

**BITTERROOT VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
5:30 PM, MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2024  
MINUTES**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call 5:30 PM

Present:

Trustee Carrie Guarino, Chair

Trustee RAN Pigman - absent.

Trustee Jean Butler, Board Vice-Chair

Trustee Sue Smith, Secretary

Trustee Darwin Ernst

Trustee Jennifer Johnson

Robert Underwood, BVCC Bookkeeper

Katie Grey, BVCC District Clerk - absent

Jamie Ogden, BVCC Management Consultant

Guests/Members of the Public present: Richard Donovan

2. Review, Revise, and Approve Agenda (Action) – Trustee Jennifer Johnson made a motion, seconded by Trustee Jean Butler, to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Trustee Butler requested the addition of 7C – a recommendation to review and interview a potential trustee candidate to fill the seat vacated by Paul Ashcraft. With no discussion the motion was passed unanimously with five (5) “yes” votes.
3. Public Comment/Correspondence on Items Not on the Agenda – None
4. Consent Agenda (Action) – Trustee Sue Smith made a motion, seconded by Trustee Johnson, to approve the consent agenda. Discussion by Chair Guarino and Trustee Johnson to correct typographical errors, including noting Trustee RAN Pigman as absent at the December 4, 2023, meeting and correcting section 7A to reflect the approval of hiring Robert Underwood as BVCC Bookkeeper. With no further discussion the motion was passed unanimously with five (5) “yes” votes.
- A. Approve minutes from regular meeting on December 4, 2023 (*Attachment A*)
  - B. Approve warrant list for December 2023 (*Attachment B*)
5. Reports/Announcements (Information)
- A. Chair’s Report – Chair Guarino thanked the trustees for their work during her December absence.
    - i. Administrator’s Report– written report submitted by Jamie Ogden, BVCC Management Consultant (*Attachment C*)
  - B. Secretary’s Report – none
  - C. Clerk’s Report – none
  - D. Bookkeeper’s Report (*Attachments D1 and D2*) – BVCC Bookkeeper Robert Underwood presented the balance sheet and reconciliation report for December.

He also stated that an engagement letter is being drafted to secure the auditor for the coming year. The BVCC Foundation is considered a component unit of the BVCC, which means it will be audited at the same time. Trustee Butler clarified that the BVCC Foundation is a separate entity entirely from the BVCC. Chair Guarino commented that the BVCC Board communicated with the Foundation about the need for an audit, as the two entities are tied. BVCC can share its engagement letter with the Foundation to assist them in moving forward.

Bookkeeper Robert Underwood will conduct follow-up.

- E. Building and Grounds Committee – Trustee Darwin Ernst reported there is no news regarding Hamilton School District’s future building locations. There is optimism among city and county leaders regarding new housing developments to increase rental unit stock in and around Hamilton.
- F. Finance and Audit Committee – none
- G. Human Resources Committee – none
- H. Engagement Work Group –none

6. Old Business (Action)

A. Recommendation to host a Veterans Upward Bound computer class, beginning in March, per the existing M.O.U. (*Attachment E*) – Trustee Butler made a motion, seconded by Trustee Johnson, to host a VUB computer class this spring. Chair Guarino asked about improving efforts to reach veterans with class information. Trustee Ernst said he has made contact with staff for US Senator Tester and also recommended taking flyers to Springer Memorial, where many vets live. There was general discussion clarifying the various Veterans’ service centers in the Valley. Bookkeeper Robert Underwood recommended sharing information with the Veterans Disability office and local American Legion posts. BVCC Management Consultant Jamie Ogden will set dates with VUB, Human Resource Council (room reservations), and the instructor (Jon Swallow). She will create a flyer and conduct initial outreach by our February meeting date, leaving time for additional and more in-depth outreach before the class begins in March. Bookkeeper Robert Underwood noted that BVCC has not been reimbursed by VUB for classes that occurred in the spring of 2023. Management Consultant Jamie Ogden will contact VUB to check on this. With no further discussion the motion was passed unanimously, with five (5) votes.

B. Recommendation to modify/amend/accept updated Proposed Language/Narrative for May 2024 Levy Ballot (*Attachment F*) -- Trustee Johnson made a motion, seconded by Trustee Butler to review, and modify the updated Proposed Language/Narrative for the May 2024 Levy Ballot. Trustee Butler explained that she and Trustee Ernst took the proposed language, approved in November, to Ravalli County Clerk & Recorder Regina Plettenberg for review. The narrative language explaining the history of BVCC, and the current mill levy vote will be included in promotional materials and media outreach, including a planned voter booklet by the Bitterroot Star. Clerk & Recorder Plettenberg provided resources, including an election calendar. She suggested having Ravalli County Attorney Bill Fulbright review the ballot

language, which Trustee Smith volunteered to lead. She confirmed that property tax impacts for home valuations of \$100k, \$300k and \$600k must be included in the ballot language.

There was some discussion of the ballot language referencing the amount of state budget allocations. Trustees Ernst, Johnson and Butler said they felt it is important to include. Trustee Smith and Chari Guarino said they would prefer removing it. Trustee Smith explained that if the levy passes, local funds will be available in November 2024. Meanwhile, the Montana Legislature will begin committee meetings in early 2025 and is unlikely to have state approval for allocations until after the legislative session.

Trustee Johnson asked about adding \$1,000,000 valuation to the tax impact portion of the ballot language. Management Consultant Jamie Ogden reported that Clerk & Recorder Plettenberg was unsure if tax impact calculations are correct, with recent tax changes going into effect in October. Plettenberg recommended contacting the Department of Revenue. Trustee Ernst recommended reviewing the tax impact statement with Ravalli County Treasurer Dan Whitsett. Trustees Johnson and Guarino will review.

With no further discussion, Trustee Ernst made a motion, seconded by Trustee Butler, to table the motion to the February 5, 2024, meeting unanimously with five (5) votes.

7. New Business (Action)

- A. Recommendation to hold a Trustee and Levy Election in May 2024 (*Attachment G*) and review of Election Calendar (*Attachment H*) – Trustee Smith made a motion, seconded by Trustee Johnson to act on the draft resolution to hold a Trustee and Levy Election in May of 2024.

Chair Guarino and Management Consultant Jamie Ogden clarified, after conferring with Ravalli County Elections, that the Trustee Election will include 3 full and 2 unexpired seats on the Board of Trustees. The seat currently held by Trustee Jean Butler is up for a full-term (May 2024-May 2027), as is the seat currently held by Trustee Jennifer Johnson (May 2024-May 2027), as is the seat currently held by Trustee RAN Pigman (May 2024-May 2027). Trustee Darwin Ernst, who was appointed to fill a seat vacated by Marci Smith, will run for the remainder of the existing term (May 2024-May 2025). The seat vacated by Paul Ashcraft also leaves open an unexpired term (May 24-May 2026). Trustees running for election must submit an Oath of Candidacy form to the Ravalli County Clerk & Recorder by March 28, 2024.

The BVCC Board of Trustees must pass a resolution to hold the Trustee election to the Ravalli County Clerk & Recorder by February 12, according to the Elections Calendar. Likewise, the intent to hold a Levy election must be included in a resolution to the Ravalli County Clerk & Recorder by February 12. This resolution includes the ballot language. Trustees agreed to continue revisions, review and clarifications in the proposed ballot language and resolution.

Trustee Ernst made a motion to table the recommendation to hold a Trustee and Levy Election in May 2024 to the February 5, 2024, meeting. The motion was seconded by Trustee Smith and approved unanimously with five (5) votes.

- B. Recommendation to comply with video recording and posting of public meetings per changes in House Bill 890, beginning July 1, 2025 – Trustee Butler made motion, seconded by Trustee Johnson, to open discussion of the recommendation. Management Consultant Jamie Ogden reported that legislation passed last session resulted in changes to Montana’s open meetings law, particularly with respect to school boards, requiring boards to video record and post meetings, effective July 1, 2024. The Montana School Board Association is recommending that school boards become familiar with the law and make a plan for compliance, stating their intention to comply immediately or at the beginning of July of 2024. Trustee Johnson asked if the law applied to community college districts. Chair Guarino said that while the law lists first- and second-class school district boards of trustees, it does not specifically mention community college districts: it is unclear whether BVCC is included in the amendments to MCA 2-3-214 under Section 1. Questions were raised about whether additional sound equipment may be necessary, and the ease of implementation. Management Consultant Jamie Ogden said compliance using Zoom technology would require only a small effort. Trustee Butler offered to inquire with Flathead Valley Community College about what it is doing or intending regarding video recording of meetings. Trustee Ernst made a motion to table the recommendation to the June Board of Trustees’ meeting. The motion was seconded by Trustee Butler and approved unanimously with five (5) votes.
- C. Recommendation to Review and Interview a potential trustee candidate to fill an existing vacancy – Trustee Butler made a motion, seconded by Trustee Johnson, to review and interview Richard Donovan, who expressed interest in filling the Board of Trustee seat vacated by Paul Ashcraft. Chair Guarino reviewed board procedures for reviewing trustee candidates, and clarified that, if appointed, the trustee would have to run for election in May of 2024 to complete the remainder of the unexpired term. Chair Guarino opened questions from the Trustees. Trustee Johnson asked how the candidate would define the differences between BVCC and UM-Bitterroot. Candidate Richard Donovan responded that BVCC doesn’t really “exist.” He expressed familiarity with the 2022 campaign to establish and fund a college district and felt that campaign assumed BVCC and UM-Bitterroot would become one and the same; that, eventually, all would be assumed under BVCC. Moving forward, he said, it’s clear UM intends to stay, so BVCC needs to distinguish themselves from other programs, and standard college programming. He would like to see BVCC take the opportunity to push the envelope (and provide handouts about a sustainability project he is currently developing). Trustee Butler asked what inspired the candidate to apply. Candidate Richard Donovan replied that the trustee position is an opportunity to push forward the ideas contained in the handouts / engineering resiliency into our communities. He expressed particular interest in being able to apply for grants for the project via/with BVCC. Trustee Ernst asked what the candidate sees as the most pressing responsibilities of a trustee? Candidate Richard Donovan responded that his priority is fund-

raising and he believes the compelling ideas in his project could draw funding from sources such as the National Science Foundation.

Trustee Smith asked if the candidate considers himself a team player or a team leader? Candidate Richard Donovan replied, "Both." As a research development professional, he said, part of his job and experience is putting together and working with teams.

Chair Guarino noted that BVCC trustees are elected volunteers who are very involved in the operations of the district. She asked what kind of time commitment the candidate could give. Candidate Richard Donovan responded that his focus will be the project he outlined. All of the technology outlined, he said, can be built and employed by community college students in the service of resiliency.

In additional discussion, Candidate Richard Donovan said he expects there will be demand for resiliency engineering over the next several decades. He is looking to raise money for these kinds of projects, and said he is working on an NSF grant with Blackfoot College. He would like a Bitterroot Resiliency Project to be part of a full proposal to the NSF in January of 2025. The BVCC, Donovan said, could provide students to learn and run technology manufacturing, robotic welding, 3D prints manufacturing and biorefinery. The trustee position, Donovan said, would be a helpful hat to wear as he goes out and talks to the community about his project and promotes his program.

With discussion closed, there was clarification as to the motion to review and interview, not to vote for or against the appointment. Having completed the interview, trustees agreed to hold a special meeting to discuss and vote on appointing Richard Donovan to the BVCC Board of Trustees on Friday, January 12 at 11:30 am via Zoom. Notice will be made on the BVCC Web site, along with a Zoom link.

#### 8. Policy Adoption and Review (Action)

A. First Reading – A motion was made by Trustee Butler, seconded by Trustee Johnson, to approve the Policy and Adoption Review, Section A (Section 6000, Business and Fiscal Services). With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously with five (5) votes.

i. Section 6000, Business and Fiscal Services (policies for annual review with suggested revisions in red) (*Attachment J*)

- a. 6001. Definitions
- b. 6005. Delegation of Authority, Business and Fiscal Services
- c. 6010. Payment of Bills
- d. 6015. Accounting System
- e. 6020. Budget System
- f. 6025. Investments
- g. 6030. Purchasing
- h. 6035. Bids and Contracts
- i. 6040. Financial Audits
- j. 6041. Financial Records
- k. 6045. Assets

- l. 6050. Insurance and Risk
- m. 6055. Independent Foundations
- n. 6060. Contributions and Gifts
- o. 6065. Grants

B. Second Reading – A motion was made by Trustee Butler, seconded by Trustee Smith, to approve on Second Reading, Section 5000. Student Services. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously with five (5) votes.

- i. Section 5000. Student Services (policies for annual review with suggested revisions in red) (*Attachment K*)
  - a. 5001. Definitions
  - b. 5005. Admission
  - c. 5010. Tuition and Fees
  - d. 5015. Financial Aid
  - e. 5020. Student Records
  - f. 5025. Student Code of :28Conduct
  - g. 5030. Student Support Services
  - h. 5035. Student Activities and Organizations
  - i. 5040. Student Email

9. Adjournment – A motion was made by Trustee Smith, seconded by Trustee Johnson, to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 PM. With no further discussion, the motion was passed unanimously with five (5) votes.

Carrie Guarino  
Trustee Carrie Guarino, Board Chair

2/5/24  
Date

Jean Butler  
Trustee Jean Butler, Board Vice Chair

2/5/2024  
Date