
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MINUTES

Coast Community College District

Special Meeting of the Legislative Affairs Committee

Thursday, January 20, 2022 at 2:30 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:31 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Trustees Present: Trustee Prinsky and Trustee Patterson

Trustees Absent: None

In Attendance: Dr. John Weispfenning, Chancellor; Dr. Andrew Dunn, Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administrative Services; Dr. Andreea Serban, Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and Technology; Tim McGrath, President, Golden West College; Erik Fallis, District Director, Public Affairs and Marketing; Julie Clevenger, Director, Chancellor's Office Operations & Governmental Affairs; Michael Scott, Project Director, Coastline College; Roy Sahachaisere, Student Trustee; Casey Elliott, Vice President, Townsend Public Affairs; Ben Goldeen, Senior Associate, Townsend Public Affairs; Mary Grady, Administrative Assistant Board of Trustees; Jane Burton, Manager/Board Secretary

3. Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no requests to address the Legislative Affairs Committee during Public Comment.

4. Selection of Chair and Vice Chair of the Legislative Affairs Committee

On a motion by Trustee Patterson, seconded by Trustee Prinsky, the Committee voted to appoint Trustee Prinsky as Chair and Trustee Patterson as Vice Chair for 2022.

Motion carried with the following vote:

Aye: Trustee Prinsky and Trustee Patterson

No: None

Absent: None

5. Approval of Minutes: Meeting of December 2, 2021

On a motion by Trustee Prinsky, seconded by Trustee Patterson, the Committee voted to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 2, 2021.

Also discussed was funding in the budget proposal for ongoing capital projects, noting there would be no new-starts allowed, and how expansion of deferred maintenance would be beneficial to allow us to use funds for costs of demolition.

The state surplus was approximately \$45 billion, although the Department of Finance reported the total economic impact from the Omicron variant was not yet fully considered. Options for the surplus to be disbursed included (1) invest in education K-14 (2) Infrastructure (3) return money to tax payers.

7. Discussion of Budget and Legislative Priorities with Senator David Min

Senator David Min representing District 37 joined the Committee meeting, along with Matt Kern from his District Office. Trustee Prinsky welcomed Senator Min and introduced the Committee members. Trustee Patterson expressed thanks to the Senator for his interest in the future of Coast and community colleges.

Senator Min discussed priorities for 2022 in the state legislature. Some of the new legislation that would be introduced in the new year would relate to education, domestic violence, climate change and gun violence prevention. There would be a continuation of SB286. There was excitement for upcoming cyber-security bills that would help shore-up the state cyber-security practices and create best practices in respect to identity theft. A number of environmental and climate change bills were in development, looking to end off-shore drilling in state waters, to avoid another oil spill.

Most relevant to the Coast District was Senator Min's work on the Budget Subcommittee for Education.

Senator Min was pleased with some of the priorities in the Governor's budget for climate change, specifically the call for more tax credits for businesses to use green innovation. The Governor was proposing direct investment in research at universities prioritizing green innovation.

On the education side, in the Senate the Senator had pushed for more base funding and commented that he was pleased to see a 5% across-the-board increase for community colleges.

Senator Min shared that he felt this was the time to shore up the neglected infrastructure, base funding, and pay down obligations including pension obligations, which were looking much better than they looked a few years ago. PERS achieved a 21% rate of return last year in its portfolios and STRS earned a 27% rate of return. STRS after this year's injection would be fully funded from the state's point of view, and PERS approximately 80% funded. Unfunded liabilities were shrinking significantly to the point where the LAO's office, generally conservative, had advised they may pull back pension investments and shift other rainy day and reserve funds because we could be overfunding pensions. There was optimism for community college base funding, infrastructure, and deferred maintenance funding.

The Senator asked the committee to share their priorities for the budget.

Ben Goldeen, Senior Associate from Townsend Public Affairs, provided an overview for the Committee, and reminded the Committee that 2022 would be an election year.

The Continuing Resolution passed last December 2021 would be effective through February 18, 2022. Members of the Appropriations Committee were meeting and were expecting to reach agreements for a spending bill by February 18, 2022. FY 2023 would be the focus once the new spending bill was passed.

Build Back Better passed the House in November 2021 and included an Increase for Pell Grants as well as assistance for community college students. The proposal originally including free community college was dropped.

The Department of Education announced additional support from the American Rescue Plan Act and new guidance that would impact community colleges regarding Covid-19. An announcement was made with an invitation for applications for a \$198 million grant opportunity under the supplemental support of the American Rescue Plan program focused on institutions of higher learning that have experience enrollment decline due to the pandemic. New guidance was issued to help colleges and institutions seeking student support through grants for things like food insecurity, housing and childcare for students.

The Department of Education also sent out a letter encouraging institutions of higher education to inform their students of public benefit programs such as SNAP and other affordable connectivity programs.

The student loan repayment freeze was extended through May 1, 2022.

9. Review, Discuss, and Possible Action on State Community College Legislation/Update on Watch List

Mr. Casey Elliott, Vice President, Townsend Public Affairs, provided a brief update for the Committee.

The legislature's house of origin two-year deadline was coming up within a couple of weeks.

AB1505 was a two-year bill from Assembly member Rodriguez. The bill was approved out of the Appropriations Committee and would be heard on the Assembly floor and was expected to pass. Chancellor Weispfenning added that this bill would be particularly harmful to the District. The conversation regarding this bill would continue at the next meeting.

Other political discussions taking place in Sacramento:

- Redistricting
- Vacancies in Assembly due to resignations – approximately a dozen.
- Assembly member Holden is the new Assembly Appropriations Chair.

The next Legislative Affairs Committee meeting was scheduled for March 3, 2022 at 2:30 p.m.

13.Future Agenda Items

- a. Budget Update – Casey Elliott
- b. Federal Legislative Updates
- c. State Legislative Updates
- d. Future Legislative Priorities
- e. Covid-19 Update

14.Adjourn

On a motion by Trustee Patterson, seconded by Trustee Prinsky, the Committee voted to adjourn at 4:17 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously with the following vote:

Aye:	Trustee Prinsky and Trustee Patterson
No:	None
Absent:	None



Secretary of the Board
Jane Burton