

L&C Board, President Looking Ahead to the ‘Next 50 Years’

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GODFREY – The Lewis and Clark Community College Board of Trustees attended a virtual retreat in mid-October with college President Ken Trzaska to start laying the groundwork for the “next 50 years.”

The college, founded in 1970, is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, though the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted its planned celebratory activities.

“We are still celebrating in spirit, honoring the strong legacy that Lewis and Clark has built in our communities over the past 50 years,” Trzaska said. “As we look toward the next 50 years, we’re focusing our vision and efforts toward building on that legacy and streamlining the work we do to broaden access and opportunities for our students.”

Trzaska became L&C’s sixth president officially on Sept. 21. Over the course of his first month, he’s spent time traveling the community, in person and virtually, to meet various stakeholders, from community leaders and local officials to faculty, team members and students.

The Board Retreat was held Friday, Oct. 16 on Zoom, and was open to anyone who wanted to listen in. Its purpose was to facilitate an open discussion around strategic planning for college’s future progress and growth.

Board members were asked to submit comments and questions around what the college should start, stop and continue doing, as a starting point for further discussion.

“This feedback is useful in informing a sort of reset of the college’s strategic plan and the collective and unified focus to serve students and our communities at the highest and most efficient level,” Trzaska said.

Discussed for consideration included the need to more closely align budgetary resources with enrollment functions of the college, to hyperfocus all college activities for the benefit of its students, to explore the purpose and interconnectedness between the college’s satellite locations and the overall college mission, and to evaluate and possibly restructure areas of the college’s organizational chart, among others.

“The retreat was a wonderful opportunity for all the Board members to share their thoughts, concerns and ideas for the future of the college, and the result was a lot of good discussion,” said Board Chair David Heyen. “We have a lot of work ahead, but many opportunities as well to ensure that the college continues to be of great value to the district.”

The Board is only the first group among many who will provide feedback to be considered in the strategic planning process – the college cabinet, faculty and staff, students and taxpayers will also have a say in the college’s direction in the coming months.

Trzaska is hoping to have a draft of a new, three-year plan to the Board for approval sometime this spring.

The Board and president also spoke about expectations of one another through an exercise aimed to bring alignment and focus to the collaborative work between the two.