Call to Order: Chancellor Melody Rose, serving as the Committee’s Co-Chair, called the meeting of the Community College Workforce Training & Programs Committee (Committee) to order at 3:00 PM. Co-Chair Mr. Derrick Hill participated virtually.

Members Present:

Dr. Melody Rose, Co-Chair
Mr. Derrick Hill, Co-Chair
Ms. Stacey Bostwick
Ms. Myisha Boyce
Ms. Jhone Ebert
Mr. Kurt Thigpen
Mr. Chris Trolson
Mr. Ryan Woodward
Dr. Federico Zaragoza

1. Information Only – Public Comment:

None

2. For Possible Action – Consideration of February Meeting Minutes:

Member Myisha Boyce moved approval of the minutes. Member Federico Zaragoza seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion and the minutes were approved by all members except Ms. Ebert who was not present at the time of the vote.

3. Discussion Only – Report from the Co-Chairs:

Co-Chair Rose provided a general update on the activities since the last meeting on February 28, 2022. Committee members should have received an e-mail containing
links to the NSHE website and each of the community colleges. The links are also on the AB 450 webpage which is housed on the NSHE website and allows for public access the same information.

Co-Chair Rose used this opportunity to provide updates on her NSHE team.

Co-Chair Rose said she was grateful to be a member of the Governor’s Office of Economic Development Board. On Thursday, March 17th, the Board approved an exciting opportunity in concert with Western Nevada College (WNC). The Workforce Development Grant is a $400,000 funding opportunity through the Workforce Innovations for the New Nevada (WINN) fund. This grant is designed to support the growth of a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) Training Program at WNC. Funding this CDL program is a great example of how nimble our community colleges are in responding to emergent workforce needs, with critical investments like grants, coupled with government and industry partnerships. This program will help train workers for an industry currently facing significant vacancies that undoubtedly impact our nation’s challenges with supply and demand for goods and services. Thank you, GOED and congratulations to WNC!

This committee is part of NSHE’s larger Strategic Initiative Coordination Effort, which is central to NSHE’s strategic planning efforts. Member Ebert arrived at the meeting.

Co-Chair Rose established a Chancellor’s advisory committee for the strategic planning process comprised of community business leaders and philanthropic leaders throughout the state. The first meeting occurred on March 14th and was well attended. She stated it is clear that community leaders understand the value of higher education and are invested in our progress.

4. Discussion Only – Report from Governor’s Office:

Daniel Stewart, the Chief Strategy Officer from the Governor’s Office, provided the committee with updates from the Governor’s Office that may have a direct impact on the work of the committee.

Mr. Stewart read several remarks from Governor Sisolak into the record as they relate to this committee and provided an update on the Governor’s vision for this committee, especially as it relates to his direction from the state of the state address delivered just four weeks ago. In that address, Governor Sisolak stated he wants this committee to explore ways to make community college and other apprentice and training programs free for more Nevadans by 2025. Governor Sisolak specifically asks that this committee make practical recommendations on how Nevada might fund community colleges and other apprentice training programs so that they can be free to more people by 2025. This committee should also feel free to make additional community college funding recommendations for the next legislative session but given the limited time this committee has to write and release its report, how Nevada may adjust its increasing priorities to make community colleges free to more Nevadans by 2025 should be a priority.

Governor Sisolak has set aside $5 million in ARPA funds to help kick-start this committee’s recommendations. ARPA funds may only be used for projects that are within the scope of the accompanying federal treasury rules. Governor Sisolak trusts
the leadership of the Co-Chairs as well as the exceptional members of this committee to get the job done and he stands ready to assist in the shared endeavor.

5. Discussion Only – NSHE Community Colleges – Governance Structure and 2014-2015 Interim Study:

Co-Chair Rose introduced NSHE Regent Jason Geddes, Ph.D., the longest standing member on the Board of Regents, and NSHE Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs and Community Colleges, Crystal Abba. Both share longevity in the system and have a wealth of information about where the Community Colleges have been and what the evolution of them has been. They provided a joint presentation which included a general overview of NSHE Community College Governance Structure, Institutional Advisory Councils, and the 2014-2015 Interim Study Concerning Community Colleges, which had implications for the system.

Regent Geddes stated that in the mid-2000’s former Chancellor, Jim Rogers had recommended looking at Arizona’s model, where individual counties fund community colleges within their county as a way to provide funding for the individual colleges to supplement what the state was providing. The great recession impacted Chancellor Rogers plan and it did not move forward. During the great recession, NSHE conducted a funding formula study to look at funding for higher education. Prior to the current funding formula, there were eleven funding formulas, which applied to all different categories such as libraries, buildings and grounds, education, etc. The legislature's funding formula determines how much money to give higher education and when money is distributed the funding formula determines the amount the institution receives using the weighted student credit hours model. Outside of the seven teaching institutions, Desert Research Institute (DRI) and other non-formula budgets are separate.

During the 2013 legislative session the state was in a recession, so there was no new money available. Therefore, the formula simply divvied up the funds and spread it among the seven campuses. At that time some equity issues were addressed including the long-standing issue of the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) not receiving enough funding for many years. NSHE ended up with a formula where our two smallest institutions, Western Nevada College (WNC) and Great Basin College (GBC), took the biggest hit to their budgets. Based on their enrollment, a small institution factor was created to try and offset the budget reductions.

In the 2013 legislative session, SB 391 was introduced. That bill was designed to look into placing the four community colleges under the Nevada Department of Education (NDE). At the time, NDE said they did not have the budget and were unable to accommodate. At the same time, there was a discussion of roles and responsibilities, as well as a general concern that if community colleges went under NDE they would be seen as an extension of K-12 and not higher education. Therefore, an interim study was initiated to determine how community colleges were delivering services and to look at overall funding for community colleges.

The largest part of the interim study included looking at the programs and services the community colleges deliver and how they integrate with K-12. In addition, the study looked at how community colleges were performing in preparing students to go onto the state college or universities. The primary goal was looking at the funding for the community colleges and if there was a way to get more funding outside of the
traditional model and would be the best way to govern the community colleges. be to split them into a separate system as some states have or leave it as a unified system?

During the interim in 2013-2014 the study evaluated what other states did in terms of evaluating best practices and focusing on sustainability and funding of the rural community colleges, which took the biggest brunt of the funding formula. Once the 2015 legislative session began there were a few bills recognizing how well California was doing in their transfer and articulation agreements from their community college system to their state university system and the overall UC system. California has three entirely different systems with three entirely different sets of administration and structure. There were six legislators assigned and they appointed members of local government, economic development authorities, and Regents to sit on those committees, and they focused on the community college governance, the support of academic program alignment, workforce development grants and need based financial aid. The interim committee gathered the information and put together a report which was distributed at your first committee meeting, which were the findings of SB 391. The primary recommendation that came out of that process was that they did not think there needed to be a change in the governance structure. Regent Geddes believes the driving goal was NDE did not think they could absorb it and were not sure it was a good fit. They also did not want to create a separate governance board, oversight, or administration as well as the costs associated with that structure. So, the recommendation was to keep the Nevada System of Higher Education intact but work on the issues within the system. The overall sense was to create a system within a system to emphasize the importance of the community colleges and ensure they were not being overshadowed by the universities and state college.

The interim committee made its report to the legislature in 2015 and submitted a list of recommendations. There ended up being three bill drafts created. The first was to create a need based financial aid program funded at $5 million dollars. This bill draft became the Silver State Opportunity Grant. Regent Geddes stated he believes this is one of the most important items that came out of the committee. Prior to 2015, there was no need based financial aid in the State of Nevada. The only need based financial aid students had been from the federal government or from programs those individual campuses had created. The second recommendation was to assist with workforce programs funded at $6 million dollars. Unfortunately, that bill did not pass or get funded but did eventually lead to the WINN program (Workforce Innovations for the New Nevada). The third recommendation was for a STEM workforce challenge grant to bump up the STEM programs in the state. Unfortunately, that bill did not pass or get funded.

Another recommendation was the shared services initiative. This is where the campuses support each other behind the scenes. For example, UNLV processes all travel throughout the system. This is done so there is no duplication of efforts. There are many more examples of these types of services throughout the system and they have increased over the past couple of years. The other recommendation was the creation of the Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges.

Regent Geddes stated that Institutional Advisory Councils (IAC) were created. One of the criticisms was that NSHE had far too many Advisory Boards and Advisory Committees within the community colleges and there was interest in creating one overarching IAC for each community college. This structure helps to ensure the business community knows what is happening at the community colleges and they
can also be advocates within the community and with the legislature. In addition, this structure helps ensure the community colleges know what the needs of the business community are such as what programs they are looking for and what skills they need from our graduates. Regent Geddes said Vice Chancellor Abba will provide an update as to reformatting those Institutional Advisory Councils to make them more efficient and effective.

Another creation resulting from the Interim Committee was the creation of a Community College Committee. The committee meets quarterly and focuses solely on community college related issues. IAC Chairs attend the meetings and have dialogue with the Regents and committee members.

In addition, the expansion of Advanced Placement (AP) Dual Credit certificate programs has seen tremendous growth. Primarily in the dual enrollment programs where students in their junior and senior year of high school can take college courses and earn their associates degree by the time, they receive their high school diploma. These students can either move straight into the workforce or transfer into the state college or universities as a junior. Regent Geddes said it is one of the great successes and he is proud of the program.

All the recommendations that came out of the SB 391 committee and were adopted by the legislature as recommended by Chair Woodhouse and Subcommittee Chairs Marilyn Kirkpatrick and Debbie Smith, the Board of Regents has adopted and implemented. This creates a starting point and would not suggest the committee go back and ask for guidance on these issues, although he acknowledges there are some big issues that are worth re-addressing as time goes on. The issue of funding, especially for the community colleges continues to be an issue and he believes it is worth the committee’s discussion and consideration as to the best ways to do that. If there are ways for this committee to rectify and boost funding for the community colleges and the system as a whole, it would be most welcome.

Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs and Community Colleges, Crystal Abba spoke to the areas of responsibility assumed when the former Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges left NSHE.

The first area is the standing committee for Community Colleges. Vice Chancellor Abba stated that within the interim study report there was a formal letter drafted from the committee supporting the concept of community colleges operating as a “system within a system”. A portion of the infrastructure the Board of Regents created to support that was forming a standing committee on community colleges. As the Board moved forward with the concept of a “system within a system” they created the standing committee on community colleges. The charge was quite broad, essentially touching on several areas from workforce to looking at current and national trends in community colleges and identifying innovative program traits. It also said they would look at and achieve an appropriate balance between imagination, risk-taking and wise use of human and financial resources. The challenge with the charge of the community college committee was every element of that charge was dealt with by the full Board or by another standing committee. So, the question that was raised by the Chancellor’s cabinet was how we can utilize this committee in a better way, particularly, given the state’s new focus on workforce. If one looks at the AB 450 legislation and compares it to the SB 391 legislation, the charges are identical. However, based on the comments of Mr. Stewart from the Governor’s office, this committee’s charge has now shifted.
There may be items this committee is unable to deal with because of the short period of time the Board of Regents changed the charge for the community college committee, now the workforce committee, to allow this group a place to leave the unfinished work should this committee not finish all the items in the committee charge. As we looked at the community college committee the Board chose to revamp that in a way that focuses on workforce and that committee will look at ways to align degree and workforce credentialing programs that are offered by the community colleges particularly to align with the economic goals of the state and the Office of Economic Development pursuant to state law. That group is going to be looking very specifically at what direction the state is going in and making determinations on how the community colleges are supporting those efforts via academic or training programs and then strategic efforts to support that as well. The second piece is focused on the IAC. NSHE is looking at the current provisions that govern the IAC’s and is proposing a way to revamp them so that those IAC’s better support the institutions to put the presidents in the driver’s seat for being able to guide those conversations in a way that best supports the community colleges in their own strategic endeavors. Vice Chancellor Abba stated she believes the legislature felt that though there were several advisory boards that existed there was no ideal conduit in which the business community could tell the community colleges what they needed. Therefore, everyone agreed to eliminate the existing provisions and recraft them in a way that will potentially move forward at the June Board of Regents meeting. It flips the dialogue and takes it from an assumption that committee members will guide where things are going for the community colleges and assumes that the presidents will tell the community members “this is the way you can best support the institution”. So, each community college president will be given the authority to establish their own parameters for the IAC’s rather than following these broad parameters that were expected to be a one-size-fits-all. The challenge has been that each IAC and each college operates within its own community, and each has utilized those councils differently, so this allows the president to essentially craft the provisions that govern their respective IAC in a manner that best supports their institution. So those councils can provide advice, assist in community relations, assist in institutional development, and provide other assistance as requested by the president which is all aimed at enhancing the institution including supporting institutional incentives, institutional advocacy. The IAC chairs see themselves as ambassadors of the institution and they want to be in a position where they receive very specific guidance in how they can go out into the community and support that in a manner, so the community is aware of it and realizes the importance to supporting the citizens of the state.

This proposal includes workforce advisory boards which are currently in place at all the community colleges. We are recommending to codify for the sake of perception – the challenge has been that the legislature and the conversation the board had in regard to IACs was based on a premise that those IACs would be telling the institutions “this is what we want from your programs”, but the reality is that those dialogues are far more intimate and occur at the program level. It is often required for accreditation so many programs for the purpose of accreditation bring together individuals from a specific industry, for example, software computing or HVAC and those individuals are advising the college in terms of “these are the expectations that we have for the knowledge, skills and abilities that your graduates need to have to work in our industry”. Those dialogues are ongoing and have been ongoing for decades as it relates to accreditation requirements but what this proposal does is it makes it clear that the board, the legislature, and the public that those dialogues are occurring and that they are not occurring within the IAC’s but are imbedded and part of the dialogue
within the institutions. This proposal will go to the Board in June and from there we
hope to have proposals from the individual presidents by the end of the year which will
then be considered by the Board for formal adoption so they can move forward with
their own specific provisions as related to the IACs.

Regent Geddes shared two final comments: He stated that aligning workforce needs
and what the colleges were doing was difficult because there was no state plan for
economic development until 2012. The other is responsiveness of the community
colleges is different than it previously was. When Panasonic and Tesla came to
Northern Nevada, the community colleges created programs that were late entry
programs to get these workers the training they needed. WNC has a mobile trailer that
can go to individual companies and train employees onsite with the training they need.
President Zaragoza has several other examples. Community colleges are ready,
willing, and able and it’s not the old semester model. They will jump in and do
certificates or a few courses and whatever the employers need. Willingness is there
with the presidents and Vice Chancellor Abba and Vice Chancellor Cage are there to
help assist. Try not to think of only the fall and spring model but if there are specific
things, they are willing and able.

Co-Chair Rose thanked Regent Geddes and Vice Chancellor Abba for sharing their
knowledge with the committee. All four community college presidents were available
if there were questions members would like to ask.

Member Woodward asked where members can the state economic development plan.
Regent Geddes stated it could be found on the Governor’s website and Governor’s
Office of Economic Development. Regent Geddes requested Vice Chancellor Cage
send the state economic development plan to all committee members.

Member Woodward also asked how students are financing training with employers
such as Tesla and Panasonic. WNC Acting President Dalpe stated that Panasonic and
Tesla programs are funded through a number of grant scholarship programs. Students
directly out of high school also have access to funding through things like the
Millennium or Silver State Opportunity Grant mentioned earlier or the Nevada Promise
program. Private gifts are also available such as funds from the Pennington
Foundation which are available to students in workforce programs. Funding for
students going into workforce training programs to support them in that pathway even
if they do not complete the program and are gathering credits and skills to get either
into the workforce or upskilled into the workforce. Acting President Dalpe said that
there are many scholarships available as well to support students.

Member Bostwick stated she wanted to ensure that Member Woodward got the
information he was seeking. The item Regent Geddes was referring to is the state
economic development plan which has been generated since about 2011/2012 with
the most recent one being one year ago. It is publicly available on the Governor’s
Office of Economic Development (GOED) website with targeted industry details. She
stated GOED plans to engage in a new process because the last plan was written on
recovery and resilience. Member Bostwick asked Member Woodward if he had a
question more related to workforce strategy because that is not embedded into the
plan. Member Woodward stated he is more familiar with the workforce blueprint
through LVGEA and other organizations doing that work on a local level but was
curious if that aligns well with the state plan. Member Woodward stated the blueprint
was probably more strategic around workforce and the state plan probably focuses
more on recovery and he appreciated Member Bostwick’s comments. Member Bostwick said the state economic development plan is heavily focused on economic development with targeted sectors. She stated their partners have since filled that vacuum with some very strategic efforts that the workforce and economic development are simultaneously integrated. She stated that her office likes to say workforce is critical to our space but hopefully the strategic vision of economic development ties into the priorities of what is happening in workforce development.

Vice Chancellor Constance Brooks stated she wanted to remind the members that the state plan is contained within the reference materials. It is also housed on the AB 450 portion of the website within the NSHE website. She said the plan can also be resent as well.

Member Zaragoza stated he wanted to follow-up on the issue of customized training and the accelerated models. He stated a lot of the programs are aligned to students connecting to a pipeline to what he would call an extension. They are accelerated models, the area which is a gap in Southern Nevada and perhaps other areas of the state is customized training programs. There may be situations where existing employees who need training may be taking courses at a community college, but those trainings would be non-credit and non-reimbursable. In other places it is easy for employers to invest in employing and updating the skills of their employees because it is a deal they cannot refuse. In this situation the employers are paying full cost and often it is easier for employers to get vendors than it is to use the community college system and that is an infrastructure that could be very responsive, and he feels we are underutilizing the community college structure by not addressing some of the issues to address a broader workforce.

Member Thigpen stated is that the workforce is seeing hiring shortages. Have there been conversations between the state and community colleges or within the business community about asking them not to require things such as degrees and making those diploma programs more acceptable to certain jobs. It has been a limiting factor, where the workforce wants to see bachelor’s degrees at a minimum. Considering the K-12 situation we are going to be a little bit behind academically and playing catch-up for a long time. Have we talked to the business community to see if they can change their motivations?

Co-Chair Rose stated she would offer one piece of information related to that and she stated she believes we are beginning to see some of that shift happening naturally from industry on its own for the reasons Mr. Thigpen indicated. One thing she really values in the Governor’s Economic Development Plan as well as the work done at LVGEA is that it very frequently makes clear which industries and jobs require what levels of education, so we can align appropriately and not over engineer what an individual learner need. One of the most exciting things happening in higher education in America today is the notion of stackable credentials and that is something you will hear our presidents talk about. That is the opportunity to get your “just in time skills” to get retrained or upskilled for a particular job opportunity and then three years later that individual could decide to move into management and to make sure that the content the individual received from us earlier is relevant and adds to the associates degree and I think that is something that all our community colleges are working very intensively on. Higher education used to think that our customers or our students were one-time customers and I think it has been a whole mind shift within higher education
in America that learning is forever, and we want to see you again and again as you need us at different points in your career.

Member Bostwick stated this sounds a lot like what pathways do and we must continue the conversation within industries, it is not a one and done situation. She did want to reference one element that is a mechanism that has been around the state for a while and reconstituted into the industry sector council and that is administered through the Department of Employment Training and Rehabilitation and the Governor’s Office of Workforce Innovation. Looking at targeted industries that align with our state plan and economic development and bringing very intentional people who represent those industries. That group of industry representatives along with education and post-secondary have those conversations and that is really where the back and forth happens and that is when they can actionable recommendations to come back and say potentially to community colleges “hey, we are really struggling, we need something that is more condensed, or alternative models”. That is where businesses engage on a regular basis at the state level, but Vice Chancellor Abba was talking about the shift in the industry advisory councils and how can that be done within the communities in which the community colleges are happening. Some of the feedback, as someone within economic development, is that there wasn’t really a two-way street. The sector councils are designed to be a two-way street at the state level and through to the Governor’s office. She asked of Member Zaragoza wanted to add to that and how they continue those conversations because as systems evolve, there needs to be more than one conversation.

Member Zaragoza stated the way they are trying to re-engineer the pathways are through stack ability, which is very important. One of the elements being seen is a more systemic alignment of skillsets to what employers need. Community colleges know by program what kind of skills get people that first job and that becomes the first certificate. It could be 6 weeks; it could be a semester it could be longer or shorter, but it is what the industry demands. Within the literature it talks about beginning to develop a way to unbundle programs. We are beginning to see workforce connection sector groups where they are connecting to employers and they are telling us how their sector works and that is very important because the IT sector for example is very different from the manufacturing sector and our programs connect to those and there is a lot of alignment with that and accreditation so there is synergy there in terms of reinforcing what is a good program and ultimately at the back end looking at the data, are graduates getting the jobs and how does that relate to wages and all of that is part of the new workforce mentality of community colleges. Community colleges are becoming employer driven both in the way we behave and the accountability component.

Co-Chair Hill thanked both Vice Chancellor Abba and Regent Geddes as well as the committee members on great questions that will inform our insights as we move forward.

6. Discussion Only – Proposed Work Plan:

Co-Chair Hill stated the work plan is a fluid document that will be a standing agenda item for discussion as we move forward. He noted that members can expect to hear presentations at the April meeting on:
• The Nevada Department of Education, the Governor’s Office of Economic Development and the Department of Employment Training and Rehabilitation as they provide a holistic overview of workforce development through their lens as key service providers and stakeholders; and
• Presentations that will provide us with context around national best practices.

Co-Chair Hill asked members if there were any questions about the workplan or suggested changes at this time. Member Bostwick asked about different kinds of funding and new funding as the committee thinks about this new goal post of making more opportunities for free or significantly cheaper access to a college education, What do the dollars look like, how does it impact students in terms of how many students are benefiting from the Silver State Opportunity Grand and other pieces such as the Nevada Promise and if there is a big picture understanding of how many students are paying out of pocket, receiving PELL, etc. It is unclear to her how many students the committee is talking about in terms of what the increase is, so it is difficult for her to wrap her head around a recommendation at this point.

Co-Chair Hill asked Member Bostwick if she is recommending that we include some measurements around this on a go-forward basis as part of the work plan? Member Bostwick stated she hates to add more to the work plan, but her recommendation is to receive more information, she stated she is not opposed to receiving that as background materials but does think that is something the committee needs to understand as a piece of all the different funding mechanisms that come in. She stated she is speaking about both the credit and non-credit side. Another recommendation, she understands on the credit side there is a funding formula, but she is unsure if that funds the cost of operations. She doesn’t know if it would be cost of attendance or cost of operations but that seems to be two very different benchmarks and she mentions it because she lives in this space, especially in workforce and on the non-credit workforce side the house you need to cover your costs. There is no credit baring fee obtained so the costs look different or there is a different operation model so how do we fund those? There are two different funding mechanisms for those two spaces, so it is kind of a big picture ask but I think understanding that when we say “free” what does “free” really mean? Are we talking about the cost to operate or the cost to the student? Also, what are the current resources and what are they doing in terms of sheer outcomes and numbers and who are we still trying to affect in offering better access to free education?

Co-Chair Rose stated she believes member Bostwick is right in line with some of staff’s conversations with the Governor’s office around his vision in terms of numbers, dollars, and outcomes, and there are a lot of ways to get a free community college program. Staff hopes to surface some examples for the committee because it is going to take some analysis to get there and some modeling. Co-Chair Rose stated she was hoping that some of the Governor’s investment might be utilized to offset that staffing impact so staff could further examine what the boundaries are on usage of that money, but it may be that consultants would be needed. NSHE does not have the budget to cover that, and the different funding source modeling are beyond what our staff has the capacity to do. The background NSHE staff will be starting to develop concepts for the committee’s consideration so the committee does not have to slog through that.
Member Woodward stated he believes some of the bright minds throughout the state are in higher education today and are learning those skills of quantitative analysis and bringing data together and could potentially use internship opportunities that could help provide some of the outcomes we are looking for.

Co-Chair Rose stated she appreciated looking at our bright graduate students but reminded the members that there is a tight report deadline of August 1st.

7. Discussion Only – Items for Future Agendas:

None

8. Information Only – Public Comment:

None

Co-Chair Rose thanked NSHE and SCS staff for providing support in putting these meetings together and logistical support.

Meeting Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at order at 4:14 PM.