

Chair Report, Steve Loosley

June 6, 2018

1. **Senator Prozanski Town Hall.** I attended Senator Prozanski's town hall meeting on June 2nd with Dr. Thatcher. The senator explained that community colleges need to argue with data to support our funding requests. He offered an example: for every dollar spent on education, it saves the state roughly thirteen dollars in reduced social and criminal services. Representative Buehler's Chief of Staff similarly told us that we must back up our requests with data. If community colleges have any hope to increase funding, we need to change our pitch from "restore funding levels" to "here's the data that shows how the funding will benefit our communities."

We also learned that the public universities plan to ask the legislature for a 23% increase in funding during the next session, which amounts to \$220k. Additionally, given that a joint task force appointed by the governor has been conducting public hearings on how to increase high school graduation rates, we know that there will be enormous pressure on the legislature to increase funding for K-12.

In sum, we have our work cut out for us if we hope to increase funding for community colleges in the next legislative session.

2. **UCC Foundation.** In a meeting with Steve Feldkamp, the Foundation Chair, and Alex Palm, the Vice Chair, we learned that the Welding Program had requested \$15k to purchase three new aluminum welding machines. Alex, who also sits on the Douglas County Industrial Development Board, encouraged us to submit a grant request to the Development Board. As all of you know, Susan Taylor and her family moved to Blacksburg, VA, so with lots of help from Elizabeth our Grant Writer, the Development Board will consider our request in July.
3. **Credit card fees.** The notes from a recent SLT meeting explain that Higher One will no longer process online tuition payments for our students; Nelnet will handle all online payments. I have learned that the College absorbs around \$90k in transaction costs for tuition payments each year. All of the options for students to pay tuition are subject to transaction costs. Until the College offers a means to pay that doesn't incur a fee, I don't know how we can explore charging some fees back to students.
4. **Student housing.** The College was approached by the owner of the old DHS building on Harvard to see if we would be interested in converting the building into student housing. I'm working with Alex Palm, a principal in i.e. Engineering, to develop a budget for the conversion. The committee will use the cost estimate and potential cash flows to assess our interest in the project.