



ACCREDITATION EVIDENCE

Title: Board of Trustees Special Meeting

Evidence Type: Circumstantial

Date: 30 September 2021

WAN: 22-0121

Classification: Minutes

PII: No

Redacted: No





Board of Trustees

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

September 30, 2021

Trustees Present:

Regina Clark, President
Dr. Veronica Donaldson, Vice President
Dr. Greg Erramouspe, Secretary
Kenneth Lorimer, Treasurer
George Eckman
Zach Guier
Jim Jessen

Also Present:

Dr. Kim Dale, College President
Dr. Cliff Wittstruck, VP for Student Learning
Burt Reynolds, VP for Administrative Services
Joy Adams, Assoc. VP of Human Resources*
Kandy Frink

Trustees Absent:

None

This meeting was held via video conferencing

SPECIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

- I. AGENDA
 - A. Call to Order

The special meeting of the Western Wyoming Community College District Board of Trustees was called to order at 4:02 p.m., Thursday, September 30, 2021, via Zoom video conferencing, President Regina Clark presiding.
 - B. Approval of Agenda
 1. Treasurer Lorimer made a motion to approve the special meeting agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Trustee Jessen and was approved by vote.
- II. PUBLIC COMMENT
 - A. Visiting Delegations

None
 - B. Questions/Media/Public

None
- III. RECOMMENDED ACTION
 - A. New Business
 1. Approval to Submit Powerline Technology Programs for WCCC and HLC Approval

Western was approached to provide Powerline Technology programs by several industries in our service area. Western has met with industry partners in an Advisory Council format and informal discussions to hear what they would be looking for as we develop AAS and Certificate programs. These partners

include *Rocky Mountain Power*, *Union Wireless*, and several rural electricity providers, along with local and national union representatives. Each of these groups have expressed extreme interest in Western starting these programs. To show their support we have to date received seven letters of support. In researching for best practices regarding these possible programs Dr. Dale, Mr. Carlton DeWick (Chair of the School of Manufacturing and Industrial Technology), and Dr. Wittstruck met with *Rocky Mountain Power* representatives in Salt Lake City; this visit included a tour of their training facilities. Additionally, Mr. DeWick and Dr. Wittstruck visited *Mitchell Tech* (Mitchell, SD), which has a nationally recognized powerline program that has been in place since the mid 1970's. Based upon this research, Mr. DeWick and Ms. Kendra Meeker (Western's Plant Operations faculty) along with Dr. Wittstruck, developed a certificate in Powerline Technology and an AAS in Powerline Technology program map and the necessary documentation required by the various approving bodies. These programs have been approved by Western's Curriculum Committee and the Academic Affairs Council, which is composed of the seven community colleges' Chief Academic Officers. After approval by Western's Board of Trustees, the next step is for these programs to be approved by the Wyoming's seven community college Presidents, after which the programs will be placed on the Wyoming Community College Commission's Board of Trustees Agenda for its meeting on October 7th. These programs will provide students with quality education along with real-world knowledge and skills to maintain and repair distribution, transmission electrical power lines and cable. The students will learn to operate applicable equipment and the use of powerline tools with a strong emphasis on safety. Upon completion of this program, the student will have the skills and knowledge required to apply for Apprentice powerline positions in the electrical Powerline field.

Recommendation:

To approve submission of the Powerline Technology AAS and Certificate programs as presented to the Wyoming Community College Commission and the Higher Learning Commission for their approval.

Dr. Dale said Western first began development of a Powerline Technology program before the COVID pandemic hit, saying that the development was delayed due to the pandemic. Dr. Dale said that Western included the Powerline Technology programs in our recent proposal for the Wyoming Innovation Partnership (WIP) and we are ready to submit the proposed program to the Wyoming Community College Commission and the Higher Learning Commission for their approval. Dr. Dale said she has never seen so much support for a program, noting that this program will be expensive. Dr. Dale asked Vice President Wittstruck to provide information on the research conducted and the input received for the proposed program. Vice President Wittstruck said and Mr. DeWick met with representatives from the United Electrical Workers Union in Salt Lake City earlier today, saying that the union is very excited about the proposed program and volunteered to provide members for the advisory council. Vice President Wittstruck said we've received strong support for the proposed program, adding that the industry has numerous jobs available and is projecting a need for approximately 2,000 powerline

technicians. Vice President Wittstruck said he and Mr. Carlton DeWick also visited a technical school that has an established powerline program and were told that their program has a 96% placement rate for their graduates. Vice President Wittstruck said that program has a waitlist.

Treasurer Lorimer asks if local industry representatives indicated that this would be an ongoing need. Vice President Wittstruck said it will be an ongoing need as the average age of current powerline technicians is 55 years. Vice President Wittstruck said the aging workforce will create the need for additional workers as those workers retire. Vice President Wittstruck went on to say that electrical equipment in forested areas will also need to be retrofitted with new equipment to avoid having the old equipment cause fires in those areas. Trustee Eckman said this is incredibly dangerous work so the industry needs a properly trained workforce. Vice President Wittstruck said the proposed programs focus heavily on safety. Vice President Wittstruck also said the starting salary for powerline workers is approximately \$60,000 per year. President Clark said she was impressed with the letters of support for the program.

Secretary Erramouspe made a motion to approve submission of the Powerline Technology AAS and Certificate as presented to the Wyoming Community College Commission and the Higher Learning Commission for their approval. The motion was seconded by Treasurer Lorimer and was approved by vote. Dr. Dale said she will keep the Board informed on the progression of the program approval process and potential site locations.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business to act on, President Clark adjourned the special meeting at 4:17 p.m.

NOTE: Additional information (tapes and/or addenda) from this meeting is available in the Board Office.

Above recorded by:

Kandy Frink

WWCC Board President

WWCC Board Secretary