



Office of the President

Dr. Chris McCarthy

FILED

AUG - 7 2008

Clerk of the Napa Superior Court

By: C. Brennan
Deputy

July 18, 2008

William E. Trautman
Foreperson
2007 - 2008 Napa County Grand Jury
P. O. Box 5397
Napa, CA 94581

Dear Mr. Trautman:

Please accept this letter as Napa Valley College's official response to the 2007 - 2008 Napa County Grand Jury's Report on Napa Valley College.

The Napa Valley College Board of Trustees and administration join in thanking the members of the Grand Jury for their thorough and thoughtful report on Napa Valley College. We appreciate their careful work and the many hours spent collecting and analyzing the information regarding Napa Valley College. We strongly believe in the importance of the review process, and we will use the report as a valuable resource in our ongoing efforts to provide Napa County residents with access to outstanding, affordable higher education.

The college would also like to thank the members of the Grand Jury for the professionalism they demonstrated at every juncture of their investigation. The courtesy and intelligence they brought to their task was sincerely appreciated, and their understanding of the areas reviewed is impressive for its comprehensiveness and its detail. We will utilize the report to help shape the direction of Napa Valley College over the coming years.

COMMENDATIONS

Napa Valley College would like to particularly thank the members of the 2007 - 2008 Napa County Grand Jury for recognizing the leadership of Napa Valley College and the quality of the working relationships throughout the college community. Napa Valley
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Court Executive Office

College Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff are extremely proud of the mutual respect and shared commitment that make our community college an exceptional place to both learn and work. Maintaining the highest standards of productive, ethical relationships throughout the campus community is a top priority of the college and a central factor in the success of our students. We value and appreciate your acknowledgement.

We also appreciate the commendation of the Grand Jury for the installation of the solar field and the chiller plant. Napa Valley College is gratified by this commendation, as it has long been the college's goal to be a leader in energy conservation and at the same time reduce the college's energy costs. The college would like to acknowledge the support of Napa County residents for the success of Measure N in 2002, without which these projects could not have been brought to fruition. As the college continues to expand, it will be diligent in its efforts to utilize green technologies in its new buildings and to minimize our environmental footprint.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Please accept our following responses to the recommendations made by the Grand Jury.

Recommendation 1: NVC continue to support efforts at the State level to secure a more stable funding mechanism that is not tied to K- 14 funding.

District staff continues to participate on various committees at the state level that focus on community college finance and funding issues. Proposition 92, the most significant recent effort to change community college funding, was defeated in the February, 2008 election. However, the proposition created a greater awareness regarding the funding problems faced by community colleges. The State Chancellor's Office and the Community College League are continuing their efforts to draw increased scrutiny to this issue. A member of the Board of Trustees is elected to the California Community College Trustees (CCCT) board that is continuing to advocate for legislation that separates community college funding from the K-12 funding.

Recommendation 2: NVC Board of Trustees proceeds expeditiously to convert the unfunded health care liabilities from a "pay-as-you-go" to an accrual basis.

The Board of Trustees is reviewing numerous options regarding the unfunded retiree health care liability. At the Board's direction over the past five years, the college budget has included an increasing amount of set-aside beyond the pay-as-you-go amount.

A subcommittee of the Board is currently reviewing options for generating additional funds to address this issue by utilizing allowable investment options and other financial methods. The subcommittee is planning to report back to the full Board in Fall, 2008.

Recommendation 3: NVC inform the public when promoting new bond issues, not only of what will be gained by the passage of the bond issue, but what will be lost if the bond issue does not pass.

Napa Valley College appreciates the attention the Grand Jury brought to the importance of communicating effectively with the community—not only during a bond campaign, but on an ongoing basis. This recommendation also reaffirms what we heard from many members of the community subsequent to the failure of Measure L—that that were disappointed and regretful that they had not realized what projects would not go forward if the bond did not pass. Additionally, we believe that communicating needs, along with accomplishments, has the benefit of actually increasing community support for the college. The unique strength of the community college lies in an honest, open dialog between the college and the community, and the college is committed to finding new ways to increase opportunities for that dialog to flourish.

Recommendation 4: NVC take a more pro-active role in informing the public about its accomplishments and needs.

Last year, the college hired a marketing strategist to assist the college in developing new marketing strategies to strengthen its ongoing communication with the community. The college will receive a final report from the marketing strategist early in the Fall semester and will incorporate those strategies into our existing efforts, which include: weekly press releases to local media (area newspapers, radio, college website); paid advertising campaign around each registration period; monthly cable TV show on Channel 27; a college DVD used at outreach events; community publications such as President's Report to the Community; brochures, posters, flyers about events and programs; active outreach to area high schools, including financial aid outreach; participation in community events in Napa County; highway signs; campus tours; staff participation in service clubs; hosting professional conferences; college president, staff, and Foundation members speak and represent college in the community.

Recommendation 5: NVC provide campus-wide wireless access to benefit the faculty, the students and Campus Security.

College staff is currently gathering cost information regarding wireless access. The staff is very aware of the significant security issues involved with a wireless environment. Any further steps that the college takes regarding wireless access will be designed to protect the security of the administrative computing system as well as the security of the faculty, staff and students. The college must also carefully review the cost/benefit aspects of such an expensive undertaking.

Any system for the Campus Police would need to be separated from a college-wide system. Options available for these purposes are also under review.

Recommendation 6: NVC provide computers with wireless capabilities be installed in campus police cars.

The college is exploring the option of a mobile unit that is a tag-on to Verizon's wireless system, requiring no implementation from the college Information Technology Department. The upgrade would allow police officers in the field to access vital student records, warrant status, and other information that is routinely needed without the delay caused by contacting the department by phone or radio. Our police vehicles already have computer mounts, reducing the expense of installation. The power source to run this system is generated by the vehicle. The system can be used by college police staff assigned to the Upper Valley Campus in St. Helena to interact with the main campus. Having wireless capabilities in police vehicles is consistent with other County law enforcement.

Recommendation 7: NVC install a campus-wide alert/alarm system to inform those on campus of emergency situations and what actions/precautions be taken.

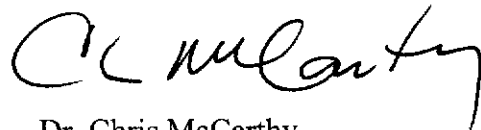
The college is currently evaluating a computer-based system that would augment the current emergency alert systems (AlertU, emergency phones, and email). The LYNX system, a computer server that operates over the existing network, would bring new capabilities that would allow the college to "push" emergency information to computers, phones, pagers, cell phones, and public displays.

The Napa Valley College Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff would again like to thank the members of the Grand Jury who served on the college review team. We will make every effort to fully respond to their insightful comments and recommendations. It was a pleasure to work with them, and we greatly appreciate their excellent service to our community.

Sincerely,



Bruce Ketron
President, Board of Trustees



Dr. Chris McCarthy
Superintendent/President