Trustee: Ishan Shah

Workshop/Convention: CCLC Effective Trustee Workshop

Dates: January 23-25, 2015

Location: Sacramento, California

Sessions Attended:
1. Introduction to the Brown Act (23rd)
   a. TL;DR
      i. It turns out it isn’t so much a matter of what Brown can do for us so much as it is what Brown can do to us.
   b. Description
      i. In this session, an attorney from a law firm that sponsored the workshop gave a crash course in public meeting laws. We covered serial meeting issues, wheel and spoke, replying all to email, and a myriad of other topics intended to keep rookie Trustees from making mistakes. We also went over what happens if Trustees don’t stick to the Brown Act. This section was helpful to me as my last interaction with the Brown Act came during my time on the Student Senate for California Community Colleges, quite some time ago.
2. New Trustee Introduction to Roles & Responsibilities (23rd)
   a. TL;DR
      i. We are responsible for money, the president, employees, students, goals, outcomes, and the metric tonne of rules and regulations that go with all that. Remember how you campaigned for the chance to do this?
   b. Description
      i. Trustee McKay, of the Ventura Community College District, was my favorite presenter across workshop sessions. In this one, Trustees were given an overview of the California Community College system, introduced to the Community College League of California (and its functions), and had common terms, roles, and responsibilities defined for them.
3. Effective Trusteeship (24th)
   a. TL;DR
      i. Hand a big bag of money, and a bottle of really nice scotch, to the accrediting team upon their arrival.
      ii. Accreditation is really important, and maintaining the expected standards is always a constant, challenging, work in progress. Respect the process and make it a priority.
   b. Topics Covered
      i. This was an incredibly in-depth session so the following is a nonexhaustive list of subjects I took notes on:
         1. Board Purpose
         2. Academic Senate
         3. Ed Code
         4. Title 5
4. The Role of the Board in Labor Negotiations (24th)
   a. TL;DR
      i. Trust your negotiator in the room, don’t negotiate away from the table, speak
         in a Georgian accent, and rap your knuckles twice on the desk when you’re
         done. Note: Do not goad the opposing negotiator into punching you in the
         face.
   b. Description
      i. A panel of negotiators and Trustees spoke about what a delicate process
         negotiations are, and, most importantly, about the importance of not
         undermining your negotiator. They explained collective bargaining at a very
         high level and defined the meaning of good faith negotiations and sunshine
         clauses.

5. The Board’s Role in Fiscal Policy (24th)
   a. TL;DR
      i. Money, money, money, money...moneeeey!
   b. Description
      i. In this session, Trustee McKay covered annual budgeting, fiscal reporting,
         audits, Chancellor’s Office involvement in finance, and a number of other
         fiduciary matters involving Community College accounts. She underlined the
         importance of data driven decisions, and understanding what Trustees can
         and cannot control with regard to the economy and college finance.

6. The Board and the President/CEO (25th)
   a. TL;DR
      i. Trustees are the Electoral College. You know, besides being completely
         useless and outdated!
   b. Description
      i. In the final session of the workshop, we learned about the nature of the
         Board/CEO dynamic. We covered selection, interaction, support, and the
         particular importance of the Board Chair-CEO relationship.

Events Attended
1. New Trustee Reception (23rd)
   a. One of my favorite events of the trip, I found the New Trustee Reception afforded
      participants a great opportunity to interact with other Trustees. I met one Trustee in
      particular at this event, Trustee Zurich Lewis of Cerritos Community College
      District, with whom I had a terrific conversation. Being around the same age, we
      both had the opportunity to talk about what sort of advantages and disadvantages
      come with that. I am still in touch with Trustee Lewis, and I have this reception to
      thank for this new professional contact.

2. Lunch with Dr. Browning (24th)
   a. Lunch with Dr. Browning was a good chance to take a bit of a break from the
      in-depth concepts from the gruelling morning sessions and get to know the President
a little bit better. It was also one of the more educational lunches I’ve ever been a part of.

3. Dinner with CCCT Board & Chancellor Harris (24th)
   a. Chancellor Harris gave a terrific presentation followed by an equally terrific dinner, purple broccoli notwithstanding.

This workshop was very informative. It provided a solid foundation of information on which I hope to build. It gave me a great opportunity to interact with a number of Trustees with a wealth of experience and knowledge. I sincerely appreciated the opportunity to attend it.

Respectfully,

Ishan Shah
Trustee, OCCD