

**Cannon Valley Elder Collegium
Board Minutes, April 16, 2014**

The Board of Directors of CVEC met at the Northfield Senior Center on April 16, 2014. A quorum being present, Board Chair ReJean Schulte called the meeting to order at 3:46 P.M.

1. ReJean asked the Board to approve the agenda that had been circulated to the members of the Board prior to the meeting. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the agenda was approved unanimously.
2. ReJean next asked that the minutes of the March 19, 2014 meeting of the Board be approved in the form circulated prior to the meeting. A motion to approve the Minutes in the form circulated was duly made, seconded and approved unanimously.
3. Operations Director Dale Sommers discussed spring registrations, which were down somewhat from the prior two years. However, Dale noted that cumulative course registrations for the 2013 – 2014 fall, winter and spring sessions exceeded 600 for the first time. Previous years' cumulative registrations exceeded 600 only after counting registrations for the summer film festival. Registrants for the spring session included 19 new students, the same number as had registered for the winter session and greater than the number of new students who registered for the 2013 spring courses.
4. Curriculum Director Ed Langerak reported that courses for the 2014 fall session were set, and that no additional courses would be required for that session.
5. Dale asked that the calendar for the 2014-2015 academic year, posted previously to the CVEC website, be approved by the Board. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the calendar was approved unanimously.
6. ReJean asked Dale to take the lead in discussing the activities and proposals of the ad hoc committee formed to consider technological improvements in aid of CVEC instruction. Previously, a detailed report had been circulated to the members of the Board, and Dale briefly discussed highlights of that report, a copy of which is attached to these

Minutes as an exhibit. After a brief discussion, the following Resolutions were moved, seconded and unanimously adopted:

RESOLVED that the Sim Sound and Video proposal for a system to be installed at Village on the Cannon shall be accepted, and the expenditure of \$15,055.73 is approved.

RESOLVED FURTHER that the ad hoc technology committee is authorized, in its discretion, to expend up to an additional \$1,000 in connection with the installation at Village on the Cannon.

Rich Noer reminded the Board that according to the CVEC policy manual, an expenditure of this magnitude may be approved only by action taken at two successive meetings of the Board. Thus, this matter will be discussed further, and final action authorizing the expenditures will be taken at the Board's May meeting.

7. ReJean lead a discussion of plans for the annual meeting of members, scheduled to be held at St. John's Lutheran Church on May 4th. This year, CVEC will recognize students, particularly the many "frequent learners" who have enrolled in many CVEC courses, and some "frequent learners" will be asked to speak about their CVEC experiences. Unlike recent years, fall term instructors will not be asked to discuss their courses; however, a list of fall course offerings will be circulated at the annual meeting. After asking for volunteers from the Board to help with greeting, set-up, clean-up and other tasks, ReJean explained that individual invitations would be circulated to students enrolled in spring term classes, that Ed Lufkin would be sending an email "blast" to members, and that individual email invitations would be sent to the 56 students identified as having taken at least 20 courses in the last 10 years.
8. Rich Noer reported on the activities of the hearing technology committee. Following the March meeting of the Board, six students had the opportunity to try out Williams Sound's "Pocketalkers." Five of the six students had positive reactions, stating that these devices work quite well in a group setting. Rich discussed how "Pocketalkers," which cost about \$125 each, might be distributed to students. He said no conclusion had been reached as to whether to purchase the devices

or, alternatively, to recommend that individuals purchase their own. Rich will report further in May.

9. Finally, Bruce Roberts reported that letters from the “Collegium Invitational Talks” program had been sent to more than 40 churches and other institutions, offering talks by fall term instructors. Thirteen responses had been received, but only one from a church, an unexpected result. This will also be discussed again in May.

Upon motion duly made and seconded and without discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:02 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

Michael H. Harper, Jr., Secretary

April 2014 Report
CVEC Technology Committee

The Technology Committee (Mike Harper, Jerry Mohrig, ReJean Schulte, and Dale Sommers [chair]) reviewed the existing technology at class sites used by CVEC, and discussed technology needs with staff at the various facilities. The Committee concluded that the greatest need for immediate improvement is at Village on the Cannon (VOC). The Committee further concluded that Room 106 at the Senior Center is also in need of significant improvements in technology.

A member of the committee, through phone and emails, discussed the technology needs of CVEC with Audio Logic Systems of Eden Prairie, the vendor used by NRC for the Nygaard Theater. Though CVEC needs were not of a sufficient scale for Audio Logic Systems to make a proposal, having been provided photos and a floorplan of our sites, they made suggestions for appropriate technology that provided useful background. The Committee consulted with Jim Pierret, Presentation Technology Specialist at Carleton College, about the state of the art and about the experience of Carleton in managing their presentation technology. The Committee met with Dean Sim of Sim Sound and Video, Inc, of Winona to discuss the needs of CVEC. The Committee received a strong endorsement of the technical expertise and service of Sim Sound and Video, Inc. from Don Thompson, facility manager at St John's Lutheran Church in Northfield. With the approval of the CVEC Board, the Committee requested a proposal for Village on the Cannon from Sim Sound and Video, Inc. for 1) an installed audio visual system, and 2) a portable cart-based audio visual system.

EASE OF USE

The mantra of the Committee at every stage of the process has been *ease of use*. With regard to technology, our faculty displays a wide range of skill levels and comfort levels. Our technology should not present any unnecessary challenges to the instructors. Newer *and well-matched* technology can have much more intuitive controls that are easier to learn. Some elements can be preset, limiting the number of steps with which a user has to be concerned. In every conversation with anyone outside the Committee, *ease of use* was explicitly stated as our greatest concern.

CVEC

A few facts about CVEC should be made explicit, because they played a crucial role in the Committee's deliberations and recommendations.

We have good facilities at the Senior Center, VOC, NRC, and other sites in the community. CVEC is a first-rate organization, in its mission, in its instruction, and in its governance. Technology has often been a hindrance rather than a help in maintaining our standards of excellence.

CVEC has substantial financial resources. An investment in technology, to further CVEC's mission as a non-profit organization, will not deplete those resources. No other financial need has been identified that would do as much to enhance the mission of the organization.

April 2014 Report
CVEC Technology Committee

VOC

The Community Room WiFi, which is only used by CVEC classes, was recently upgraded by VOC. The audio visual equipment, acquired piecemeal over time, is old and deteriorating, the components do not work well together, and they are complicated for our faculty to set up and use. Most recently there were complaints from music classes about speakers not working. Music classes are often scheduled for VOC because of the presence of a piano. (There will be a music class at VOC Fall Term 2014.) The VOC space, which has the same cost to CVEC as Room 106 at the Senior Center, is routinely used for other classes as well.

Contemplating a possible capital investment by CVEC at Village on the Cannon, the VOC Board adopted the following resolution:

"The VOC proposes no change in its policy of making its Community Room available to the Cannon Valley Elder Collegium for CVEC classes at least three days each week during the terms when CVEC courses are taught. If CVEC installs an audio/visual system in the Community Room, VOC guarantees that this policy will stay in place for at least ten years."

SENIOR CENTER

Room 106 at the Senior Center is the space most often used for CVEC classes. There are scheduling issues surrounding the new cart-based TV at the Senior Center. The components on the cart are consumer-grade and not well-matched. There have already been some connection problems and buzzing problems from the sound system. Having said that, the cart and the older wall-mounted equipment in Room 106 are more functional than the current audio visual equipment at VOC.

AGING TECHNOLOGY

In addition to the site-specific issues, the laptop computer, the video projectors and the document cameras owned by CVEC are several generations old. That presents a problem for two reasons. 1) They are more complicated to use than newer generations. 2) At the end of 2014, industry standards for electronic media are going to shift entirely to digital, and our projectors will not be compatible with newer media.

SIM SOUND AND VIDEO, INC. CART-BASED VIDEO PRESENTATION SYSTEM

As requested, Sim Sound and Video, Inc. of Winona presented a proposal for a cart-based Video Presentation System. The cost of this system is approximately \$10,000 less than an installed system. (That was consistent with conversations with Audio Logic Systems.) The Committee considered this cart-based system, taking into consideration the cost differential. The Committee does not recommend the cart-based system. That was a unanimous decision.

The cart-based system would be inferior to an installed system in ease of use. There would be more cable connections for the instructor to deal with. There would not be a single control panel. Controls would be more complicated. The cart would have to be properly placed for each use, the projector refocused for each use, and the cart would have to be disconnected and moved into the closet after each use. In addition, sound quality from the cart-based speakers would be significantly inferior. Properly placed and focused, video quality would be comparable.

In our first consultation with Jim Pierret, Presentation Technology Specialist at Carleton College, Jim told the Committee that Carleton had used both cart-based and installed systems. They made a transition to all installed systems because faculty did not want to use the cart based systems.

April 2014 Report
CVEC Technology Committee

SIM SOUND AND VIDEO, INC. INSTALLED VIDEO PRESENTATION SYSTEM

The Technology Committee unanimously recommends that the Board authorize the acceptance of the installed "Sound and Video System Proposal (updated)" from Sim Sound and Video, Inc. as described below.

The recommended system includes a fixed, wall mounted 46"x73.5" Interactive White Board/ Projection Screen. An ultra short throw projector would be wall-mounted above the center of the screen, its optics providing a focused and undistorted image from extremely close range. The instructor would not obstruct the projector, and the projector would not obstruct the viewers. A 12.2" speaker would be mounted on either side of the screen (4" woofer, 1" horn).

The electronics at the heart of the system would be installed in the closet at the back of the VOC Community Room. (Other equipment and the modem for the WiFi are already in the closet.) The Blu-ray player would also be installed in the closet. The document camera would be stored in the closet when not in use.

There would be a wall plate at the front of the room where a cable from a laptop could connect to the system. In addition to connections for digital (HDMI), analog (VGA) and 1/8" audio, two RCA jacks would be provided for music input from other sources,

The system would be controlled from a 7" Touch Screen mounted on the wall at the front of the room. There would be a customizable home screen. We can design the touch screen controls to fit our needs. From the home screen, a person might select the icon for a PC or for Blu-ray. If Blu-ray were selected, the Blu-ray disk (or DVD) would have to be inserted in the machine in the closet. With the touch of the one icon, the system would turn on the projector and the Blu-ray player, and the normal controls for the Blu-ray machine would appear on the touch screen. We could customize those controls so they are as simple as <Play> <Pause> <Volume> <Quit>. When finished, the system would automatically cool down the projector before shutting it down.

One of the most attractive elements of the proposal is one full year of training, service and support. St. John's praised the ongoing support they received from Sim in optimizing both the operation and the acoustic performance of their system after installation.

Scheduling installation could take 4 to 6 weeks. Actual installation could take 2 days. It is a turn-key proposal, with two exceptions. 1) Before installation, an electrician would have to install an additional outlet at the front of the room and one in the closet. 2) When the existing whiteboard is replaced by the new smaller whiteboard, there will have to be touch-up painting. The Committee intends to discuss these two items with the VOC Board.

The total cost of this Sim Sound and Video, Inc. proposal is \$15,055.73.

The proposal (cost and specifications) was reviewed by Jim Pierret, Presentation Technology Specialist at Carleton College. His response: "The price looks very good." According to Forbes Magazine (11/16/2011), Crestron, the manufacturer of much of the hardware, is a privately held American company. "The company's equipment orchestrates conference rooms at Microsoft's headquarters in Redmond, Wash. It's in seven out of eight Ivy League schools; in the penthouse of the Trump World Tower in New York City; and in a situation room at the Pentagon."

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CVEC Technology Committee

WHAT ISN'T IN THE RECOMMENDED PROPOSAL

The Committee was selective in its recommendation. The recommended proposal does not include an "interactive" projector, that would allow writing with a marker on the whiteboard/ screen to be input into a computer, at an added cost of \$500. A wireless operation system would add \$1600 to the proposal. A variety of assisted hearing options were suggested ranging from \$600 to \$1200, but those needs are being addressed by another committee. The recommended proposal includes two speakers - sufficient for classroom use, rather than a surround-sound system that would add \$2,000. Screen size is a relatively modest 46"x73.5" - sufficient for classroom use and well-matched to the ultra short throw projector, rather than a larger screen optimized for movies and requiring a ceiling mounted projector with higher installation costs. The Committee believes it has made prudent choices.

There was a suggestion from the CVEC music faculty to add a turntable for records, and a tape deck, with a total added cost of perhaps \$1000. These hardware items are not integral to the system, and the Committee does not include them in the recommended proposal. Some audiophiles believe that CDs and iPods do not convey music as well as classic vinyl. Huge amounts of audio resources that could be used in CVEC music classes are available through the collections of CVEC instructors and through the college libraries. A motivated member/ donor might choose to donate funds designated for a system-compatible turntable or tape deck, perhaps with a nameplate attached acknowledging the gift. That is beyond the scope of the Committee's recommendations. However the Committee believes there should be onsite nameplate acknowledgements for donations, designated for our technology upgrades, of an amount above a threshold to be determined as the next fund drive is planned,

FUTURE PROPOSAL

After the system at VOC is installed and operating successfully, the Committee intends to return to the Board with a proposal for an upgrade of a similar quality addressing the specific needs for Room 106. Such an upgrade would require coordination with the Senior Center and the entity managing the building.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

(Under Roberts Rules, a Committee Member will move the adoption of the following resolutions, moving Resolution 2 if Resolution 1 is adopted. A motion made on behalf of a committee does not require a second. The motion presents a recommended course of action, based on the Committee's deliberations, for the Board to adopt, modify, or reject. In the course of discussion, Board members may propose amendments before the motion is brought to a vote.)

1) Resolved, that the Board authorizes the acceptance by CVEC of the "Sound and Video System Proposal (updated)" submitted by Sim Sound and Video, Inc., dated April 1, 2014, in the amount of \$15,055.73.

2) Whereas, installation will take place over the summer, when there are no Board meetings to deal with exigencies, and whereas, the Technology Committee includes the Board Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary, and the Operations Director, therefore

Resolved, that the Board authorizes the Executive Director, in consultation with the Technology Committee, to authorize additional expenditures up to \$1,000, if determined to be just and necessary to ensure timely completion of the work in the accepted Sim Sound and Video, Inc. proposal dated April 1, 2014.