

I. STUDY SESSION

1. Call to Order

Chair Jessica Norouzi called the meeting to order at 1:01 P.M. and noted a quorum.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Band Instrument Repair Class Visit

4. Lower Building J Tour

5. Building J Improvements

President Yoshiko Harden thanked Vice President Jacob Jackson for his work with faculty and designing the first floor of Building J. VP Jackson stated that there were already 3 faculty listening sessions, which would inform the suggested improvements to Building J. The current structure of Building J underutilizes space. The proposed improvements include more standardized classroom sizes, more windows, and better entrance and egress. Each classroom is 990 square feet, with room for 32 desks in each classroom. Right now, classroom size varies. Proposed improvements also include a faculty office suite with 20-24 offices total, a part-time faculty office space, and a faculty lounge including a copier. Right now, there are no real student spaces in Building J. The proposed improvements include a student lounge as well as a dedicated HR conference room and training location.

Remodel of classroom is projected at \$7M, which includes contingency, the architect fee, and other construction expenses. Re-painting the building with the remodel would be \$600k. "Skinning" the building (getting rid of the stucco) would be \$4M. A combination of re-painting and "skinning" the building would be about \$2.5M. Vice Chair Tim Cooper asked about leasing out land that RTC owns. VP Jackson stated that long-term, the plan is to convert the land into an events space.

VP Jackson stated that payments will start July 2026. RTC will not need to repay monies not used. The Office of Financial Management (OFM) predicts that construction costs will rise about 19% next year. There is \$550K per year of generated rental revenue and \$300K per year of rental income, both of which are unbudgeted. In 2027, about \$30K will fall off of debt services with further a \$40K anticipated fall off the following year.

If approved, VP Jackson will continue work with the architect and will schedule faculty listening session. If the Board approves the resolution, it will go to the State Board who will review for approval. The only way for colleges to fund construction is through debt or local dollars. It is a duty of the college to provide modern learning spaces. The Governor's budget includes a reduction. Construction can be funded using unbudgeted dollars. Donna Maher asked why unbudgeted dollars can't be used for staffing. VP Jackson stated that Certificate of Participation (COP) dollars have a possibility to reduce with a new bond, whereas staffing costs are guaranteed to increase each year. Chair Norouzi asked if the urgency of this action item now is due to cost escalation or if it was a need for spaces. VP Jackson stated that after Building H is remodeled, there will no longer be enough space for a centralized campus. After the Building H remodel, if Building J is not remodeled, it would cut into rental spaces, necessitate construction for new office creation, and split departments around campus. The college has been re-investing interest. Building H is funded through the state and is next on the list for next biennium. There is not the same deficit in the capital budget as there is in the operating and transportation budgets.

Trustee Frieda Takamura expressed a concern about funding considering the OFM debacle. Vice Chair Cooper stated that every organization he's been a part of has experienced constriction as related to capital, and, while it's been painful, the organization must not be so short-sighted as to not plan for the next move. Building J is antiquated. The hoods are not functioning, the labs are not attractive to students, and the space may well impact enrollment. He stated that if the project inflation holds, he would be hesitant to approve construction in the future. Vice Chair Cooper asked about selling property currently not in use. As soon as the land is paid off, it can be leased. The Board discussed capital fundraising. COPs distribute funds to ELGIB funds, which accrue interest. If the Board declines acting at this time, it will increase the costs. RTC can withdraw from the OFM bond sale.

6. Meetings

A. Regular Board Meeting – January 15, 2025, at 3:00 P.M.

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for January 15, 2025, at 3:00 P.M.

B. Adjournment

There being no further business, Vice Chair Cooper motioned to adjourn the Board of Trustees meeting at 2:48 P.M. Trustee Takamura seconded, and the motion carried.

II. REGULAR BOARD MEETING

1. Call to Order

Chair Jessica Norouzi called the meeting to order at 3:17 P.M. and noted a quorum.

2. Adoption of Minutes

A. December 9, 2024 – Special Session

Vice Chair Cooper introduced a motion to approve the minutes for the special meeting held on December 9, 2024. Trustee Takamura seconded, and the motion carried.

B. December 11, 2024 – Special Session and Regular Meeting

- i. Vice Chair Cooper introduced a motion to approve the minutes for the special meeting held on December 11, 2024. Trustee Takamura seconded, and the motion carried.

3. Communications

A. General Information/Introductions

Mark Daniels introduced Randy Alop, Sophie Gambino, Jimmy Mullins, and Jayvee Villamar. Tim O'Donnell introduced Gary Fowler the new Culinary Instructor. Gary is looking forward to good times and welcomes all kinds of feedback. Gary stated that he taught at a Jesuit institution, had his own catering business, and then received degrees in pastry and culinary. He's spent time in many countries studying various cuisines, has staged in various restaurants and casinos. Cooking is easy for Gary because he loves giving people what they love, and his power comes from serving.

B. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

C. Public Comments from the Audience

There were no public comments.

D. Student Leadership

Mica Hunter, Director of Student Life gave an update. Student Leadership is having their first meeting tomorrow. January 29 is Lunar New Year in the Cafeteria from 11 A.M. - 1 P.M. which will include a wish tree, bingo, and more! On February 8, ASG is partnering with the Renton King County Justice Alliance with a keynote for Black History month including a keynote, an interactive fishbowl panel with ASG, performances, food, and more. This will be a family event to build community.

E. Renton Federation of Teachers (RFT)

Donna Maher, President of RFT, gave an update. The Executive Board met on the list of eight programs looking at possible reductions. That discussion took up the entire meeting and generated the below questions and concerns:

What is the data behind suggestions? RFT knows some of the data and would like updates on the data.

What are the programs and classes being considered for reduction?
Teach-outs are required for sunset programs. What will happen to these instructors?

What is the enrollment status of these programs? What is the effect on FTEs?
Is there a hiring freeze for the college? Is this only for administrators? RFT wants to know what is happening with staff.

RFT wants a current seniority list. RFT would like to know the updated budget and what the selected program reduction does to the budget.

F. Written (and video) Communication Reports

4. Action Items

A. Building J Remodel

President Harden noted that the Building J was completed in 1988 and was not remodeled since. The HVAC unit was replaced 10 years ago. The second and third floors are under consideration for remodel to better utilize space, provide student spaces, and create better classroom and office spaces. 20-24 faculty offices, rotating adjunct faculty office space, 18 classrooms, a student lounge, a dedicated HR training area and conference room, and more ASG space are all part of the proposed remodel. There have already been three faculty listening sessions on this building. More listening sessions would be scheduled if this is approved. If approved the first payment would be due June 2026.

Chair Norouzi commented that what the Board is voting on today is whether RTC will move forward with asking for funds from the legislature. Chair Norouzi stated that there was a lengthy discussion on this action item. This is a challenging time to put this motion forward. It was not easy for anyone on the Board to decide on this. Ultimately the Board considered what the near-term and long-term impacts of this motion.

There will be more listening sessions forthcoming. There are different types of funding for staffing and capital projects. Part of the Strategic Equity Plan (SEP) is to Be The Place by modernizing student spaces. President Harden stated that we will need to hold space for two different conversations.

Trustee Takamura stated that she will object to this motion strictly due to the timing. This is not the same as the financial emergency that was declared. This issue is a separate issue about looking ahead. However, because the two issues came out at the same time, she is voting no.

Chair Norouzi stated that she shares concerns about timing, however the estimated 19% increase might prevent this from moving forward in the future, and for that reason, she is voting for this motion.

Vice Chair Cooper stated that this was one of the most robust board conversations the group has had. Hearing Trustee Takamura's concerns about timing, it became clear to that this is a time we need to invest in people. When we saw a facility that has not been improved since 1998 except for the HVAC and roof, it became clear that we need to find a way to create a space that we need and that will help the college continue to grow. This is a difficult decision that every Board member was weighing.

Trustee Bob Zappone commented that he is mindful of what this appears to be, but it is important to keep in mind that the Board is approving seeking funding, but this does not commit us to the project. The state has a complicated process with long time frames for approval. If circumstances change so that it doesn't make sense to move forward, RTC can stop this process. This project won't begin for another year if approved. Having a place where students and faculty can comfortably learn and teach is important. The Office of Financial Management (OFM) debacle will take all of us to find solutions.

After considering the information presented to the Board, Vice Chair Tim Cooper move to approve Board Resolution Number 25-01-29, seeking financing authority for a Certificate of Participation to remodel the second and third floors of Building J. I will read the resolution out loud for the benefit of our audience. Trustee Bob Zappone seconded; Trustee Takamura opposed. The motion carried.

5. Discussion/Reports

A. President's Report

President Harden welcomed the group to week two of winter quarter and expressed her gratitude for what everyone does to make the college function.

Dean Shannon Matson and Dr. Huma Mohibullah joined for updates from Instruction. In terms of modernizing programs, thinking about clean energy standards that are changing, things that are changing in the environment such as the electrification of Seattle. Instruction has been working with Jack Schultz on finding grants funding. Dr. Mohibullah stated that there has been a grant to integrate climate justice into curricula. Demand for these climate justice workshops was high among faculty, and a further grant to continue this work was obtained. The eventual goal is to create real, meaningful policy change at RTC. The call for faculty to join future workshops will go out next week.

Trustee Takamura stated that this is great and timely work. She asked how the group will adapt to national changes. Dr. Mohibullah responded that she will work with what she can control alongside her DEI colleagues. Dean Matson stated that the cool thing about RTC is that it is a community with shared

governance and shared values. We are honoring collective values. Dr. Mohibullah stated that many students have a personal stake in

Be The Place Strategic Equity Plan (BTP SEP) Implementation

The series of meetings and group is set.

Partnerships

President Harden serves on several local advocacy Workforce groups. The Renton Chamber Board has been holding meetings around supporting local business. Renton is interesting because there is such a diversity of businesses. President Harden is the president liaison to the tribal government-to-government Board. This group is looking at advocacy for scholarship and funding opportunities for indigenous youth and elders.

The Renton Promise Partnership meeting's design team met. The city of Renton approved \$130K to Renton Promise financial aid. Thank you to Vice President Jessica Gilmore English and Director Rahel Weldu for their work keeping the Renton Promise going.

Community

President Harden attended the Kent Chamber breakfast. President Harden and Chair Norouzi have been meeting around the Community Advisory Committee. Mayor Pavone has agreed to serve on this committee.

Enrollment

Enrollment is 8% up for tuition-paying enrollment. Enrollment is not meeting our district education allocation base for enrollment. There will be two sets of enrollment target numbers, one for budgeting purposes and another for long-term sustainability.

The Unity Center is waiting for its final fire inspection. Executive Director Katherine Hansen completed the Legislative page. Governor Inslee did include the OFM claw back and rebase as well as a general 1% cut for community and technical colleges. Governor Ferguson does not want to cut beyond the rebase. Legislative hearings have already started. Thank you to VP Jackson for testifying in a hearing on the health sciences building.

B. Financial/Budget Status

VP Jackson gave an update on the budget. The budget is at about 44.5% for revenue collection. There is a sign of increased enrollments for winter quarter. RTC has collected \$1M more than this time last year. VP Jackson stated that enterprise is trailing but there is expected to be a jump in December's numbers.

Expenditures are a little behind when compared to last year. Food costs are up due to inflation. Debt Service payments are due in spring and so are zero until June.

There has been a decrease in cash balance that will see an upswing once the COP factors in.

Enrollment is up from fall except for apprenticeships. NW Carpenters moved offsite and consolidated with SW Carpenters, which accounts for the enrollment decrease. Winter quarter enrollment looks robust. This is the first quarter since covid that we have a comma in non-IBEST enrollment. Great job, Outreach and Student Services.

In construction, the storm line replacement has been completed. The Unity Center Inspection has passed. The HVAC unit in Building D has been completed. Facilities is looking at a deep clean for ducting in Building D. The Building I remodel is planned to start at the end of the month. There will be a visual change to Building I that will bring in more natural light. RTC received a grant about a year ago to add charging stations. This project is scheduled to start in February. The conduit will need to be expanded. There will be four charging stations, one of which will be ADA-compliant. These stations will be open and free to the public.

Governor Inslee's budget was announced. If RTC does not take any actions, there will be deficits through the next three years.

6. Board of Trustees

A. Foundation Liaison Report

Trustee Takamura stated that the Foundation Board meeting is tomorrow. Executive Director Carrie Shaw has highlighted phenomenal successes that help support students. Spring Quarter scholarship applications are open.

B. Legislative Action Liaison Report

Trustee Zappone will be in Olympia for the Hill Climb on January 30. Trustee Zappone also noted that our own Trustee Debra Entenman was on the front page of the Seattle Times.

C. Community Advisory Committee Liaison Report

Chair Norouzi stated that this group is still forming. Chair Norouzi and President Harden met last month to discuss the purpose of the committee, the composition of the community, and how this body will intersect and interact with the Foundation Board TAFs and the community.

7. Meetings

A. Special and Regular Board Meeting – February 19, 2025

The next regular Board meeting is February 19, 2025, at 3:00 P.M.

Trustee Takamura thanked President Harden and VP Jackson for their work today and expressed appreciation for the Board's discussion.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, Vice Chair Cooper motioned to adjourn the Board of Trustees meeting at 4:40 P.M. Trustee Takamura seconded, and the motion carried.

JESSICA NOROUZI, Board Chair
Board of Trustees

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Norouzi', written over a horizontal line.

YOSHIKO HARDEN, President
Renton Technical College

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Y. Harden', written over a horizontal line.