



Board of Trustees Retreat
The Lord Manion Coach House
Day two of a two-day meeting/retreat
November 8, 2022

Trustees Attending: Allyson Brooks
Shane Everbeck
Karen Fraser
Fred Goldberg
Miguel Pérez-Gibson
Kris Peters
Ed Zuckerman

Staff Presenting: John Carmichael, President
Erik Gimness, Director of Institutional Research
Dexter Gordon, Executive Vice President
Susan Harris, Executive Associate to the President and Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Others Presenting: Allegra Calder, Facilitator, BERK Consulting
Clarissa Dirks, Faculty Representative to the Board of Trustees
Sharon English, Assistant Attorney General
Susan Keefe, Staff Representative
Michael Meotti, Executive Director for WSAC
Trygve Vandal, Student Representative

Chair Karen Fraser called the meeting to order at 9:14 a.m. with a quorum present. The meeting was held at The Lord Mansion Coach House, 211 21st Ave SW, Olympia, Washington. The retreat was in-person with no remote option available.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Karen Fraser extended a welcome and introductions were made around the room. Facilitator Allegra Calder from BERK Consulting provided an overview of the day's agenda and presented draft norms for the Board of Trustees to read and consider. It was encouraged that the norms considered continue to be used and adjusted as needed in the future. It was recommended that group norms come back to the Board of Trustees January meeting for discussion and possible adoption.

1. Each trustee is an equal participant in the process and has equal opportunity to voice opinions and contribute ideas.
2. Trustees recognize the legitimacy of the interests, concerns and goals of others, whether or not we agree with them. We commit to treating each other, and those who attend our meetings, with respect and courtesy. This is to be extended to the public as well.
3. Trustees accept the responsibility to come to the meeting prepared for the discussions, willing to explore the issues, and keeping the interests of the college at the forefront.

4. Trustees commit to listen carefully, ask pertinent questions, and educate ourselves about the interests and needs that must be addressed in a constructive problem-solving atmosphere.
5. Trustees will make a concerted effort to focus on the topics under discussion and remain present.
6. We will respect everyone's time by starting and ending meetings on time and returning from breaks promptly.
7. Everyone is responsible for upholding the norms. Acknowledge if you notice we are not doing so.
8. People should feel free to speak as everyone's opinion is valuable.
9. Share the airtime. Encourage all to contribute to the conversation.

The Context of Higher Education Today

Executive Director of the Washington Student Achievement Council Michael Meotti presented on the context of higher education today.

The presentation slides will be shared with those in attendance by Executive Associate to the President and Secretary to the Board of Trustees Susan Harris.

Review of Evergreen's Foundational Principles

President John Carmichael reviewed Evergreen's current mission and vision. He shared that many have asked him what the vision of the college should be, and he has responded that the vision of the college is not one for him to decide, rather it should be a collaborative process with the entire Evergreen community. However, President Carmichael shared some broad ideas when considering the vision for the next 3 years:

- the college is growing, not shrinking
- the college is strengthening programs to the needs and interests of prospective students
- the college is continually learning and using data to identify interventions
- the college is clearing away obstacle for older students
- the college is centering belonging
- the college is seen as a good place to work
- the college talks more about careers
- the college is rooted in our community
- the college is offering programs and certification offerings for a diverse array of students

Executive Vice President Dexter Gordon noted that members of the Evergreen community want to have a common view of where the college is headed, and it will need to be innovative to meet the moment.

Board Role, Responsibilities, and Operations

The Board engaged in conversation about the Board's role, responsibilities and operations. A few items shared and discussed by Board members included:

- there is an interest in reviewing reading materials and videos ahead of the meetings to leave time for dialog in the meetings
- there is value in the committee work
- the Chair, President and Executive Vice President have been very communicative and make themselves available
- now that we are out of crisis mode, the Board should revert to its strategic role taking a high-level view and focusing on the work ahead
- provide campus tours and other experiences that increase opportunities for Trustees to dialog with the campus community;

- provide Open Public Meetings Act refresher training, with invitations being extended to faculty and staff so to better understand how the Board operates
- bring in outside speakers at the top of Board meetings to ground in the work of the college
- as part of its strategic leadership, the Board should include succession planning for the Board itself and the President
- consider how can the Board be more proactive in the work of Trustee recruitment

Themes that emerged from the conversation included the following: things are turning around; higher education institutions are entities of choice and part of the marketplace; we are co-creating a future with those we serve; engagement, experience, and our natural setting are key assets - How do we tell the story?; and what is next?

Fostering Belonging

Director of Institutional Assessment Erik Gimness presented data on the diversity of students, staff, and faculty at Evergreen.

The goal of Evergreen for diversity of faculty and staff is not only to represent the community we serve, but to build the world we can imagine. There are many actions being taken on campus to move toward an environment that promotes more belonging, such as events and activities. Additional work is needed to bring more diversity in the student, staff, and faculty populations. As well, it is important the college represent diversity in curriculum and be responsive to the campus climate.

The Board identified ways in which they can support belonging on campus:

- model equity and inclusion
- recruit a diverse Board
- encourage administration to carry out initiatives
- be present and engaged on campus
- review data and dashboards through an equity lens
- encourage physical spaces that are welcoming
- connect with external contacts promoting Evergreen and to meet with constituents when there are challenges
- serve as an insulator for political pressures
- use influence as appropriate
- use meeting time wisely
- show up and share out

Board Priorities for 2023

The Board of Trustees discussed priorities for 2022-2023. Priorities listed below are not in priority order.

1. Review Evergreen guiding documents such as the Strategic Plan; Strategic Enrollment Plan; Campus Master Plan; Land Use Plan; Climate Action Plan; Academic Plan (Strategic Plan engagement in 2023-2024)
2. Get to know Evergreen and develop sense of community
 - a. Bring in speakers, i.e.: Director of Climate Center; faculty and student work
 - b. Tours, i.e.: library tour; center tours
3. Develop a collective vision for the Board of Trustees
4. Belonging


5. Housing
6. Prison Education
7. Budget for next biennium 2023-2025
8. Bargaining
9. Accreditation
10. Lean management
11. Governance work
 - a. Board process
 - i. Committee structure: possibly add Legislative Committee; Governance Committee; Strategic Planning Committee; consider inviting Board representatives to engage in committee work
 - ii. Board goal setting
 - iii. Educating others about the role of the Board
 - iv. Board orientation
 - v. Succession planning, i.e.: Trustees; President
 - vi. Governance education, i.e.; Association of Governing Boards


Next steps and roundtable

1. Executive Committee to identify a process of how to spend time for the 2022-2023 academic year and propose to the full Board.
2. Executive Committee to consider appointing a legislative committee to meet monthly through session.
3. Consider recommending a statewide study of the housing crises on campus.
4. Executive Committee to consider how can the Board be more proactive in the work of Trustee recruitment.
5. Fashion a statement of purpose based on retreat discussions. Talk about “meaningful” education, not just “higher” education; Distinguish between “foundational” and “transformational”; Translate “access” into “transformational” experiences
6. Consider putting Representatives on Board committees.
7. Ask Board Budget and Finance Committee to review the LEAN process of state government.
8. Enhance Trustee advocacy in the legislative process.
9. Create committees or Board Liaisons to planning processes such as the Strategic Plan and Campus Master Plan.
10. Revisit Board orientation process.
11. Revisit Board meeting agenda format to emphasize more “high level”, longer-range, strategic policy matters; more discussion by all members and few briefings; members review meeting materials ahead of meetings; bring in outside speakers; present student projects; feature faculty; schedule tours after or between meetings; refresher on Open Meetings Act with invitations to Evergreen community; and adopt group norms.
12. Share the WSAC action plan with the Board of Trustees.

Adjourn meeting

Chair Karen Fraser adjourned the meeting at 3:12 p.m.


Karen Fraser, Chair


Ed Zuckerman, Secretary