



SEWARD COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Kansas law limits options for College name *SCCC/ATS Board to vote on proposed change in March*

Seward County Community College/Area Technical School trustees got a quick start on the month of February with their regular meeting Monday. The agenda included discussion of the College's proposed name change, annual reports from the Business & Industry division and federal STEM grant, as well as the introduction of a proposed Employee Code of Ethics and Conduct.

The Board spent the largest share of its time on an information-only discussion about the College name. According to information researched and presented by the Seward County Community College/Area Technical School legal counsel Kerry McQueen, ongoing conversations about what to call the college may be moot.

"SCCC/ATS was established pursuant to the authority of Chapter 71 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated (K.S.A)," McQueen stated Tuesday. "In reviewing section d. of K.S.A. 71-701 we can note: "d. "Community college" means a public community college established under the provisions of this act. The official name of a community college shall be "the _____ community college" and the blank shall be filled with the name of the city or county."

In plain language, McQueen said, "The word 'shall' means by Kansas law that the wording in the statute is mandatory. Based on this statute, I am of the opinion that the only alternative lawful names of SCCC/ATS are either Liberal Community College or Seward County Community College."

The legal clarification comes as the College continues to collect input from employees, alumni, and community members about their sense of what the college should be called.

"At the last meeting, I said I didn't have an opinion either way until I went to the grocery store and about three people hit me up," said Trustee Rick Brenneman. The gist of their comments, he said, was that the College added "Area Technical School" to its name for a reason. "They pointed out that the change was for a purpose, and it is still serving the purpose," Brenneman said. "I believe in the technical part of things highly. I don't think I want to see it dropped."

"I also believe in the technical part very highly," noted Board Chair Ron Oliver. "But when we think back on that name change, we did it against our lawyer's recommendation. We did it because we wanted to reassure technical school supporters that we were going to include them, but I think it would be good not have such a long, bulky title anymore."

When the two entities joined, pointed out Chance, "I'm not sure the old state statutes accounted for what happens in a situation like that. But if we're going to change all the deeds to reflect our name now, we should do it properly."

Board counsel Kerry McQueen said the law is clear.

"There's a lot of inconsistency around the state with community colleges that have changed their names," he said. "But just because you see someone else driving 50 miles an hour down Kansas Avenue, that doesn't mean you should break the speed limit."

The Board discussed the issue at length before agreeing to come back for a final vote in March.

SCCC/ATS agriculture program to add movable greenhouse

Dr. Suzanne Campbell, Federal STEM Grant Project Director, presented the SCCC/ATS Board of Trustees with a report Monday about the grant's fifth and final year.

"As we enter the final year of the grant with the curriculum fully piloted, the program specialists are able to identify equipment needs that were not originally included in the grant," Campbell stated in her narrative. Those items include spectrophotometers, analytical balances and microscopes for Food Science & Safety, as well as a small tractor, movable "high tunnel" (greenhouse) and produce coolers for Sustainable Agriculture Resources, and an ultra low freezer with racks for Microbiology.

In the new business portion of its meeting, the Board approved the purchase of a fourth high tunnel (greenhouse) for the Sustainable Agriculture program, using federal STEM Grant funds. Morgan County Seeds of Barnett, Mo., submitted the only bid, which the Board approved at a cost of \$20,874.

The new greenhouse will be constructed by the vendor, and will differ from the three existing high tunnels in that it will be fully movable to double the possible growing season options. When one greenhouse-cultivated crop is ready for transplant or fully outdoor growth, explained Sustainable Agriculture Instructor David Coltrain, the high tunnel can be moved to sustain a new set of beginning crops.

"Our previous experience with the other three greenhouses was that we could purchase the materials, but there was no one in place who could construct the high tunnel — so our instructor and technician ended up building the high tunnels," Campbell said. "In this case, the funding is there to go ahead and hire that construction piece for the fully movable high tunnel."

Board hears reports, considers Employee Code of Conduct

At its regular February Board of Trustees meeting, the SCCC/ATS personnel report included hiring Cecil Stoll as a systems administrator, and the retirements of Respiratory Therapy instructor Ken Killion and Humanities Division Chair and Speech Instructor Dale Doll, effective at the end of June.

"In the short time I've gotten to work with Dale, I can say he's just a great guy, and he's going to be missed," said College President Dr. Ken Trzaska.

Trustee Marvin Chance moved to accept the personnel report, noting that "we really appreciate all the years Dale has served." Sharon Hobbble seconded, and the motion passed 6-0.

Director of Business & Industry Norma Jean Dodge gave the board an overview of the many community-connected initiatives her office handles, from the Southwest Regional Job Fair and training opportunities provided in tandem with the Liberal Area Chamber of Commerce, to contract training for businesses and industries in the region. Additionally, B&I works closely with groups in the oil and gas industry through the Southwest Energy Institute and NACE.

"Over the past few years, we've seen changes as the industry changes," Dodge noted. "Companies are cutting their training budgets and attendance for vendors and employees in the industry has decreased."

Dodge continues to explore ways to partner with area entities. Other projects include Kids College each summer, professional development courses offered "a la carte" and the ever-popular personal enrichment courses.

The board voted to accept updates to the student complaint and grievance procedures as presented by Dean of Student Services Celeste Donovan.

The State of Kansas required updates and additions to the policy, she explained, primarily to ensure that students with grievances have the full spectrum of options to pursue. "Without this, we do not qualify for financial aid eligibility," she said. "It's something we're required to do."

Donovan also introduced a new document, "Employee Code of Ethics and Conduct," which filled a gap, she said. "We really didn't have anything in place in our handbook that spells out what we expect of employees," she said. "I've worked with human resources to research other schools and businesses, and we feel this was a step in the right direction." Chance suggested sending the proposed Code to the employees for feedback.

“I don’t think there’s anything in the Code that’s alarming, but if we’re going to ask them to sign it, we should get their input,” he said. Donovan agreed to send the Code of Conduct to employees and report to the board.

A review of course fees showed a few increases and some decreases in the cost of specific classes, an information item that did not require a board vote.

In preparation for the budget process for Fiscal Year 2016, the Board set dates for its summer meetings in order to allow for budget review, approval, and publication as required by law. The Board will meet Monday, June 20, and Monday, July 18. The Board concluded the meeting with reports from Deans and President Dr. Ken Trzaska. Highlights included:

— Dean of Academic Affairs Dr. Todd Carter reported that automotive student Austin Bentley received a scholarship to attend Vision High Tech Training in Kansas City. The College was selected to take part in the “Transition to College Algebra” plan with USD 480. The College has become a founding member of the Kansas Biodiesel Consortium, which was recognized at the national biodiesel conference in Tampa recently. Allied Health’s nursing program completed a two-year accreditation follow-up and is fully certified for the next five years. Finally, the nomination committee settled on Jamie Titus, Medical Laboratory Technician instructor, and Larry McLemore, Division Chair of Industrial Technology, as the College’s 2016 NISOD nominees.

— Dean of Student Services Celeste Donovan reported that spring enrollment numbers are nearly complete, and will be finalized in the coming weeks. Overall enrollment increased by 3 percent, with nearly half the 1,754 students from Seward County. A suicide prevention workshop open to faculty, staff, and housing resident assistants provided useful information to participants. Several student activities are planned for Homecoming, set for Feb. 13. Along with President Dr. Trzaska and Dr. Carter, Donovan will accompany two SCCC/ATS students to Topeka for a Phi Theta Kappa “All Kansas Academic Team” banquet later this month.

— Dean of Finance and Operations Dennis Sander reported that Great Western Dining at SCCC/ATS received a ranking of second in the state of Kansas among institutional cafeterias, and has been asked to serve as a training facility. As part of the transition to the Board Docs electronic meeting system, Trustees are invited to attend a training session March 2.

— Dr. Trzaska reported that the nine “Moving Seward Forward” project teams continue to make progress, and will recap the campus-wide goals at this week’s All-Team meeting. Trzaska has applied to serve on the Baker Arts Board, and wants to expand collaboration between the College and BAC to support the arts in the area. His presentation at the University of Oklahoma’s first-ever biomedical and health care symposium was well-received, and he was able to network with the provost and the dean of business at OU.