REGULAR MEETING

The Board of Trustees of the Stark State College held its regular monthly meeting at Stark State College at 6200 Frank Avenue NW, North Canton, Ohio 44720 on February 15, 2012.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Michael Thomas called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

The following visitors were present: John David and Irene Motts.

The following administrators were present: Para Jones, Tom Chiappini, Dorey Diab, Paul Feaser, Celeste Jones, and Cheri Rice.

ROLL CALL

The following Board members were present: Kari Groh, Jeffrey Halm, Stanley Jonas, Christopher Maurer, William Schweizer, Michael Thomas, and Fonda Williams.

PUBLIC REQUESTS

There were no public requests.

AGENDA CHANGES

Chairman Thomas made one agenda change. An Executive Session was added to discuss the employment of a public employee. Trustee Maurer moved to approve the agenda change. Trustee Williams provided the second for the motion. The motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Trustee Halm moved to consider the Consent Agenda. Trustee Groh provided the second for the motion. The motion carried.

Chief Operating Officer and Treasurer Tom Chiappini indicated that with this being the first month after the approved budget revision, revenues and expenditures were on target. Next month, there should be a significant increase in revenues due to the collection of student fees for spring semester.

Trustee Maurer asked if Mr. Chiappini had any concerns about the budget reserves for the fiscal year. Mr. Chiappini responded that he did not have concerns at this point and in fact expects the reserves to be higher than the projected $275,000.
Trustee Schweizer asked why the Personnel Services line item was $34 million last year and $41 million this year. Mr. Chiappini indicated that increases were the result of both the gross-up to cover health benefits in the last salary-and-wage package as well as the hiring of new employees.

Trustee Groh noted that the budget had decreased 11.4 percent, but the Personnel Services line item went up. She asked what areas were decreased. Mr. Chiappini responded that the capital equipment budget was reduced by 60 percent, the travel budget by 34 percent, supplies by 25 percent, information and communications by 14 percent, and maintenance and repairs by 5.4 percent. Chairman Thomas asked if that would set us behind in deferred maintenance. Mr. Chiappini responded that it would not because it came out of the cushion that was built into the funds.

Trustee Halm moved to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. Trustee Groh provided the second for the motion. The motion carried.

Approved on the Consent Agenda were the Minutes of the Board Meeting on January 18, 2012, Financial Statements, Personnel Actions, and a Memorandum of Understanding Between the Board of Trustees of Stark State College and Dr. Para M. Jones.

OLD BUSINESS

CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSION ON BUDGET PROJECTIONS – PARA JONES AND TOM CHIAPPINI

President Jones said this portion of the agenda would be used to respond to budget questions raised by the Board at the January meeting.

Dr. Jones started by explaining that in her first few weeks on campus she met with the Executive Council on two occasions to discuss strategic staffing. She indicated that based on spring enrollment, hiring would be held and only urgent situations would be considered. Hiring will be examined again when summer and fall enrollment figures are known.

Mr. Chiappini presented a proposed fee increase structure based on three different levels of tuition increase. He said that budget projections had been run based on the three options. This is the time of year that tuition increases are typically considered. Mr. Chiappini noted that he would be presenting budget scenarios to the Board next month based on these options for their consideration of a tuition increase. Ideally, action should be taken before summer and fall registration begin. Mr. Chiappini showed tuition comparisons to other two-year institutions around the state and noted that even with a tuition increase, Stark State would still have the lowest tuition in this area. He pointed out that since 2002, State Support for Instruction (SSI) has been cut 69 percent. Stark State’s cost per FTE is the lowest of all two-year colleges in the state.

Trustee Groh asked what the attrition rate tends to be when tuition is increased. The response from Vice President Cheri Rice was that with adequate notification, students are able to plan; therefore, tuition increases do not tend to impact enrollment. Trustee Groh asked for the administration’s recommendation on the level of tuition increase. Mr. Chiappini said the recommendation would be 4.63 percent (not the minimum or the maximum). Dr. Jones added that it is important to remember that we never know when the state will impose a moratorium on tuition increases, which has happened before. Mr. Chiappini noted that, though the College does not like to increase tuition, it is a reality that it needs to be done due to decreasing SSI and the need to maintain our quality of service and facilities.
Trustee Jonas asked Mr. Chiappini to explain how the state subsidy model works. Vice President Chiappini explained that there are 23 models, and Stark State participates in 13 of them. First, a control total is established for each of the two sectors (universities and two-year colleges). That control total is run through the models for all two-year institutions. There are several factors that the models utilize, including total enrollment, FTE, and success factors such as graduation rates and retention, etc. Trustee Jonas asked what amount of funding comes from SSI. Mr. Chiappini responded that it is currently 35 percent of our revenue (it used to be over 50 percent).

The Board decided to vote on a tuition increase at this meeting rather than wait a month so that students have ample time to plan for the adjustment.

Mr. Halm moved to approve a tuition increase of 4.63 percent effective summer 2012 and going through spring semester 2013. Mr. Jonas provided the second for the motion. The motion carried.

Trustee Schweizer asked that the next Board meeting include a recap on the gross-up of employee salaries that was implemented as part of the last wage-and-benefit package.

**NEW BUSINESS**

14-DAY ENROLLMENT REPORT FOR SPRING 2012 – PARA JONES AND CHERI RICE

Vice President Rice distributed charts reflecting the official 14-day enrollment totals for spring semester. She reviewed the following:

- Headcount for spring 2012 is 15,049. Compares to 15,326 for spring 2011 and 15,551 for fall semester.
- Down 1.81 percent from last spring and 6.4 percent below the goal for spring.
- FTE for spring is 4,273. This is 6.7 percent below last year’s total of 4,581.

Vice President Rice explained that the decrease in enrollment could be attributed to several factors. First, there was a change to federal financial aid regulations that requires students to meet more rigorous academic standards, which resulted in advising many students to take fewer credit hours in order to remain eligible for financial aid. Secondly, federal financial regulations are now stipulating that students can only utilize financial aid for the equivalent of two full-time semesters per year. This left some students without full funding for spring, so they were unable to take as many courses as they would have previously.

Dr. Jones added that the rebound in the economy also has an impact because students may be working more and thus taking fewer courses. Another factor was the merging of two computer courses that were duplicating efforts. The action resulted in dropping the number of credit hours assigned to one of the courses to the point that it dropped FTE by 240. A change in the structure of developmental math courses resulted in a drop of 230 FTE.

Trustee Schweizer asked how it is that there are three categories of students reflected on Vice President Rice’s charts when the College has a two-year curriculum. Mrs. Rice explained that there are new freshman, returning freshman, and sophomores. She indicated that we are making strides in the freshman and sophomore categories, indicating that retention efforts are working. Trustee Schweizer asked that the next Board meeting include the review of a five-year history of new freshman.
Vice President Rice then turned to spring enrollments at satellite campuses. She reported that all satellites are down, but the downtown campuses still has 17 percent of the total enrollment.

Vice President Rice reviewed enrollment at the off-campus sites. There was discussion about how some sites have increased in enrollment and others have decreased. Vice President Rice and her staff are currently working with coordinators at the sites where enrollment has fallen to find avenues for improvement. Trustee Schweizer asked what services were being provided at the Aerial Corporation off-campus site in Mt. Vernon. Provost Diab responded that Stark State is providing credit training to machinists on all three shifts.

With regard to dual-enrollment programs, Vice President Rice indicated that other methods of delivery, including online, are being considered. This is something that could bolster dual-credit offerings for rural school systems.

Trustee Jonas asked how many of the dual-credit hours are accepted at colleges other than Stark State. Mrs. Rice responded that all dual-credit courses meet requirements of the Ohio Transfer Assurance Guide (TAG). This means that these credits are accepted at all of Ohio’s public institutions.

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

Dr. Jones reported:

- Stark State is in line to receive $10 million to establish an energy campus in downtown Canton. Governor Kasich asked Dr. E. Gordon Gee of The Ohio State University to chair a committee made up of two- and four-year college representatives. He asked them to work together to review economic development and capital projects submitted by the colleges and universities and recommend funding. The legislature will need to approve the recommendations before they are considered final, but indications are that Stark State will receive the $10 million.

- Dr. Jones said she is honored to serve as president of this high-performing institution with so many initiatives and opportunities.

- Dr. Jones received a call from the mayor of Streetsboro inquiring about establishing a satellite in Streetsboro. She invited him to bring a team to the campus to talk about the training needs of the community.

- Dr. Jones is visiting with a long list of internal and external stakeholders, including representatives from foundations and those with an interest in the training needs of the gas and oil industry.

Trustee Jonas asked for an update on the welding initiatives. Dr. Jones responded that consideration is being given to several training locations as well as mobile welding booths. Trustee Jonas provided the names of several Alliance-area CEOs for Dr. Jones to contact about welding training needs.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 8:02 p.m., Trustee Maurer moved to go into Executive Session to consider the employment of a public employee according to R.C. 121.22 G (1). Vice Chairman Halm provided a second for the motion. A roll-call vote was taken with all members voting aye.
At 8:24 p.m., Trustee Groh moved to return to Open Session. Trustee Williams provided the second for the motion. The motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS

Items of communication were provided in the packet for this meeting.

BOARD ACTIVITY DATES

Board members were asked to review the activity chart and notify the President’s Office of events they plan to attend.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

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Michael Thomas, Chairman                   Para M. Jones, President
March 21, 2012                               March 21, 2012