



**Finance Committee Minutes
Student Center, PDR, May 4, 2016**

Attendees: D. Bertolino, M. Bixby, R. Correia-Branco, T. Gorczyca, E. Hayes-Johnson, D. Lambropoulos, S. Lancaster, P. Machado, A. Morse, L. Nadeau, C. Nuncio, R. Silva, J. Zubrow

Chair Andy Morse called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

Minutes of the April 20th meeting were approved.

Cheryl Goodwin presented news from the president's office. There are three finalists for the position of Vice President of Administration and Finance. Finance Committee members are invited to meet with the candidates on May 10, 11, and 13, at 11:00am, in the President's Dining Room.

Andy Morse offered to chair the Finance Committee again next year. There were no other candidates; Andy was unanimously elected chair.

Judy Zubrow presented copies of the official charter of the Finance Committee; the document was provided by Amy Callahan.

The **Finance Committee** reviewed Andy's draft of the letter to the president during the remainder of the meeting. Members suggested a different format, as well as the elimination of a couple of topics not as directly related to finance issues. As a group, we decided to focus on the following major areas of concern: (1) student enrollment, including recruitment, retention, and class size/cancellation, and (2) long-range financial planning, including grant management. We are all grateful to Patricia Machado and Scott Lancaster for developing and providing an outline for the next draft of the letter, which Andy will provide to the committee members before forwarding to the president.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Lynne Nadeau
May 4, 2016



May 9, 2016

Dear President Glenn:

The members of the Finance Committee would like to thank Vice President William Heineman, former Vice President of Administration and Finance David Gingerella, Chief Information Office Jeff Bickford, and yourself for appearing at our meetings this year. Your input, and that of other college administrators, has been vital in helping us to formulate our recommendations.

Student enrollment/retention

The Finance Committee must express our deep concern regarding the college's declining student population. We have been informed that we can expect this situation to persist at least through 2020. We understand that economic and demographic trends have contributed to this problem for many community colleges in Massachusetts. Even so, we believe that NECC should take steps to address the issue as effectively as possible. Based on what this committee has learned from discussions with NECC leadership over the past year, we would like to make the following recommendations.

The information that we've received indicates that the college is doing a good job of recruiting new students. The committee recommends supporting the work of Marketing Communications, in collaboration with Enrollment Services, to continue to improve recruitment efforts. We recommend gathering data to help drive a marketing plan that targets the populations that NECC usually serves. As part of that plan, we recommend emphasis on the sports teams and other amenities offered at the college. We would also like to see summary information and a cost/benefit analysis on using social-media sites to connect with prospective students. If this information is not readily available, we recommend its development.

The Finance Committee shares the concerns of all members of the NECC community regarding student retention. We recommend implementation of an Institutional Research strategy and report to identify why students do not complete their educational plans at NECC. Better information will enable the college to develop targeted solutions.

One suggestion that the Finance Committee has that could impact retention is to revisit the policy requiring a 15-student minimum in order to run a class. Cancellation of classes due to this policy adversely affects students' planning, and may cause them to seek equivalent classes at other institutions. Consequences during the summer sessions can be even more serious because students have few alternate choices for classes; a 10-student minimum might be more appropriate for summer

classes. The Finance Committee members would like to see the fiscal analysis and rationale for this policy.

Long-range planning

We recommend that as a standard procedure the college develop a long-range budget plan of five to 10 years. The emphasis that we see on single-year budgeting does not allow for enough flexibility in predicting future costs and revenues.

As a subset of the long-range planning, we recommend a clear policy for grant funds. Currently, we are not aware of what contingencies or budget plans are in place for the termination of grant funding. Does NECC always plan to absorb the costs of any grant-funded ongoing programs, projects, or personnel? These decisions have a profound impact on future college budgets, and we would like to see more clarity around this issue.

We hope that you will find these recommendations useful. All members of the Finance Committee look forward to working with you and NECC's administration in general to improve the college's fiscal future.

Sincerely,

Andrew Morse
Chair

On behalf of the Finance Committee:

Donna Bertolino	Despina Lambropoulos
Thomasine Corbett	Scott Lancaster
Regina Correia-Branco	Patricia Machado
Elizabeth Donovan	Marilyn McCarthy
Frank Dushame	Lynne Nadeau
Linda Giampa	Cristina Nuncio
Thomas Gorczyca	Ryan Silva
Richard Haskell	Bernard Zannini
Eileen Hayes-Johnson	Judith Zubrow