

**C OCC Board of Directors  
Advocacy Committee  
Meeting Agenda  
November 15, 2024  
3:00 - 4:00 p.m.  
Remotely via Zoom**

**Committee Members: Erin Foote Morgan (Chair), Laura Craska Cooper, Erin Merz**

**COCC Staff: Laurie Chesley (President), Lucas Alberg (Director of Marketing and Public Relations), Kyle Matthews (Executive Assistant to the President)**

- 1. Approval of October 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes – Item 2.1-6**
- 2. Review Advocacy Priorities Recommended by the Board**
  - a. Support OCCA advocacy priorities and agenda
  - b. Develop outreach priorities for the Board and the President in Collaboration with COCC Staff
  - c. Other potential priorities
- 3. Development of Advocacy Plan**
- 4. Timeline Review**
  - a. Internal**
    - i. November 1:** Confirmation of board priorities and review draft advocacy strategy
    - ii. Early November:** Updates to advocacy strategy
    - iii. November/December/January:** Prepare for legislative session
      1. Asset preparation
      2. Trainings for team
    - iv. July:** Debrief successes and areas for improvement
    - v. August/September/October:** Develop potential 2025-2026 advocacy priorities and draft strategy
    - vi. Fall retreat:** Confirmation of priorities and review draft strategy
    - vii. November Board meeting:** Board approval of advocacy strategy
  - b. External**
    - i. HECC meetings:** Wednesday/Thursday, second week of the month
    - ii. November 20:** First revenue forecast released
    - iii. Late November:** Legislative leadership elections and committee assignments
    - iv. December 1:** Governor’s budget released
    - v. December 10-12:** Legislative Committee Days
    - vi. December 18:** Second revenue forecast released

- vii. January – June:** Legislative session engagement
- viii. January 13-17:** Legislative Organizational Days
- ix. January 21:** 2025 Legislative Session begins
  - x. February – March:** Ways and Means Co-Chairs release budget
- xi. May – June:** Legislature Passes Budget Bills
- xii. June 28:** Legislative session ends

**COCC Board of Directors  
Advocacy Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
October 18, 2024  
3:00 - 4:00 p.m.  
Remotely via Zoom**

**Committee Members: Erin Foote Morgan (Chair), Erin Merz**

**COCC Staff: Alicia Moore (Vice President of Student Affairs, Acting President for this meeting), Kyle Matthews (Executive Assistant to the President)**

Meeting called to order at 3:08 p.m.

**1. Approval of September 20, 2024 Meeting Minutes – Item 2.1-4**

- a. Merz clarified that, in the first bullet point, she was asking if the language for the Committee's charge should be more specific, not broader.
- b. Motion to approve the minutes with the suggested correction.
  - i. 1<sup>st</sup>: Erin Merz
  - ii. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Erin Foote Morgan
  - iii. Motion approved by all members present.

**2. Updates from OCCA 2024-2025 Advocacy Training**

- a. [View training recording](#)
- b. See attached notes – Item 3.1-2
- c. Foote Morgan attended the virtual training and found it very helpful. While the Oregon Community Colleges Association (OCCA) is still determining their advocacy priorities for the academic year, Foote Morgan suggested that they would be a good organization for COCC's Board to build their advocacy framework from. The OCCA's main priority, as she understood it, was to get the right budget passed for State funding for Oregon's community colleges. Their other priorities would be rooted in this. The current budget is \$800 million and the OCCA is seeking an additional \$120 million in order to address increased enrollments, especially for expensive programs like Career and Technical Education (CTE), which require a lot of equipment and specific facilities. If the State cannot increase this budget, Oregon's community colleges may need to reduce faculty or increase tuition in order to meet the needs of their growing programs.
  - i. Foote Morgan asked Moore if the OCCA's proposed budget and concerns sounded accurate.
  - ii. Moore said she has heard these concerns used regularly in legislative sessions. The OCCA normally does not ask what budget cuts might look like as it can reduce morale on college campuses. COCC is less at risk for such cuts because of how the college is funded. To say COCC would reduce faculty is a strategy, but it might not be the result, based on conversations she has heard in the past.
  - iii. Foote Morgan asked what it might mean for COCC and other colleges if the legislature approved this additional funding.
  - iv. Moore explained that if this funding were part of the Community College Support Fund (CCSF), that would be applied to the funding formula as any

- budget increase would. Sometimes the legislature would approve targeted funding, such as an increase in funding for benefits navigators. COCC receives less from the State because of the district's high property taxes, while other colleges receive more because of their lower property taxes.
- v. Foote Morgan encouraged the Committee to support the OCCA's overall agenda, but emphasized the importance of understanding the stakes for COCC.
  - vi. Moore noted that the OCCA has trained its members to speak as one voice for the organization, because when colleges only advocate for their own needs, the legislature would usually not hear them.
- d. The advocacy training also included the OCCA's advocacy plan for the year.
- i. November 2024
    - 1. Post-election legislator introductions and outreach.
      - a. Foote Morgan suggested the Board could focus on connecting with their regional elected officials.
    - 2. Op-ed on the budget and congratulating elected legislators.
      - a. Merz asked where the op-ed would be published.
      - b. Moore said it is normally sent to several publications across the State, depending on what the op-ed is about.
      - c. Foote Morgan suggested the Board could either support the op-ed being published in Central Oregon's newspapers or send out their own.
    - 3. Draft resolution in support of legislative priorities.
      - a. Moore clarified that this is a new direction that the OCCA is trying to take this year.
    - 4. First revenue forecast released November 20<sup>th</sup>.
  - ii. December 2024
    - 1. Response to Governor's Recommended Budget
      - a. Press release
      - b. Op-ed
      - c. One Click Politics campaign
        - i. A new platform for advocacy and engagement. The Committee may want to discuss using this platform with COCC's Public Relations Director, Lucas Alberg.
    - 2. Campus legislator visits/breakfasts
      - a. One-on-one meetings during legislative days on December 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>.
    - 3. Second revenue forecast released before holiday break.
  - iii. January 2025
    - 1. One week of organizational days.
    - 2. Press release to reiterate legislative priorities as the legislative session begins on January 21<sup>st</sup>.
    - 3. Board resolutions in support of legislative priorities.
    - 4. Foote Morgan asked if Moore knew if the OCCA tracks any bills other than the budget bills during this period of the legislative year.

- a. Moore said it changes every year. When she served as Student Services Liaison for the OCCA, she would receive 10-12 bills from legislators who wanted their feedback. Other years, like the most recent session, included far fewer bills relating to community colleges. This is partially due to some longtime community college advocates who recently retired or stepped down. It is unclear how new members of the legislature will advocate.
  - b. Foote Morgan asked who some of the OCCA's champions are in the State legislature.
  - c. Merz referenced her notes from her most recent meeting with the OCCA and noted Rep. Ricki Ruiz and Rep. Zach Hudson were among those named.
- iv. February 2025
  - 1. CTE Month
    - a. Press release
    - b. Weekly social media posts
  - 2. Valentine's Day cards to legislators, showing appreciation for their work.
- v. March 2025
  - 1. Legislative Summit and Lobby Day
    - a. Meet in the Capitol building. Students are invited to speak with legislators.
  - 2. One Click Campaign on the budget and student testimonial videos.
  - 3. Press release on Ways and Means legislators' budget.
    - a. Does not always align with the Governor's budget.
    - b. Timing of the budget is unclear.
- vi. April 2025
  - 1. National Community College Month
  - 2. All-Oregon Academic Team meets in Salem.
    - a. High achieving students from COCC, nominated by their instructors, will attend a luncheon and awards ceremony with the Governor and their peers from Oregon's other community colleges.
  - 3. Highlight students, student success programs and students' basic needs.
- vii. May 2025
  - 1. Greater activity around the budget.
- viii. June 2025
  - 1. Budget due to be finalized before the end of the legislative session on June 28<sup>th</sup>.
- ix. Foote Morgan suggested that there could be other advocacy priorities that COCC's Board might want to add to their plans that might not overlap with the OCCA's.
- x. Merz asked when the weekly legislative update might take place.

1. Foote Morgan did not know. Merz suggested the Committee should find out and participate. Foote Morgan concurred.

### 3. Plan Board Retreat Discussion

- a. Possible discussion topics
  - i. Support the OCCA's \$920 million budget request
  - ii. Strengthen COCC's strategic outreach and engagement approach
    1. Laura Craska Cooper said this is especially important as part of the presidential search campaign.
    2. A stakeholder database could be developed.
  - iii. Local partner advocacy priorities
    1. Supporting K-12 school bonds.
  - iv. Local issue priorities
    1. Do they align with COCC's strategic plan or the Board's goals for the year?
    2. Student success related issues
      - a. Housing
      - b. Transportation
      - c. Other issues
- b. Merz asked how much time would be allocated to advocacy priorities at the Board's retreat on November 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - i. Matthews shared that they would have a one-hour working lunch to discuss the matter.
  - ii. Merz suggested the Board should seek to provide more clarity for what their advocacy goals might be for the coming months, especially when it comes to the presidential search campaign. Closely following the OCCA's priorities could help this Committee get a head start on its priorities for the next academic year. Should the Committee bring a proposal to the Board during their retreat, or should the Board be using the hour they have allocated for advocacy to brainstorm? Merz suggested the former may be more effective.
  - iii. Foote Morgan suggested the Committee should have a sense of scope for what might be appropriate for the Board's work this year, which may be supporting the OCCA's priorities and possibly identifying important regional relationships.
  - iv. Merz was also curious what Alberg's role and priorities would be in regards to advocacy and COCC's Board.
  - v. Moore noted that Alberg's statewide counterparts often take the lead in this work and they sit in on the weekly legislative calls. They also help coordinate the CTE days and other students' legislative days. In the past, Alberg's position has done a lot of the coordination and administrative work for advocacy on the Board's behalf. Board members can build relationships with stakeholders and support initiatives as a high level while leaving the details to COCC's staff. Moore offered to discuss this further with Chesley when she returns from vacation on October 28<sup>th</sup> and suggested Foote Morgan reach out to Alberg's supervisor, Zak Boone, while Alberg was away for a conference that day.

- vi. Foote Morgan suggested there could still be time for quick discussions with Chesley and Alberg in the week leading up to the retreat.
- c. Foote Morgan asked Merz what sort of time commitment might be realistic for the Committee to be spending on this work.
  - i. Merz wanted to know about short-term and long-term advocacy priorities in light of the Board's other priorities, as well as the broader work of the college. The first six months of this Committee's work could be focused on research and assessments of local issues, but not taking action while the presidential search is underway.
  - ii. Moore suggested that Chesley would be their best person to ask as Alberg has never been through the college advocacy cycle. She concurred that focusing on assessment and reflection during the presidential search might be a good idea as the new president's experience may be very different from Chesley's, and then they could reevaluate after every legislative session.
  - iii. Merz asked if it would be possible for the Committee to reconvene again before the retreat in order to get Craska Cooper's insights on the matter.
  - iv. Moore reminded Foote Morgan that she and Craska Cooper would both be at the Association of Community College Trustees' conference the following week, so that might be a good time to let her know what was discussed in this meeting. Foote Morgan concurred.

#### 4. Timeline Review

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Meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.