

Portland Community College 2021-23 Hearing Minutes

Thursday, May 20, 2021

3:00 pm

PCC Building

722 SW 2nd Avenue

Portland, Oregon

Via Zoom Meeting

Present:

TSCC:

Chair David Barringer, Commissioner James Ofsink, Commissioner Margo Norton, Commissioner Mark Wubbold, Commissioner Quiroz, Executive Director Craig Gibbons and Budget Analyst Tunie Betschart.

Absent: None

Portland Community College:

Board Members: Board Chair Mohamed Alyajouri, Vice-Chair Tiffani Penson, Michael Sonnleitner, Student Trustee to the Board Riley Turner

College President Mark Mitsui, Executive Vice President Sylvia Kelley, Associate Vice President of Finance and Administration Eric Blumenthal, Assistant to President and Board Jeanie Morton, Associate Vice President of Finance Dina Farrell, Budget Manager Thomas Andrews and Budget Analyst Heather Monaghan

Members of the Public: None

Chair David Barringer opened the public hearing for Portland Community College's 2021-23 biennial budget and asked the Commissioners and staff to introduce themselves. He then asked if any Commissioners have business relationships with the College that could be perceived as a conflict of interest. There were none. He asked the College to introduce the board members present and staff, make brief introductory remarks about the budget, and then the commissioners would ask a few questions and discuss the budget. Following the questions, the commissioners will take testimony from the public.

PCC Board and staff introduced themselves, followed President Mitsui for a presentation on the budget.

President Mitsui pointed out that it has been a year unlike any other. Despite a very challenging year written into the budget are true values of equitable student success and the pursuit of equitable student success in a strategic and even visionary way. Despite the tremendous challenges PCC has encountered, they were pleased to put together a responsible and prudent fiscal approach that still supports forward strategic momentum in creating equitable outcomes for all students. That encapsulates the budget in a nutshell.

He discussed developing their new strategic plan, led by Sylvia Kelly, and the linkage of that strategic plan to the budget led by Dina Farrell, Eric Blumenthal, Tom Andrews, and others. Their

goal is to put their money where their values are and provide the resources to address the community's growing needs, particularly regarding equity and student success.

President Mitsui explained that before they reopen the College for in-person learning, they want to decide which changes made during the pivot to online learning make sense to continue and what they need to return to pre-pandemic learning.

Following the brief overview, the hearing moved to the TSCC's prepared questions.

TSCC Questions:

Chair Barringer asked the following question:

How has the pandemic changed the way you have delivered education and support services this year? What have you learned from this experience and how will you apply it to the lasting impacts of the pandemic?

President Mitsui explained that they needed to pivot to all remote and all online instruction and support services within ten days. That meant adding well over a thousand additional courses to online and remote format; train and build capacity in remote and online instruction for hundreds of faculty; move the curriculum content formally delivered in person to an online or remote format.

They had to do the same with services. Counselling had to go remote. They had to establish a telehealth process. Seemingly effortless, everyday details like getting documents signed became difficult. The IT department stepped up, implementing an electronic signature system. So every aspect of the College flipped on a dime very quickly and took a tremendous amount of effort.

Addressing the second part of the question, he said given the nature of housing costs in Portland before the pandemic, they took a look at heat maps of displacement due to housing costs. They could see that there was growing displacement due to rising housing costs. They needed to be able to find ways to keep in contact and continue to teach these students. A more robust online and remote delivery capability was something they were considering. The pandemic accelerated that. So now PCC knows what is needed. They have a better idea of how to do what is required and be successful. Maintaining the quality of instruction online is an important consideration. The online and distance learning department did a great job of doing that.

Chair Barringer asked this follow-up question:

Did having a biennial budget gives the College more flexibility to adjust to the pandemic?

President Mitsui responded, saying in some respects it may have because they build that supplemental budget year in, knowing they will have to make adjustments. He said he wanted to credit Dina Farrell, Tom Andrews, Eric Blumenthal and others in the budget office. Part of what they did on a dime was to stop spending. They knew right away there would be resource reductions because of the impact on enrollment, and also, they were not sure of the new budget picture. In addition, there were rumors that the governor was going to have an emergency cut to the budget. So everyone across the College reduced spending quickly. That contributed to a healthy fund balance to carry forward.

Ms. Dina Farrell added had they had to put a brand new budget in place on July 1, 2020, that would have just created more stress in financial services. Instead, they were able to

concentrate on getting credit card machines up, making sure that financial transactions were happening timely, checks were going out to students, checks were going out to vendors appropriately, all of the various financial components that they rely on to deliver payments were up to speed. So that was a bonus not having to go through the formal budget process.

Ms. Sylvia Kelley added the College thought that they had a pandemic plan in place. They are required to do emergency planning. However, when you have to do it, and there is a pandemic, things are different and the College moved quite quickly. The president appointed what was called COLT, which was the Covid leadership team. That leadership group still meets today. They had to put together a health and safety plan across a vast district. They still had to have people either coming to cut checks, coming to campus, or maintaining campus facilities. That was something that PCC had to practice what they had previously put in writing.

All education districts have received extra federal and state funding to deal with the added costs of dealing with the pandemic. That funding will not continue indefinitely, but the impact of the pandemic may. Do you have a plan for paying for needed services when the extra funding stops?

President Mitsui responded, saying they looked at capacity building first and knew there was a lot of work to do to be COVID compliant and prepare the College for reopening. Some of those investments did have a short-term return, as shown by enrollment starting to come back even before students and staff could be fully vaccinated.

The other investments were around maintaining and supporting students. Half of the CARES funds went directly to students. That was a lifesaver for so many. According to a recent survey, housing and food insecurity, basic needs insecurity showed that two-thirds of students experience housing or food insecurity, and around 18% experience homelessness. That was exacerbated during the pandemic. Unemployment became another issue. These emergency grants that came in were essential. That is a short-term fix, but it did help students stay on their feet, access laptops and Wi-Fi hotspots and continue to learn.

He explained that in terms of how they are utilizing those investments, they are looking at things like transportation and how these funds may or may not be used to maintain some of the systems they will need to restart. There is a benefits integration project called Pathways to Opportunity, lead by PCC. This project is the benefits integration project in which all 17 community colleges in Oregon are participating. It's a partnership with the Department of Human Services to help the students access food stamps, childcare, and other benefits to put food on the table and keep a roof over their heads while they're going to school. That was important during the shutdown as the College could not maintain its four food pantries.

DHS trained PCC staff on how to help students to access food stamps online. This training is an example of experiences that will help PCC after the pandemic. Other capacities, such as remote and online learning, have also increased, thanks to some stimulus and CARES act funding.

They also had a pilot program with augmented and virtual reality, that, because of social distancing and the shutdown, they wanted to find alternative ways of delivering hands-on instruction. So, PCC now has four pilot programs going, one in aviation science and three other sectors.

And one of the things they discovered through this is because of ARVR software, jet engines can be switched out very quickly, almost with a flip of a switch and a lot less expensively than purchasing a real jet engine. So, there are some benefits there.

Commissioner Wubbold asked the following question:

Managing staffing during a period of declining enrollment and a pandemic must be very difficult. How have you been able to balance it all and maintain both good instructors and good students?

President Mitsui explained that there is a constant balance they are always trying to achieve. One has been to centralize the communication efforts. For example, he instituted weekly email messages to provide updates to the campus to address critical concerns that the campus had, both on external issues and internal ones.

When the shutdown happened, some key positions could only be done on campus and in person. Most of those were custodial, grounds keeping, and similar facility maintenance positions and bookstore and cafeteria work. To support the employee population, they introduced closure pay. He explained that they have a contract that defines closure pay with a maximum of about 40 hours total. So, they extended that far beyond 40 hours to help keep folks employed. That gave the college time as they worked through the shutdown to figure out how to recast and redeploy those employees so that they wouldn't be laid off.

They established health and safety as a priority and did not rush to reopen until they knew the appropriate safety measures were in place across the entire College. They monitored activities to ensure compliance with their procedures and OHA guidelines and requirements so that when folks did come back, they were safe. They surveyed folks to check on their readiness to return and what their main concerns were. Health and safety were the most significant concerns. Support for the faculty and staff is essential. They have an open listening session scheduled for next week to hear how folks are doing.

The leadership group at the College knows this past year has been a traumatic time. An area the PCC wants to improve is in its response to trauma through informed leadership principles. Everybody's dealing with it and whether it's primary, secondary. Some people have lost relatives to Covid. The leadership and staff want to do what they can to support folks as they work through this time.

At Portland State University, we use the state's workshare furlough program. Do you use this program at PCC?

President Mitsui said they do not mainly due to the administrative overhead of the program.

Commissioner Ofsink asked this follow-up question:

How has the input you received from surveying the students affected the decisions and actions of the College? Was the staff included in that survey, and what changes did you make due to their feedback?

President Mitsui said the survey was focused on the staff, and the questions had to do with the comfort levels of returning. They discovered that about 73% were either very or somewhat concerned about returning due to Covid. So what that did was to inform leadership regarding the kinds of measures needed to mitigate risks and the required calibration for the reopening phases to community transmission rates. Unfortunately, the vaccines had not been approved when that survey was administered, and the clinical trials had not been completed. Now that there is a vaccine available, PCC is putting another survey out to students and faculty.

Thank you. I just misunderstood the scope of it, and I appreciate you clarifying that.

PCC Board Chair Mohamed Alyajouri added that along with the surveys President Mitsui mentioned, the board was open to the comments from students, staff, and community, urging PCC to consider reopening. However, the board still stuck to the original plan. Their first concern was health and safety. They are proud of that decision.

I agree that it seems essential to stick to the plan.

Commissioner Quiroz asked the following question:

Student enrollment has decreased by 35% over the last eight years. How have staffing and overall costs changed in response to that decrease in enrollment?

President Mitsui said that the two-week count enrollment increased 9.4% over last year in the spring quarter of this year. The national community college average is minus 10.9%. So, there is about a 20% differential between the average community college enrollment and PCC's enrollment. In parsing out why, the College believes it is because they fully reopened the Career Tech Education in-person classes. There has been a significant increase in enrollment there. Another reason is the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) initiatives are kicking in. Those of you familiar with SEM are familiar with the enrollment funnel and how it looks at students transitioning from being aware of PCC to inquiring, applying, seeking advice, and applying for financial aid until they enroll. Strategic Enrollment Management uses systems and strategies to increase the transition from one phase to another.

The College has implemented a CRM, a Client Relations Management system, and is tracking the transitions from one phase of enrollment to the other. He gave a quick example saying the open email rate traditionally has been 1%. That is when emails are sent to students only about 1% of students open them. After a pretty intensive change to how and what is included and how this information is sent, that open rate is 47%. Nationally, the average is 28%.

The College is employing data to improve enrollment outcomes. Same thing with click-through rates. They are starting to measure click-through rates and using a variety of different metrics to improve enrollment. There were enough inquiries, but there were four different ways of handling those inquiries under the old structure because there are four campuses. Lists of leads on one campus were not necessarily able to centralize that and streamline the enrollment process. And that also includes the website. So, there is a combination of things responsible for this increase in enrollment counter to the national trends.

You're right about the long-term impact of the recovery and housing costs on enrollment. The College has had to adjust. Over the last two biennia, the legislative sessions have been very successful. Funding levels have gone back up. They went down in the previous recession and needed to come up again, and they have in the last two biennia, and that's been very helpful. However, the College has more work to do there. More state funding is needed.

Ms. Dina Farrell added enrollment had decreased an average of about 4.3% per year with a variation of about a negative two to negative seven percent. Over the last four years, the College has put in a lot of increased effort and expense in the YESS to Equitable Student Success efforts to commit to long-term growth enrollment and knowing that that would not be recognized in the short term immediately. Through the strategic plan, PCC has shifted some of the focus and, in turn, the incurred costs necessary to continue to grow the enrollment.

The costs that have made the most significant impact on the budget have been health insurance and PERS. So those have been two essential cost factors that have impacted the budget from 2012 to 2019. In addition, unemployment costs, workers' comp. All of those have gone up over that period.

The College believes that their One College model will enable them to be more flexible in reacting to and assuaging decreasing revenue. They are committed to strongly linking outcomes to their investments and enhancing the ability to respond timely to students. Particularly during the pandemic, they have focused on communicating with students, as they are opening their email more frequently. In Student Affairs and Student Accounts, they make more of a direct one-on-one connection to students. These connections have resulted in some of the substantial increase in enrollment this year.

She said they were pleased to have taken advantage of some of that remote video communications with students. Having various ways of communication methods has strengthened ways to respond to students.

What kind of stability do you expect to see in the next two years in staffing levels associated with the stabilized enrollment or possibly increased enrollment?

President Mitsui fielded these questions saying there is an optimal number and he wasn't sure it is always bigger is better. He explained that what happened during the last recession was that state funding dropped and student enrollment peaked. Once you enroll students over your state funding cap, you don't get any more state funding. Then you're trying to operate on tuition alone, and that's not enough to increase student success. A recent article from an organization of higher education pointed out that decreases in state funding per FTE are inversely correlated with student success. As a per student funding goes up, students success rates go up as well.

The goal at PCC is equitable student success. So what they are looking at is the optimal enrollment for that, and how should the available resources be applied? Staff will always balance the budget but must look at how to deploy the available resources within that balanced budget to get the desired outcomes. The College has implemented YESS to Equitable Student Success. It starts with data to identify how students are doing from entry to completion and where PCC is losing students. Then looking at disparities mainly by race, ethnicity, and those disparities and how to use desegregated data to identify how to improve outcomes equitably for all students.

That will help with retention, which will help with completion. That helps the bottom line, but some expenditures need to be made upfront to achieve those outcomes. But eventually, cost per completion goes down. So, there is a positive financial benefit over time and it depends on how much success you have. But of course, YESS is being done because Equitable Student Success is one of PCC's values. It does just happen to pay off over time.

The balance in terms of employees is what positions they will be in. And how they will improve equitable student success. Advising is a good example. The advising system has been redesigned. It is now mandatory and all students now have an assigned advisor.

On top of that, we will layer what's called Single Stop, a computer technology to help students access the best package of public benefits. PCC is trying to scale what it learned through Future Connect. This individual program served a few hundred students very well and increased graduation rates significantly to thousands of students to increase outcomes significantly.

Commissioner Ofsink said he had the next question, but President Mitsui had answered it in the previous answer. So, he suggested moving to the next question.

Commissioner Norton asked the following question:

I'd like some help reading the Federal Government's tea leaves because I'm not sure that I get it all. We have an administration that wants to talk about jobs that do not require a college degree. On the other hand, we also hear him talking a lot about student debt forgiveness. He seems to be on board with community college for all. I'm trying to bring those all together and understand them. Can you help me do that as it applies specifically to community colleges? Then very specifically to how PCC is positioning itself, no matter which way it goes?

President Mitsui reported that he testified to Congress on America's College Promise Act and infrastructure bill. He then said that the commissioner raised some fundamental questions. With so-called free community college, the current bill in the house would average community college across the country. Then the federal government would pay 75% of that. The state would be expected to pay a match of 25%. States would have the option of opting in. Whether or not states will opt-in is the first question. The second is where the tuition level is set. There's been some concern because Oregon tuition is higher than the national average. So, it probably would not benefit the Oregon system.

Just like Obamacare, a lot of these bills have to be born first and perfected later. It's going to be a few years before they come up again. The idea is that you get them passed and then work on them over several sessions. They get better and better over time. That's the free community college proposal, and there are some variations on that. There would be some universities that would also be able to participate.

Debt forgiveness is also being discussed. It is a bit of a tension point between parts of the Democratic Party because of its cost. Student debt is so high right now. Blanket forgiveness of all student debt would be very expensive.

Other discussions are happening. Intermediate steps are streamlining the income-based repayment plans and the public service option or changing the interest rate. These could help students experiencing debt.

Another part of this is the policing of predatory educational loans and giving more authority to the Department of Education and the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau. There will probably be federal help that will allow students who get stuck with predatory loans to have those loans forgiven. Under the previous administration, that rule was struck down and seems like it's likely to come back. So, there are some of those measures that could happen.

In terms of how PCC would approach this, it has to pencil out the expenditures per FTE for equitable student success. If state funding were elevated to the level where it would provide PCC with the kind of funding needed to promote success, that's something the college would support and participate in. It wouldn't require the state to buy into the federal system.

The other piece is the president's \$62 billion proposal for student success. That incorporates both two and four-year strategies and funding. It would be more of a competitive grant program to improve student success strategies. That would help everyone.

I have one question for clarification. When you talked about federal government funding 75%, 25% state funding on tuition and the fact that Oregon is above the national average and tuition, is that because of the state's disinvestment?. So that's where it comes home to roost. By disinvesting historically, it puts us higher and potentially would make us not as interested in pursuing this. Is that correct?

President Mitsui said that's correct. Part of this is the political strategy. He said he asked the staff if there was any way individual colleges could apply and was told the federal government

wants the leverage to get states to reinvest in their institutions and drive tuition down to the point where it makes sense to participate.

Commissioner Wubbold asked these follow-up questions:

Why a national average? Why not a regional average?

President Mitsui said that is a good question. There are different funding sources around the country. New Jersey has county funding for community colleges, for example, and how do you maintain effort in a county as opposed to a state? That's part of the problem, as the federal government wants to encourage more significant investment across the country. For example, in California, where state expenditures in many colleges are much higher, the average tuition is \$50 a credit, something like that. It is a lot less than the rest of the country. So California would do very well by this plan. And I think that's what they're trying to encourage: to get states to invest the way California and other states with very low tuition rates do.

Commissioner Quiroz asked the following questions:

What do the students gain as the College reorganizes from a campus-based organization to a unified college-wide system? And what is the financial impact of this change?

President Mitsui tackled these questions, saying they do a special study where they survey the college employees. One of the things they found was widespread concern that the students were not having access to a consistent level of quality instruction and services across all four campuses. So, one thing that a restructuring would allow is greater consistency of quality and ideally high-quality instruction and services across the district. An example of that is that PCC hired part-time faculty on a campus basis instead of a district basis. So, the district could not evaluate faculty consistently, particularly part-time. Standardizing the hiring and evaluation processes will help to standardize instruction across the district.

In addition, strategic course scheduling is made more probable through this kind of structure. A quick example is the online course schedule. Before the pandemic, the College had already embarked on creating an annual online course schedule. That was done a couple of years before the pandemic. When PCC looked at the numbers you showed earlier on enrollment loss, they noticed that enrollment loss for online courses was much lower than for in-person classes. Part of that is because students had a reliable schedule. They could plan out their academic journey far in advance because they knew what would be offered and when. So not having four different variations of everything lends itself to consistency across the district. This helps students in their long-term planning.

In terms of student support services, PCC is able to leverage economies of scale now. Single Stop is an algorithm that identifies the best combination of public benefits for students. Staff does not want to inadvertently make a student ineligible for one service by making them eligible for another. The College does not wish to harm the students. With Single Stop we can program in additional resources like scholarships or the food pantries. That creates a package for students to be included with their financial aid. If PCC had attempted this on a campus basis, that would mean each campus would have to purchase Single Stop. That would have required different structures for orientation training. In terms of accountability, there would have been four variations of that. Now there is one recording line where the district identifies how to get oriented to the new technology and use it as part of an advising process. It streamlines the implementation of different kinds of services. He said PCC needs to become as nimble as possible as an organization.

Then the last thing is that PCC has implemented Guided Pathways. These are aggregations

of six different pathways to create a more coherent academic pathway for students. And that has brought the academic and Career Technical Education Programs into the same division. There used to be this artificial membrane between them. That has broken down, and they're part of the same unit. That is going to help students. It's rich when a CTE instructor and a biology transfer instructor can coordinate and collaborate on different initiatives. That's what employers are asking for. So those are some examples. There are a lot more.

Ms. Farrell added that the investment that they have made in the reorganization is a multi-phase process. It's beginning in this year, revamping some of the positions and extending into the next fiscal year. The district is counting on the investment of money in that area in terms of shuffling from the campus space to see more district-wide based to meet the needs of the students better. They have set aside funds of about \$3.5 million for the reorganization process. That is also a part of the strategic planning effort. The College is prepared to make those initial investments, with the expectation that they are better serving students, better able to meet the students' needs, and ensure more equitable opportunity for their students.

Commissioner Wubbold asked this follow-up question:

I was both a student and faculty, in community colleges for eight years here in Oregon. As a student, I would have loved this. Guided Pathways would've been fantastic to have. I bounced around through the different PCCs as a typical student does. As a faculty member, I would be nervous. What would you say to your faculty about this? Because it's different. It's a change. It's a reorganization.

President Mitsui said it is not a monolithic response because it's not a monolithic community. Some have concerns because PCC is changing the status quo. The system is changing, as is the structure. Other faculty are excited because they're beginning to see the benefits of this. He said he had two faculty members last month say how excited they are to be working across disciplines. They were both talking about how they can coordinate, work together, and might be able to support one another. And those are opportunities that weren't there before. Other faculty who have become administrators have become real champions. Now that they see some of the administrative constraints posed by the relative lack of coherence across campuses, they have become excited about the reorganization. They have an opportunity now to see a more coherent set of pathways for students and to have more consistency.

Often it comes down to a battle over FTE. If there are four separate campuses, they could try this other strategy, but who will get the FTE? When you have four campuses, each with their chart of accounts and budgets, and it's all FTE-based, you're doing your job by protecting your FTE. It is like a battle over FTE, with each campus safeguard their turf. This One District line item eliminates that cross-campus conflict.

Commissioner Ofsink asked this follow-up question:

I work at OSU in higher ed. We have many problems with decentralization. You've done an excellent job painting a picture of the benefits of centralization and standardization. They bring a lot of benefits. On the flip side, I think some of the most common things we hear have smaller constituent organizations that are doing things slightly differently. It makes this laboratory where you can take best practices and learn from doing things differently

Most importantly for PCC is having smaller, autonomous organizations that can address the specific needs of specific populations. I imagine for PCC, that is geographic, and other characteristics that maybe some of the campuses serve more than others. I wonder if, just in a paragraph, can you communicate to us how the new remodeling will make sure that PCC can offer the right flavor for the right student profile?

President Mitsui said that is the crux of it. They do want to retain the responsiveness to local communities and local student bodies. Sort of blend the best of both worlds. So, the way they want to approach that is that the administrators will still be place-based. They may belong to the same division across all four campuses, but they will be housed at a specific campus. They will get to know the Southeast group of the academic foundations division and the same for the Sylvania administrator. So they are expected to understand the needs of the community in greater detail. There's enough flexibility in the curriculum. A few courses can fit into the associate's degree and might be more suited at Southeast than at Cascade or Sylvania.

Some of the specific needs of faculty can come into play. For example, a faculty member may need to get off work at a particular time because of childcare. The district needs to honor that. That's excellent information, and they want to support faculty in that way. He said he did not see them as opposing.

On the personal development side, they still have four teaching and learning center coordinators. Now there is a district-wide coordinator to coordinate the coordinators. One of the areas of focus is equity and instruction: culturally responsive teaching. That never happened before. In the past, if one campus had a different priority and if they wanted to focus on that for professional development, they did. That made it more challenging to address equity in the classroom.

Commissioner Norton asked the following question:

The new strategic plan is very future-focused. How is it reflected in the budget? Will we see some actions? Has the College developed performance measures for the plan?

President Mitsui said they see this as a contract with the PCC of the future. One of the key accountability partners will be the accrediting body. The NWCCU looks at whether or not the College is pursuing its strategic plan: if resources match the objectives. Another essential part of accreditation is the key performance indicators and indicators of mission fulfillment. That was taken into consideration in the development of the district's goals.

Ms. Sylvia Kelley added that the work on the Strategic Plan began before the pandemic and finished during the pandemic. To your question around those action plans, PCC is in the process right now, as a cabinet during the next 60 days, of getting into the details of those action plans, figuring out what those priorities are, and assigning them to the actual teams doing the work. All that will happen in the next two months. The district didn't want to have a plan that sat on the shelf looking beautiful, but that nobody did anything or measured it. The College uses a software system that will enable them to track all of these action plans. It's called Team Dynamics. Part of that Team Dynamics software allows the district to evaluate performance measures regularly and shift priorities as needed, depending upon what's going on in the world.

The board approved the high-level initiatives. They approved themes that go with that. And as it should be, left it to the college leadership and all of the community to figure out how to operationalize it. So, staff is in the operational stages of this plan right now. Part of that certainly includes those measurements and those metrics that go with each of those.

Where will we see the reporting on this performance? Will it appear in the next budget? How will people know how you are doing, what you are doing, and how you are doing it?

Ms. Kelley responded, saying a couple of things are going to happen. PCC has a communication plan and a website in place to be very transparent in how they are doing with some of these things. Communications that go out will also include this information. It won't be a situation where the district lets people know what they are doing two years from now.

When the seven-year accreditation visit happens, PCC will have documentation for what has been accomplished up to that point as well. So, it will be very public. There will be input from the community and from the teams as they're working on it.

Commissioner Ofsink asked the following question:

Vice President Kelley, you have had a long career in education. As you prepare for retirement, what have you been thinking about the state of higher education and how that will impact PCC and future students?

Ms. Kelly pointed out that the strategic planning process was exciting because they did a tremendous amount of forward-thinking research, looking at what the future might bring. In that process, much of that has begun to happen partly due the pandemic and partly, because of artificial intelligence, due to changes in technology.

She said higher ed would never be the same as it was when she began her career. There's just too much happening. One of the wonderful things about Portland Community College and this pandemic is that the college had to shift. PCC is now prepared to operate in a very different and more nimble way which, she said, they are going to have to do if they are going to survive. So that's one observation on the workplace. It will never be the same because of all of this. There's no going back to what was once called normal. There isn't even a new normal. And it won't go back to what it was.

Another thing that is important for PCC is climate action and how the climate is going to impact the workplace. How will it affect the students in terms of transportation and in terms of facilities? It will have a considerable impact. And, just as well, the college will have to address equity, houselessness, food insecurity, and those things will continue to be serious issues.

She concluded by saying that as she is departing in retirement, PCC is working on housing and its responsibility as a community leader to provide affordable housing for students. Those things are paramount in changes as they move forward.

Thank you so much for the gift you have given the community.

Commissioner Wubbold asked the following questions:

President Matsui, you will be retiring at the end of the next fiscal year. What do you hope to accomplish in your final year at Portland Community college?

President Matsui said he would first like to thank the PCC Board Chair Alyajouri, Vice-Chair President Sylvia Kelley, and the board members for their leadership and the support they have shown to him. He also thanked PCC for the opportunities he received.

In the coming year, he wants to continue the work on Equitable Student Success and continue with the structural change. The district is calling this change One College for Equitable Student Success, realizing that it is as much of a cultural shift as it is a structural one.

When he first got started in this field, the mantra was that every student has a right to fail. That's what he was taught when he started at a technical college over 30 years ago. The instructor's job

was to open up the doors, turn on the lights in front of the class, and how students did that was up to them. Fortunately, that perspective has shifted. Because of the lifelong impact that credential completion has, educators are now concerned about outcomes and whether or not students graduate.

It is essential to continue the structural changes to improve PCC's systems. He has told the college community that PCC's approach is perfectly designed to get the results they are currently getting because the College has been getting them for many, many years. PCC can do better, and the students can do better. That's what they are committed to doing, make it better.

It is essential to continue the hard work of restructuring the college. President Mitsui gave the example of a home remodel, saying there's that stage in the remodel where the wires are hanging out and the wallboard looks like a mess. It just looks terrible. You wonder, why did I do this? How was this ever going to be better? If you stop there, you're absolutely right. It's not going to be better, but if you go through with it, things get better. You're glad that you did it. So that is what PCC needs to do, get through that murky middle to where they can all begin to see how it will be better for staff, better for students, and better for the community.

The other piece is opportunity. Equitable Student Success and Opportunity have been the focal area for him. That means strategic partnerships with the federal government, state government, local government, the philanthropic community, and employers in strengthening and continuing to build on those partnerships that PCC has already.

And then finally to find the right next president. This person will have a great chair, vice-chair, and board to work with. He said the board needs to ensure that they have the right next president for PCC for what the college needs for where they are and where they are going.

Chair Barringer asked if anyone had signed up to speak, and no one had. He asked if there were any other questions or comments. There were none.

Chair Barringer closed the public hearing and opened a meeting of the TSCC to consider the budget for Portland Community College. He asked if commissioners had any comments on the budget. There were none. He asked Executive Director Gibons for comments about the PCC 2021-23 biennial budget.

Mr. Gibons complimented PCC staff, saying they did a terrific job, especially for Tom Andrews' first year doing PCC's budget. He said he recommended commissioners certify the budget with no recommendations or objections.

Commissioner Wubbold moved to certify that the commission had no objections or recommendations regarding Portland Community College's 2021-23 biennial budget. Commissioner Quiroz seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote (5).

There being no other business, the regular meeting was adjourned.

Minutes approved at TSCC Regular Meeting 7/27/2021