Cannon Valley Elder Collegium

Board Minutes, September 11, 2013

The Board of Directors of CVEC met at the Northfield Senior Center on September 11, 2013. A quorum being present, Board Chair ReJean Schulte called the meeting to order at 3:45 P.M.

1. This was the first Board meeting for some members, so the Board members and staff members who were present briefly introduced themselves.

2. An agenda having been circulated to the members of the Board prior to the meeting, ReJean asked the Board to approve the agenda, with one change to correct a typographical error. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the agenda was approved unanimously with such change.

3. ReJean next asked that the minutes of the May 15, 2013 meeting of the Board be approved in the form sent to the Board prior to the meeting. Jerry Mohrig noted that the minutes refer to an attachment, which was not in fact attached. A motion to approve the Minutes in the form circulated was duly made, seconded and approved unanimously, the attachment to be filed with the official minutes.

4. Executive Director Rich Noer reported that he and the other two new staff directors are learning their jobs and that so far, things are going smoothly. There are 200 class registrations for the fall trimester, which is near a record, and the number of class registrations for calendar year 2013 classes is easily an all-time record. Rich said he considers these records a tribute to the outgoing team of directors.

5. Rich then suggested that the calendar for the 2013-2014 academic year, circulated to the Board previously and approved by vote at the May Board meeting, should be revised to reflect CVEC's usual practice of holding Board meetings on the third Wednesday of each month. A motion to approve the calendar in the form previously approved but with the revised Board meeting schedule was duly made, seconded and approved unanimously. The approved calendar will be circulated by email.

6. New Operations Director Dale Sommers suggested that CVEC should keep records and make registration reports based on the academic year, September through August. Currently, some reports are based on the calendar year and others on the academic year. Dale then discussed a number of reports and graphs and reports that he had circulated prior to the meeting. The reports and graphs highlight a number of important and previously unrecognized facts about CVEC student behaviors which will be helpful, particularly to the Curriculum Committee as it considers future academic offerings. Among other things, the graphs demonstrate that "flexible" course offerings, such as the summer film festival, bring new students to CVEC in significant numbers, and that many of the new students then sign on to more traditional CVEC offerings. Dale's graphs also establish that the largest numbers of new students enter in the fall each year, and that the numbers of new students are significant: for the 2012 – 2013 academic year, CVEC attracted 62 new students. Dale's reports and graphs provoked a spirited discussion, and there was general agreement that the new ways of looking at student data will prove useful in the future.

7. New Curriculum Director Ed Langerak reported that 13 courses, including two "flexicourses," have been scheduled for the winter trimester. This schedule is firm, subject to the usual exceptions for unforeseen events. Ed asked whether the Curriculum Committee should consider itself limited to three "flexicourses." There was a discussion on this point, the gist of which was that the "flexicourses" benefit CVEC by attracting new students and instructors, and that three flexible courses for the year should be a goal of the Curriculum Committee, not a limitation.

8. Ed Langerak then reported that Barbara Evans' course about Frank Lloyd Wright, a flexible offering, is heavily subscribed and will more than cover its out-of-pocket costs despite its $95 fee.

9. Ed Lufkin said that Carleton expects to host Salman Rushdie for a convocation later this fall. Ed suggested that CVEC might sponsor an event around Rushdie's visit, such as a satellite presentation of his convocation speech. Ed will keep in touch with Carleton about this possibility.

10. Jerry Mohrig, a member of the Curriculum Committee, suggested that the Committee should recruit a member who is familiar with the secondary school teachers in the Northfield School District.

11. Finance Director Barb Jenkins had circulated two financial reports before the meeting. She discussed the "Operations Report," explaining the small deficit of about $1400, and the report of fund balances, which is up about $11,000 due to a rise in the stock markets. Barb also briefly discussed the proposed budget for the next calendar year, which will be discussed, revised as necessary and approved at the next meeting of the Board.

12. Eric Nelson led a discussion of the summer, 2014 film festival. He expects to lead a committee consisting of Ed Lufkin, Ed Langerak, Rich Noer and possibly others. The committee will report to the Board as plans are made. Eric reported that the number of people attending the films at the Weitz Center in 2013 was greater than the number in the inaugural year of 2012, but that the number taking the follow-up classes remained level, which led to a small financial loss. Board members were unanimous in praising the festival and dismissing the loss as a worthwhile expenditure. Eric next raised the possibility that short student-produced films from Carleton, St. Olaf and Northfield High School might be shown in conjunction with the 2014 festival. This suggestion was received enthusiastically by several members of the Board.

13. Bruce Roberts reported that another session of "Idea Harvest" was held during the summer, this time at the Methodist Church in Northfield. Bruce did not have time for a full report to the Board, and it was agreed that his report should be a subject of discussion at the October Board meeting.

Upon motion duly made and seconded and without discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:07 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

Michael H. Harper, Jr.
Secretary