

## I. STUDY SESSION

### 1. Call to Order

Chair Jessica Norouzi called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M. and noted a quorum.

### 2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

### 3. Update on Budget

Vice President Jacob Jackson briefed the group on the budget and Office of Financial Management (OFM) claw back. The OFM claw back will likely not occur this year. The I-732 wage increases are fully funded by the legislature. The Board allocation will likely decrease by \$28.6M for fiscal year 2025. If RTC rolled over the budget without any Board action, the budget would be operating in a deficit of \$4.8M for FY26, \$2.2M for FY27, and \$717K for FY28. However, the State Board is adopting a new allocation model starting in FY26. The result is that there will likely be differences in FY27 and FY28 budget predictions. The current model has been frozen since 2016 with one exception, which was based on FTE. The proposed new model will be based on headcount and FTE which will impact the District Allocation Education Base.

RTC has left some positions vacant, has not refilled other non-faculty positions, slowed down recruitment, offered the faculty retirement incentive, is staying the I-732 COLA for non-represented exempt staff this year, and is taking other measures to save costs and increase revenue. The 3% COLAs are fully funded for exempt employees, but some employee positions are not legislatively funded. RTC needs to find funds for wages for not legislatively provided. About 67% of RTC's revenue is from the state. Annualized employee contracts, student and programs fee, organizational structure, and programs are being reviewed.

Program viability includes employment placement rates, Advisory Committee engagement, entry-level wages for graduates, yearly estimated tuition and fees for students, program revenue, industry standards, employment opportunities, and typical level of education for the industry. The Deans looked at the data and spoke with faculty. Data was run again in fall, which surfaced some instructional programs for conversations. Instruction has been having conversations about programs for further review.

Vice President Stephanie Delaney shared the conversations Instruction has been having. This includes engaging faculty with conversations around data to ensure a

comprehensive look at program enrollment and revenue. Early Childhood Education, Medical Office, and Property Maintenance are the only programs on campus that do not run at a deficit. There are several programs with historically low enrollment with few or no tenured faculty. The contract allows notification of faculty that precipitates Advisory Committee conversations. The Advisory Committee conversations inform the employment opportunity predictions. President Harden commented that there is the possibility for new programs and Executive Director Carrie Shaw has been working on partnerships moving forward.

VP Jackson reviewed the timeline with the group. The campus messaging about the OFM error was sent at the end of September. Faculty will need to be notified by February 28. The Board will vote on an action at the March meeting. Exempt and classified staff need to be notified around the end of April. The deferment of the OFM claw back only delays these conversations. To grow programs to meet future needs, there needs to be resources for growth. There are currently no resources for growth. The Board discussed previously declaring a financial emergency. The OFM error still exists and is valid.

4. Meetings

A. Regular Board Meeting – February 19, 2025 at 3:00 P.M.

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for February 19, 2025 at 3:00 P.M.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, Trustee Frieda Takamura motioned to adjourn the Board of Trustees meeting at 2:38 P.M. Vice Chair Tim Cooper seconded, and the motion carried.

## **II. REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

1. Call to Order

A. Chair Norouzi called the meeting to order at 3:03 P.M. and noted a quorum.

2. Adoption of Minutes

A. January 15, 2025 – Special Session and Regular Meeting

- i. Vice Chair Cooper introduced a notion to approve the minutes for the special and regular meetings held on January 15, 2025. Trustee Takamura seconded, and the motion carried.

3. Communications

Terri Trillo introduced Danielle Perkins, a new Nursing instructor, who is looking forward to teaching students. Selinda Shi has been teaching at RTC since 2020 and has joined as full-time faculty. She is an RTC alum and loves the environment. She appreciates the team

A. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

B. Public Comments from the Audience

There were several public comments. Naser Chowdhury voiced his support of the BAS application program. David Schoenmakers shared some facts about and advocated for the Machining program. Matthew Vargas, Be-Asia McKerracher, William Cram, Celine Watcharaapakom, Bashar Abduljaleel, and Van Vuong all spoke about how much their previous experience as Computer Science students at RTC meant to them and stated support for the Computer Science Program. Comments were also received and forwarded to the Board from Amanda Dalessandro and Marnie Ferrer.

C. Student Leadership

Leo Ragual, Associated Student Government (ASG) Treasurer, gave an update. ASG hosted the Lunar New Year event last month. There were various activities including origami. ASG co-hosted a Black History Month event with King County Justice Alliance. This included engaging activities. Tomorrow there will be a keynote speaker for Black History Month.

D. Renton Federation of Teachers (RFT)

Donna Maher, President of RFT, gave a report. Things are changing fast with the current administration, including a recent Dear Colleague letter. This letter was very unsettling and did not state what specific actions need to be stopped. RFT wants to work with RTC leadership on what is best for faculty and students. Some students won't come to campus because of a fear of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The stress, confusion, and fear are over the top. OFM is not taking the claw back, which is good news. AFT and RFT went to Olympia last week. It was a very busy day with good conversations.

Chair Norouzi mentioned that the Association for Community College Trustees (ACCT) encouraged the trustees to reach out to Republican legislators. Vice Chair Cooper asked about a policy on law enforcement on campus. President Yoshiko Harden stated that a number of communications went out. Communications is working on printing Know Your Rights cards. Executive Director Doris Martinez is also working on scheduling a Know Your Rights training. Trustee Takamura stated that she appreciated the way that staff and faculty discussed concerns around ICE at the last All-College Meetings. Assistant Attorney General (AAG) Michael Hemker noted that anywhere a general member of the public needs to be invited into are considered private spaces.

E. Written (and video) Communication Reports

Chair Norouzi thanked the group for their written and video reports.

#### 4. Action Items

##### A. RFT MOU

Vice President Lesley Hogan noted that last December, the Board approved an increase incentive for early retirement for the MOU. The request is for a vote to extend once more a one-time incentive for faculty who may choose to notify the college their intention to retire early.

*After considering the recommendation presented to the Board, Trustee Takamura moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the Renton Federation of Teachers regarding the Early Retirement Notification Incentive for this current academic year. Vice Chair Cooper seconded. The motion carried.*

#### 5. Discussion/Reports

##### A. President's Report

John Clark, RTC's former AAG, introduced Michael Hemker, RTC's new AAG. Michael has been with the AAG's Office since 2012 and brings a lot of valuable experience with him.

President Harden spoke about the Dear Colleague Letter. Executive Cabinet has been attending webinars about the possible impacts of the letter to college business. Please look for clarifying communications.

President Harden noted that there have been a variety of campus events. She expressed gratitude for the community's involvement. The Accreditation Team has come up with Strategic Indicators. The Be The Place Implementation Team has been meeting twice monthly. Thank you all for your attendance at the All-College Meeting. The Board requested Budget Listening Sessions. Trustee Takamura stated that she is proud to be part of RTC and be a part of productive meetings. Trustee Zappone commented that solidarity will get us through this. President Harden noted that there were ideas around automation, intentional thinking around program development, efficiencies, and more.

Overall, winter enrollment is up 13% and 21% for the whole year. Enrollment continues to move in the right direction. There is still work to do around retention and enrollment. Next up are meetings with instructional deans on enrollment targets.

The Unity Center is completed and furniture delivery is scheduled. In Enrollment Services, construction has started and will be completed in April. This will create more office space.

There have been many legislative updates. There will still be a budget reduction moving forward. Trustee Takamura stated that there were some legislators who were unaware of the OFM budget debacle. The House budget is scheduled to come out and there is an anticipated deficit. There was a House Bill about online community colleges that has a high fiscal note. HB5523 on a student trustee died in the house and is scheduled to be on the Senate floor. The January Hill Climb was last month with Rick Geist, VP Jackson, Leo Ragual, and Trustee Zappone. Last week, President Harden and Chair Norouzi attended ACCT National Legislative Conference (NLS) where they met with various legislators. Priorities include securing Pell and ending taxation on Pell. Trustee Takamura asked about the general tenor at the ACCT NLS. Chair Norouzi responded that the atmosphere was somber, legislators had empathy and support for the community and technical colleges, and asked for people to contact counterparts across the aisle. President Harden noted that there is bipartisan support for workforce.

Chair Norouzi asked if there is a formal partnership with PACCAR. Dean Andrea Samuels stated that PACCAR is not a formal partner at RTC.

B. Mid-Year Financial/Budget Status

VP Jackson gave a mid-year fiscal update. The state allocation revenue is anticipated at about \$700K more. Throughout the year, RTC receives specific funds. Tuition is exceeding what is budgeted so far. The projects are based on last year's data. \$2.5M was budgeted for fees, but fees will likely be \$3.2M. Running start is projected at \$290K. Enterprise funds should be self-sustaining but are at negative \$652K. Most of the surplus in the allocation is for a specific purpose. Looking at the revised revenue, we're ahead of where it should be. Tuition collection is up. Fees are on target. Running start and high school completion revenue tends to come in at the end of the year.

Expenditures trend towards the end of the year. Expenditures do not roll over. Food prices are up which impacts the cost of goods sold. Revenue is projected at about \$400k more than anticipated. Vice Chair Cooper asked about putting the \$300K back to the Board reserves, which were previously tapped. The Board reserve funds are performing well.

6. Board of Trustees

A. Foundation Liaison Report

Trustee Frieda Takamura stated that the good news is that the Foundation is awarding many students. The annual scholar donor event is April 24. To date, the Foundation has provided \$782K of scholarships and grants to students.

B. Legislative Action Liaison Report

There was no Legislative Action Report.

C. Community Advisory Committee Liaison Report

The Community Advisory Committee Report was provided in the President's Report.

7. Meetings

A. Special Board Meeting – March 14, 2025 at 9:00 A.M.

A special Board meeting is scheduled for March 14, 2025 at 9:00 A.M.

B. Special and Regular Board Meeting – March 19, 2025

A special Board meeting is scheduled for 9:00 A.M. to proceed the regular Board meeting on March 19, 2025 at 3:00 P.M.

8. Adjournment

Trustee Cooper expressed gratitude for the individuals who made a public comment, noting that it's not easy to speak publicly. There being no further business, Vice Chair Cooper motioned to adjourn the Board of Trustees meeting at 4:35 P.M. Trustee Takamura seconded, and the motion carried.

JESSICA NOROUZI, Board Chair  
Board of Trustees



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YOSHIKO HARDEN, President  
Renton Technical College



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