Oct. 11, 2016

SCCC board hears reports on safety, website, deferred maintenance projects
Enrollment figures hold steady for 2016-17

In its regular monthly meeting Oct. 3, the Seward County Community College Board of Trustees worked quickly through a light agenda, starting with reports from two Mover teams, set up to tackle projects of critical importance.

Director of Safety Dennis Mulanax provided the board with an overview of the Safety Mover Team's continuing efforts to improve safety on campus. Mulanax has submitted the annual Clery Report as required by the Federal Government. The report gives current data about safety and security actions on campus, as well as SCCC's efforts to ensure campus safety and provide transparent and complete information to the public. At SCCC, the current Clery Act is available upon request through the office of Vice President of Finance and Operations, Dennis Sander, and a log of security officer interactions with students and the public on campus can be viewed through the main website.

Other highlights of Mulanax's report included an update about student I.D. cards, which have become mandatory for students on campus. Mulanax estimates about 85 percent of SCCC students (not including concurrent high school students) have now received I.D. cards. Logistics will determine how and when to photograph and issue I.D. cards to the hundreds of high school students who take college classes at their local schools, and on the SCCC campus.

Starting Monday, the College's new parking permit system takes effect, Mulanax said, "and as with any program that involves change, there are always questions about that. But I think we'll come through it well." The College has introduced a parking permit system in order to enable campus security officers to monitor who is on campus, as well as keep student, patron, and community members' vehicles safe. Parking permits are currently required to be used by students at all SCCC parking areas, including the Epworth Allied Health building, the Surgical Technology Building, and Colvin Adult Learning Center, and the main and Industrial Technology campuses. Permits cost $10 for the entire academic year, and can be obtained on the Web, via the "Students" tab on the main menu, followed by "Security, or by accessing a quick link, "http://wcms.sccc.edu/web/students/security." The process will be implemented by the contractor Rydin, which will also handle collection of citation fees when tickets are issued. Income generated by the permit system will be earmarked for parking lot and security improvements on campus.

In other safety-related issues, Mulanax told the board he wants to address what he views as "somewhat of an increase of drugs being used on campus," which has prompted him to "up enforcement with the Liberal Police Department and their K-9 units." Mulanax told the board he intends to perform occasional searches with drug-sniffing dogs on campus, focusing on all areas of the dorm housing, and on the parking lot.

Looking ahead, Mulanax would like to set up policies and standards for student drug testing, but must first look into the legal ramifications of doing so. "We want to be sure we are in line and in sync with other colleges," he noted.

Director of Multimedia Technology Doug Browne presented the board with a first look at the College's updated website design. Because of the rapid changes in technology and computer use, Browne said, the new site is "a completely

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different type of website. It's dynamic," he said. "In the past, IT departments had to take care of two separate websites, one for desktop viewing and one for mobile devices. This one is completely different, and can be viewed either way." Browne noted that the new site's launch does not mean all aspects have been completed. "It's a work in progress, and we will continue to update the content on the inside pages as we move forward," he said. Features on the updated website include a live feed to the College Facebook page, links to a news blog, and the College's recently-introduced mobile app that can be downloaded from iTunes or Google Play. The website maintains the same address: www.sccc.edu.

Vice President of Student Services Celeste Donovan presented final enrollment figures for the fall semester. "We certified these with the state of Kansas, so these are the figures we can hang our hats on," she said. "You will see that even week by week, the numbers changed dramatically as the semester began, but in the end, we have a slight decrease in overall head count – down 2 percent – which leaves our total student number at 1,927." Within those figures, Donovan pointed out a slight increase in part-time students, and a decrease in full-time students, with a zero change in incoming new freshmen. "We'll continue looking at these numbers and digging into the reasons for some of the changes," she said.

In Trustee comments, John Engel reported that numbers were up for the people who attended the 22nd Annual Foundation Auction that raised funds for college programs and scholarships. "We had more ticket sales, and more people," he said. "The net income for the auction was down $5,000, but that was primarily due to less participation in the live auction items 'Fund a Need' project. Other sales and participation numbers were actually higher." In a related matter, the Board voted to name the main "circle drive" on campus "Jo Ann Sharp Drive" in accordance with the winning bid at the auction.

The personnel report, which the board also accepted unanimously, listed the resignation of automotive instructor Luis Vela, effective Sept. 7, and the hiring of Janeth Vasquez as academic advisor. Open positions include instructors in the nursing, automotive technology, diesel technology, and behavioral science programs, program coordinator/secretary for the Student Support Services program, and the Associate Regional Director for the KSBDC program. Information about these, and other positions currently open, can be found online at sccc.edu, under the "About" tab and the "Employment" list item.

As it has in previous years, in anticipation of the upcoming seasonal holidays, the Board took a look at the fringe benefits listed for hourly-wage employees. "Last year, we asked the board to provide paid holiday time for the gap between the Christmas and New Year's holidays, to allow our entire team a break rather than requiring them to use leave time for that," said SCCC President, Dr. Ken Trzaska. The decision, which revived a longstanding tradition that had been set aside for several years, "was an enormously positive move. It's hard to quantify how much inspiration this injects to the team."

"It's my understanding that it really boosted morale on campus," said Board Chair Ron Oliver. The Board voted unanimously to approve an update to the relevant policy (#619: Fringe Benefits) to permit all employees to receive pay for all the days during winter break each year, at the discretion of the President. The number of days would vary each year.

In reports to the board, members of the executive team presented information on the following items:
— Improvements to the main campus cafeteria and the Industrial Technology Division café, in cooperation with the food service vendor, Great Western Dining. Cost for remodeling work, addition of coffee-shop amenities, and more updates could be split between GWD and the college, with a payment play spreading the expenditure over a period of years.
— Observance of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, with a movie, workshops, and student pledges.
— Progress on the Compressed Natural Gas program facilities, with equipment that has been delayed after a year of legal wrangling with the vendor. The compressor and other items are in the process of being installed.
— Finalization of a new position in the office of development, a major gifts officer.
— Update on the SCCC Health Care Task Force, made up of employees from many departments on campus, which has begun meetings with insurance providers in order to evaluate options for employee healthcare benefits.
— Deferred maintenance projects to address security-related issues on the physical campus, and in the IT sector. Other projects under consideration include replacement of aging roofs on campus, improved sound systems in the Green House and the Showcase Theater, as well as updated, code-compliant lighting in the theater.

Trzaska noted, "we are trying to find a middle ground approach, between being overly ambitious and standing still."

Discussion among board members focused on the need to address longstanding maintenance issues in a fiscally conservative manner. "It's important to go where you find the best interest rate," noted trustee Dustin Ormiston. "Either way, we answer to the taxpayers."

Trzaska agreed, adding that the addition of a major gifts officer could eventually enable the college to match donor wishes and causes with projects on campus. "We need to align ourselves with supporters, and make it easy for them to put resources into areas they care about," he said.