



SEWARD COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Division reports from Industrial Tech, Ag/Business/Personal Services *Board pleased with improvements in high-demand fields*

In its regular meeting Dec. 7, the Seward County Community College/Area Technical School Board of Trustees handled a light agenda. The board heard program reports from the Industrial Technology Division and the Agriculture, Business and Personal Services Division.

“So many of our programs are working out really well,” said Industrial Technology Chair Larry McLemore. “In Commercial Drivers License training, we are the rock stars in the state.” Adding two sessions of night classes enabled the program to increase enrollment, he said, which is significant in light of the six-week study model, which can pose a challenge for students who typically cannot work at outside, full-time jobs while completing the CDL.

McLemore also highlighted the automotive business management program, which has grown considerably thanks to concurrent high school student enrollment. While many of the students go on to find employment in auto parts businesses and as parts managers in industrial settings, some have leveraged their training in creative ways.

“We have a lot of female high school students, who have been able to take those inventory skills, customer service and communication skills, and apply those in other types of businesses,” he said.

In her report, Agriculture, Business and Personal Services Division Chair Kim Zant emphasized the tremendous progress in the agriculture program.

“We’ve got two agriculture instructors who have been on board for less than a year, and they are doing a beautiful job of getting the program where it needs to be,” she said. “Our advisory board was pleased to see the Celebrity Livestock Auction return, and we hope to get a livestock judging team back in action this year.”

Board chairman Ron Oliver, a farmer himself, said he was pleased with the program’s progress in light of faculty turnover in previous years.

“We have needed stability in there, and that doesn’t happen overnight,” he said.

Zant also presented information about the business division programs, which are working closely with advisory boards to ensure students learn skills that are up-to-date and valued in the employment market.

The cosmetology program has benefited from the addition of another instructor, Zant reported, which enables students to more easily log the time required for program completion. There, too, an advisory board has provided helpful input for program design.

“I think it’s critical that we use those advisory boards,” Oliver said. “I appreciate you paying attention to them, and doing what they suggest. That’s what they are there for.”

The board approved continuation of the SCCC/ATS early retirement policy, and accepted the early retirement request of drafting instructor Steve Merz. A veteran instructor, Merz worked for 16 years at the former Liberal Area Vocation-

al-Technical School / Southwest Kansas Technical School before the vo-tech became part of Seward County Community College eight years ago.

The board noted its appreciation to Merz for his 24 consecutive years of service to the college, students, and the public. Other agenda items included a preliminary discussion about the college's official name, which still appears on tax statements as a "junior college." According to courthouse officials and board counsel Kerry McQueen, the college must be listed with the name that appears on property titles.

"I'd like to take a look at getting the names on those titles cleaned up, and updated," Oliver said. The board agreed to begin discussions about the issue in January 2016.

Four bids were presented to the board for consideration. In its effort to redesign and update the College's website, the multi-media and technology department sought bids from various companies. The resulting bids ranged from a starting cost of \$39,750 to \$309,060. Ultimately, the board opted to follow the administration recommendation of working with Campus EAI of Cleveland, Ohio, which also provides other technology services to SCCC/ATS, for the low bid of \$39,750 for the first year of website hosting, and a yearly cost of \$9,950 for the four years thereafter.

The board also approved the purchase of an air compressor for the corrosion program, for the low bid of \$42,555 from Air Capital Equipment in Wichita; the purchase of a fleet vehicle — a 2016 Ford Fusion — for the low bid of \$19,584 from Foss Motor of Liberal; and a Lecture Capture System to be used for the corrosion and natural gas compression programs, for the low (and only) bid of \$56,286 from Cytex Media Systems of Topeka.

Board member Dustin Ormiston asked if the Lecture Capture System could be used for courses other than the two listed.

"I've been trying to find some ways to do that," said Doug Browne, Director of Multimedia Technology. However, Browne explained, the equipment is connected to the instructional space, and cannot be moved from room to room.

Ormiston said he would like to see a demonstration of the new equipment once it is installed and working.

"I can see this kind of thing being utilized a lot more broadly," he said.

The next SCCC/ATS Board of Trustees meeting is at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 4, 2016.