

Coast Community College District
District Budget Advisory Committee
June 19, 2009 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Meeting Notes

The District Budget Advisory Committee Meeting was called to order by Interim Chancellor Currie at 1:05 p.m. in the District Board Room. Committee members in attendance were:

1. Minal Ajbani, Classified Representative, CCC
2. Cheryl Babler, Acting President, CCC
3. C.M. Brahmbhatt, Vice Chancellor, Administrative Services, District
4. Susana Castellanos-Gaona, Classified Representative, GWC
5. Ding-Jo Currie, Interim Chancellor, District
6. Rodney Foster, Faculty Representative, OCC
7. Lee Fuller, Student Representative, CCC
8. Helen Hawthorne, Student Representative, OCC
9. Janet Houlihan, Vice President, Administrative Services, GWC
10. Judi Lagerlof, Classified Representative, OCC
11. Dean Mancina, CFE Representative, OCC
12. Michael Mandelkern, CDMA Representative, OCC
13. Kevin McElroy, Vice President, Administrative Services, CCC
14. Lois Miller on behalf of Wes Bryan, President, GWC
15. Ann Nicholson on behalf of Danny Wojciechowski, CFCE Representative, OCC
16. Rich Pagel, Vice President, Administrative Services, OCC
17. Cynthia Pienkowski on behalf of Vangie Meneses, Vice President, Student Services, CCC
18. Diane Restelli, Faculty Representative, GWC
19. Cheryl Stewart on behalf of Nancy Jones, Faculty Representative, CCC

Interim Chancellor Ding-Jo Currie welcomed Committee and audience members.

Dr. Currie stated that the committee members have already accomplished a great deal and thanked them for their hard work and dedication. She went on to say that the feedback she has received has been extremely helpful and productive. **Dr. Currie** announced that the tentative budget was forwarded to the Board of Trustees and was approved at the June 17th Board meeting. General apportionment was the first priority to deal with, but now the committee will need to focus on looking at categorical funds and what steps need to be taken to deal with these issues. Changes and updates are still taking place at the State level so we will need to continue to work toward our goal while making necessary adjustments. **Dr. Currie** introduced **Vice Chancellor C.M. Brahmbhatt**.

Mr. Brahmbhatt provided an update on the state budget. He began with the 2008-09 state deferral by explaining that there is a good chance we may not receive payments from the state in a timely manner, but that we can withstand the deferral of payments for approximately four months. **Mr. Brahmbhatt** went on to say that we need to keep in mind two very important aspects in dealing with these conditions; 1.) balancing the budget and 2.) managing our cash flow. The Vice Presidents of Administrative Services are put to the task of balancing the budget, while the District Administrative Services staff manages the cash flow. **Mr. Brahmbhatt** added that the state wants to reduce \$85

million from categorical funds for 2008-09. The District will help absorb the difference for 2008-09, but the colleges need to take steps now to offset the reductions for 2009-10.

Ms. Cheryl Stewart inquired about the proposed increase to student fees and if those monies would come back to the District. **Mr. Brahmhatt** explained that the money generated from the fee increase does not come back directly to the District. The state would collect approximately \$70 million from the proposed increase, but will use those funds to backfill cuts made in other areas, which in turn could relieve funds for other programs. **Mr. Lee Fuller** pointed out that the media has been portraying the opposite message. **Mr. Dean Mancina** stated that he has also read many articles that give the public the opinion that the fee increase could easily alleviate the community colleges budget concerns and suggested that perhaps our college public relations offices should clarify this to the local community.

Mr. Brahmhatt continued with the outlook for 2009-10 by stating that the state apportionment for 2009-10 has been reduced by \$120 million which equates to \$3.6 million for the Coast Community College District. The District will need to reduce FTES by 700 (or approximately 200 sections). The State also reduced workload measures by 700 FTES. **Mr. Brahmhatt** indicated that we will make every attempt to offset over cap funding. **Dr. Cheryl Babler** asked how funding over cap now will hurt us in the future. **Mr. Brahmhatt** indicated three ways in which it could affect us in the future:

- 1.) Historically, permanent reductions are never restored
- 2.) Classes over cap will erode the way of doing business in future years
- 3.) Legislative impact; if we find ways to fund over cap, legislators will decrease funding even more. The state will look at it and interpret it to mean if we are able to maintain without additional funding, maybe they are providing too much to begin with, without realizing the sacrifices made to offset the costs.

Dr. Currie stressed the importance of managing enrollment by balancing our hearts with our heads. We want to serve students as best we can, while at the same time making necessary reductions. To lessen the impact, we will need to move slowly to ease the effect of a drastic reduction. **Mr. Fuller** expressed his appreciation from a student's perspective for the efforts being made by the committee. He is proud to be able to go back to the students he represents with positive feedback.

Mr. Brahmhatt stated that the state needs to take steps to fix higher education by developing a master plan. They can't continue to take the band-aid approach, which only leads to mismanagement. **Dr. Currie** further noted that California, compared to the nation, is in a very daunting position. At a national level, community colleges receive a lot of representation, but at the state level, we are often neglected. Hopefully, we at Coast can help our community notice the importance of what community colleges have to offer.

Mr. Brahmhatt informed committee members that no decisions have yet been made in regards to categorical funding for 2009-10. The next Categorical Budget meeting will be June 25th and is hopeful we will know more by then. He reviewed the last page of the handout he provided which outlines proposed reductions to categorical programs. **Mr. Brahmhatt** opened up the meeting for questions and discussion. **Mr. Randy Foster** shared his concern for programs that will be hit with 100% cuts. Specifically, the CTE programs he teaches. His program, as well as many others, will be unable to function due to the loss of supply money, supplies needed to demonstrate and instruct the students enrolled in these programs. **Dr. Currie** deferred the question to **Mr. John Breihan**, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor of Educational Services. **Mr. Breihan** explained that SB70 funds have been cut, but SB1133 provides primarily the same coverage. The funds from SB1133 will alleviate the cost of

supplies for the CTE courses. **Ms. Cynthia Pienkowski** indicated the importance of continuing to provide special services for students including note takers, interpreters, and counselors in order to balance student's needs with business decisions by fully utilizing our resources to improve services. **Ms. Stewart** stated that we need to keep our focus on keeping students in the classroom and commit ourselves to student success. The proposed 32% cuts to matriculation could be devastating to our efforts. **Mr. Breihan** added that the areas in which we are gaining the most students are those that need the most services. **Mr. Fuller** stated that he is worried about cutting courses students need to transfer. If we cut too many or rearrange existing class schedules, it will have an enormous impact on students and could set them back six months to a year in their transfer plans.

Mr. Mancina distributed copies of an announcement from White House Chief of Staff, Rahm Emanuel, that may offer a glimmer of hope for community colleges nationwide. The White House will be making a major announcement very soon that they will boost funding to community colleges in an effort to get more workers through community colleges and job training programs to help with the economic recovery efforts.

Mr. Brahmhatt advised that we need to develop a multi-year plan to deal with the current budget issues. He went on to say that regardless of what the state decides, we will need to continue to follow the proposed cuts indicated on the handout he provided.

In regards to district-wide budget cuts, **Dr. Currie** asked college Presidents to keep her informed of the measures being taken on their campus in response to proposed reductions. She would like them to report on the following:

- 1.) How and where they are making cuts.
- 2.) What process are they following to make those decisions?
- 3.) Hiring slow-down/freeze. What positions are in a slow-down status versus those in a freeze status and the criteria used to decide which is which.
- 4.) Class projections and service reductions.

Dr. Currie also asked the committee to consider mechanisms for replenishing funds taken from reserve accounts. **Mr. Rich Pagel** announced that OCC has created three sub-committees to address the areas of operations, categorical, and new revenues. These sub-committees are sending out weekly reports to keep people informed. **Ms. Janet Houlihan, GWC** and **Mr. Kevin McElroy, CCC** stated that they are doing the same. **Ms. Lynn Riddle** shared that OCC is looking for volunteers to fill the gaps left by reduced funding in several areas on campus, it is a great concept, students helping students.

Dr. Currie reported that all budget related communications are also being posted on the District website at http://www.cccd.edu/budget_update.aspx.

Dr. Currie continued the meeting to discuss committee membership and the charge of the group. She referred to an email she sent to committee members asking for feedback on the request made by the Association of Confidential Employees to have equal representation on the District Budget Advisory Committee. **Mr. Mancina** stated that when the committee was revitalized it was done so rather quickly in order to address increasing concerns and issues related to the budget crisis. He suggested that perhaps the committee needs to look at what their long term goals will be and who should be included on a permanent basis. **Dr. Lois Miller** stated that she agrees that it would be wise to create a mission statement outlining the charge of the committee, but feels that all constituency groups should be

included in the process. **Dr. Diane Restelli** added that if the committee will be charged with making recommendations and decisions, that all groups should be represented.

Ms. Ann Nicholson requested that the committee also consider adding a District classified representative. After some discussion it was agreed that both a Confidential and a District classified representative would be added to the District Budget Advisory Committee. **Dr. Currie** asked for a show of hands from the committee on the issue of adding a Confidential representative to the committee. The majority agreed that a Confidential would be added.

Dr. Currie asked members to provide suggestions on defining the charge of the group. **Mr. Brahmhatt** suggested the charge should be to articulate goals and principles and make recommendations for the Chancellor to take forward to the Board of Trustees. **Dr. Babler** added that the group should address a collaborative approach for fiscal advisory and responsibility. **Ms. Houlihan** offered that each campus has a written charge for the Budget Advisory groups and perhaps the committee could look at each and incorporate them into the district charge. **Mr. Mancina** expressed four areas that should be addressed by the group. Those being;

- 1.) Develop a long-term staffing plan
- 2.) Establish a goal to look at the 50% law
- 3.) Give regular presentations to the Board of Trustees to provide updates
- 4.) Develop budget recommendations

Neal Kelsey, CFCE, recommended including a section in the written charge defining the scope. **Mr. Mancina** stated that at the Board meeting on June 17th, there was an item on the agenda requesting to re-open negotiations with the unions. When **Mr. Mancina** asked why the request had been made, the answer was, "because the District Budget Advisory Committee voted on these top 5 suggestions and that some of the suggestions were negotiable items." He stated that looking back, there should have been two separate lists created for cost saving recommendations made to the Board. The first being a prioritized list of recommendations and the second being a list of suggestions that require negotiating. The fact that negotiable items were included in the recommendations made, has created difficulties for the constituency group leaders when explaining to those they represent. **Dr. Currie** stated that the suggestions forwarded expressed the sentiment of the collective and helped put issues in perspective while at the same time providing an indication of where people stand. **Mr. Mancina** noted that we need to respect the laws and agreements in place when making recommendations. **Ms. Nicholson** stated that when voting took place, individuals were possibly voting based on their own personal choices and not necessarily for the majority of the group they represent. **Ms. Pienkowski** noted that perhaps there should have been more clarification that these are suggestions, not final decisions. **Dr. Restelli** added that in the future there should be an opportunity for committee members to speak with those they represent before any voting occurs. **Mr. Fuller** expressed that he believes it was very clear, prior to voting, that these were just recommendations. He wants to ensure that no one on the committee feels uncomfortable in voicing their concerns and opinions. He went on to state that as a committee, we cannot stifle our efforts, but rather work together to find solutions. He would like to see the committee discussions be as open as positive and not avoid certain "negotiable" items.

Dr. Currie stated that perhaps there was some misunderstanding regarding the voting exercise. She went on to explain that it was meant to obtain a basic, general idea on what the issues and suggestions were. The voting was intended to narrow down ideas in order to focus on those specific areas. Ideas continue to be made from committee members as well as staff district-wide, and **Dr. Currie** reminded

everyone that nothing is set in concrete and her final recommendations to the Board didn't include any negotiable items, neither were all the recommendations in the top ranking. **Dr. Currie** informed the group that she has asked General Counsel to review the legality of this entire process and what the implications may be. She does not want to create a feeling of hesitation amongst committee members and the fact that some members remain silent concerns her. **Dr. Restelli** added that some groups have more representation than others which allows them to have a stronger vote on issues and we need to find a way to even the playing field. She reiterated her previous thought that committee members should have an opportunity to take ideas and information back to their constituency groups for feedback before bringing consensus back to the group. **Mr. Brahmhatt** expressed that we are here to serve the students and the community without hurting staff. He also stated that during these tough times we need to work together toward a common goal. **Dr. Currie** stated that if we focus on what is best for our students' success, we would disagree less on many issues. **Dr. Currie** emphasized that each member's seat at the table is a valuable seat and whether you agree or disagree, the committee relies on each of you for input. There are some silent participants and she encouraged all to share their thoughts and concerns.

There was some discussion in regards to adding the three Senate Presidents. Due to the length of the meeting and the need for many committee members to leave due to prior commitments, it was recommended by **Dr. Babler** that the issue be discussed further at the next meeting.

Dr. Currie asked for representatives to participate in creating and presenting the final committee budget recommendations to the Board of Trustees at the September 2nd Board meeting. If anyone is interested, please let her know.

In closing, **Dr. Currie** thanked all members for attending and stated that the discussion was fruitful and productive. As a final thought, **Dr. Currie** stated that the current budget situation should force us all to take a close look at our business practices and how we can improve them.

Meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

****Next meeting is scheduled for Friday, July 10th from 1:00-3:00 p.m. in the District Board Room.**