomes are. This should be clarified up front as the content and format forum will flow from the goals desired.

Trustee Macker noted some of the outcomes she would like to see and one of them was to engage the broader community. This would be one more opportunity to grab the community’s attention in a positive way, reminding them of what they have here in a focused manner. We are trying to brainstorm together and trying to be as open as possible about the budgetary problems we are facing and how we are considering remedying them. We need to think about who we would want to invite. Would hope that some thought would go into that; who do we want to invite to this forum? Who do we want to make sure we reach, besides the community in general? We would want to add some outcomes.

Trustee Croninger noted that an outcome has to do with people engaged. Engaged in the process of fielding solutions to the budget challenges so they feel a part of the process and do not feel like they arrived after all the decisions were made. And that’s something that is really important. Trustee Croninger asked what outcomes Superintendent/President Serban had in mind for the two forums that she had planned, as these may help them plan and identify their outcomes.

Superintendent/President Serban noted that she had mentioned two outcomes previously and those were to ensure that college employees and students are informed about the financial status of the college as it currently is; numbers need to be involved because this is about budget. But what is different this time around in how they are going to not only address the current fiscal, and the next fiscal year, but they are also going to talk about a three-year time frame and the importance of understanding that. Secondly, they would be soliciting input and some of the suggestions are already being worked on, one being that there will be on the college website a budget-focused website and materials are currently being collected for that and discussion is taking place about creating an area on the website where people can submit suggestions. However, it is important to manage expectations. Recommended that the committee consider that at these forums that the
community not be given the expectation that if a suggestion is made, it will be implemented, as not all suggestions are feasible.

Trustee Macker noted that she would like to comfortably know that everyone has made every reasonable opportunity to let people know the information they need. Heard the point about watching people's expectations about suggestions and wants to frame this as a positive event, where the full Board is involved out in the community representing the school and presenting what is going on. Would like an event or two where the whole Board is present, this would be a positive thing for the college.

Trustee Croninger noted that there are definitely different outcomes between what Superintendent/President Serban is aiming for with the scheduled budget forums and the forums that would be planned by the committee for the summer. Then there is also the interest of CEIA, Continuing Ed faculty and students.

Dr. Arellano, VP Continuing Education asked the representatives of ACES that were in attendance at the meeting for their assistance in how they share information. Because she met with Cathie McCammon to go over a document that was produced by ACES which contained inaccurate information. Also recently received an email from a staff member that some ceramic students went to the front office very upset because they said ACES representatives went into their ceramics class and informed the students that the ceramics program was being cut. So she wants to see how they can better facilitate dissemination of information because isn't sure it is the role of ACES to go into the classrooms not having all of the information. And now they have a situation where the word is out they are cutting the ceramics program which is not accurate.

Superintendent/President Serban invited everyone to come to the budget forum at the Wake Center on May 11, at 4:00 pm, so that they can get the accurate and full information. As was noted at the outset of this meeting, accurate information needs to be provided. It is not helping the students, the staff or the college, or the Board, for that matter, if inaccurate information about the college, for whatever reason, is being perpetuated. It creates unnecessary sense of panic when there shouldn't be.

Trustee Croninger asked if there was a problem with students and faculty meeting, if that is what they choose to do so? Superintendent/President Serban noted that it was up to them. There is a clear process in place, there is a consultation process and there is a governance process. This meeting is not about the governance process of the college. This meeting is about the Trustees' budget forum. Ask that the committee stays with the agenda. Trustee Macker asked that this be mentioned at the end of the meeting as part of agenda items for the next meeting. Trustee Blum noted that it is important for everyone at this meeting to realize that the thing we do does affect the public relations in this community. Everyone needs to be sure that they have the same numbers and so on. Also, we need to know that the public relations among Continuing Education students is there also and that they trust what is happening, and doesn't think that they do yet. That is why telling them they can't do something without an explanation is not logical, let's figure out a way to tell them they can do something and that we would love to hear their ideas and make this a more positive thing. Trustee Macker would also like to see some positive
outcomes in terms of the dialogue going on because it comes up -- it has been coming up every month or so since December. So it is just one of those things that we should be able to resolve where people feel informed and feel they know what's going on.

Superintendent/President Serban noted that she met with Cathie McCammon and Eleanor Burns and provided information. The college has dedicated a full-time continuing education director as advisor to ACES who goes to all ACES meetings and provides information to them, so it’s unclear why the misinformation is out there. Perhaps if ACES could better verbalize what exactly they are missing in terms of information, that would be helpful because a lot of time has been spent with them and extensive information has been provided. Trustee Croninger noted that this could be something for a future agenda item where Continuing Education students and faculty could be asked what would be helpful to make them feel as they are part of the process in a more positive way. Trustee Macker would also love to see more of the Continuing Education students and representatives or non-representatives at more of the Board meetings where all of this gets discussed and everyone is welcome to attend the meeting and they also have access to all of the information that the Board has.

Superintendent/President Serban reiterated what she understood the scope to be and that was that this is a Board committee forum, so it is really about the Board being on the front stage, the Board making the presentation, the Board getting the input. This committee will make this recommendation to the Board as a whole. Superintendent/President Serban commented on the issue of timing for the forum. On May 20th they would lose the credit side, as the spring semester ends for the faculty and students, so anything planned for summer would not include many from the credit side. Also, in terms of the tentative budget, as was mentioned, we need to have a tentative budget by June 15. Would like to also discuss this, because she would need to gather the information, wanted to know what kind of background material the committee would like to have and what kind of materials they would want the staff to provide them to make this a successful and informed forum, as she is also interested in ensuring that the correct information is put out there and is consistent with the budget forum they will present and the forum the Board will present. She suggested that the Board may perhaps have a facilitator at this meeting and also suggested perhaps having some questions in advance for those attending to partially channel the feedback. Trustee Croninger suggested perhaps the use of clickers along with the questions.

Joan Galvan, SBCC PIO, noted that there have been good ideas suggested, and we have had all types of forums for the community off and on campus. Something everyone should be aware of is timing. Should manage people’s expectations on how long you are going to spend on this, it is telling people up front how long you are willing to be there. Trustee Croninger noted that this forum would probably not happen until the end of June. There is a fair amount of work that needs to be done to get something organized that would be well put together.

Vice President Sullivan also noted that it will take staff sometime to put together information for this and since it’s going to be a different scope, would like to know how much of their time would be involved with in putting information together. Also reminded
the committee that if they wanted something in it about the adopted budget, the adopted has to actually be completed before the end of August to get it to the September Board. It takes some time to get it through the governance process and then they have changes that need to be made before the final version is presented to the Board.

Karen Sophiea, SBCC Director of Marketing and Publications, noted that what she has heard from this meeting is a desired outcome, and it's really about opening a dialogue, shaping or reshaping perceptions. From her perspective that always takes a long time, it won't happen in one forum. It's a lot of things that are done in the community that help that. Secondly, the budget crisis is not all going to get solved with a new adopted budget come September. This is going to be a three-year process, so instead of worrying about rushing to get suggestions that would impact the September budget, maybe we should instead focus on what has already been said, we want to talk about our mission, what is our role in the community, how budgets are handled, how they are developed. We want to get input and suggestions from the community and, importantly, manage those expectations that we can turn around and change because we have a lot of things we can't change. We shouldn't look like we've got to quick get this done by June and we have to do this because we are going to significantly impact our adopted budget or perception in the community by September. Maybe it needs to be looked at as a longer view.

Ms. Galvan noted that it needs to be framed in a way that states that we are in this together for the long haul. Trustee Blum reported that with the community forum they would be able to get more people aboard, it increases awareness. Ms. Sophiea stated that it would be important to have a discussion on all the roles each of us play in this. What role can a student play? We all have different roles, but they may be helping with what our roles are.

Sally Saenger asked why we as a college wouldn't completely embrace the idea of having forums and more connection with the community. It is all a way to clear up the inaccurate information, like the information gathering. We are not just giving out information but getting information. It is a give and take. It is about a sense of how people are feeling about the college and how it's perceived. Some suggestions were provided for the committee to consider with regards to where the forums could be held and what could take place after the forums to disseminate the information received as input. President Haslund suggested that perhaps these forums could be held fairly frequently and also perhaps to hold them in different parts of the community.

Vice President Sullivan reminded the committee that when the college went out for the bond, we had an approval rating that was through the roof in this community. Many of them still are, and his concern is that we listen only to a very small, focused, vocal group and assume that's what our overall population is thinking. Wants to make sure it is a broader spectrum than the same people every time that keep coming and we keep hearing from. It is important we hear from them but, again, it is important that we understand the breadth of the community and not the narrow focus group we have. Trustee Macker noted that's what she was trying to get at when she mentioned that they can think ahead of the people they would specifically want to invite to the forums, strategizing about the business leaders in Goleta. Ms. Galvan stated that what is sometimes forgotten is that City College
is much broader than just this campus and the Continuing Education centers. We offer classes from Carpinteria all the way through Goleta.

Trustee Macker noted that at the next meeting one of the agenda items would be to fine-tune the charge and mission statement of this committee. Today’s agenda item was to talk about the budget forums. And is really excited to hear about all the other ideas of other things we can do. We need to be cognizant of what the Board’s role is and the staff is going to do. President Haslund noted that if we’re going to be talking about the budget, there are two things that are going to be essential. One is that we have general agreement. It won’t work if staff is at their budget forum saying one thing and the Board are saying another. There needs to be a process by which that agreement is reached. Trustee Blum asked that at the next meeting a date and time be established for the budget forum. Wasn’t sure if trying to change the budget should be tied into the forum, this would be part of the expectations. Trustee Croninger stated that they would be moving through the process, as they have to, going from tentative budget to final budget. At the same time, it is a good time to step in and let people talk with the Board. This hasn’t been done by the Board in quite a while.

Ms. Auchincloss stated that just a point of order. It appeared that there were four active Board members participating in the meeting. Should this have been noticed as a Board meeting instead of a discussion session? You have a majority of the Board here. Trustee Macker stated that it needed to be noted that Peter is contributing his comments as a public member. Superintendent/President Serban noted that the meeting had a 72-hour notice but that committees are assumed to be three Board members. If we know we are going to have a fourth Board member that is part of the discussion, we should notice that and list who the Board members present are. President Haslund felt that staff did what they were supposed to do, in other words, this had a 72-hour notice. Superintendent/President Serban stated that it didn’t have the proper notice of who the Board members present were and actively engaged in the conversation. Trustee Croninger noted that she didn’t think the Brown Act had anything specific to say about the point of who is listed. President Haslund’s understanding was that the critical variable was that there is a 72-hour notice of the meeting with Board members present. Ms. Auchincloss noted that she was at the Brown Act training, and had listened to other subcommittees where the fourth Board member is requested not to participate. And so she is either confused or uncomfortable with having a majority of the Board participating if it hasn’t been noticed. Superintendent/President state that the obligation relates to the 72-hour notice, which was done, it wasn’t noticed there would be four Board members actively engaged.

Trustee Macker asked the committee for the date of the next meeting. A suggestion was made of May 17 and Superintendent/President Serban noted that it would work if the meeting could start at 5:00 pm. Trustee Croninger asked that on the next agenda that they include the CEIA students and faculty.

Phil Carter asked when these trustee forums are conducted who would be making the presentations. Since the presentations would be provided by the Board, the committee
may want to consider perhaps having members of the community invited to participate and work with the Board on their presentation.

Trustee Macker adjourned the meeting at 5:25 p.m.

Dr. Andreea M. Serban
Superintendent/President