



## DIESEL TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

FRIDAY, NOV. 13<sup>TH</sup>, NOON VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

### **I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 12:04 P.M.**

### **II. ATTENDEES**

Terry Craig, ERS West  
Johnny Krause, DSU Peterbilt  
Bryce Lemmons, Signature Transport and Interstate Wood Products  
Phil Martin, Foster Farms  
Lucas Richardson, Swanson Bark & Fuel  
Kerry Tuck, DSU Peterbilt  
Lynell Amundson, LCC  
Jim Dillinger, LCC  
Tamra Gilchrist, LCC  
Steve Pattison, LCC  
Barry Walther, LCC

### **III. AGENDA ITEMS**

#### **a) Updates from LCC**

Enrollment, class schedule, CDL Simulator, Restart Grant

Tamra Gilchrist shared with the group that LCC's Diesel Technology classes are operating in a hybrid model with much of the coursework occurring online and then small groups in the lab on alternate days and times. A mitigation plan was developed in response to COVID-19 that involves extra cleaning of stations, desks, door handles and requires temperature checks each time students and staff enter the building.

Enrollment is down 18%, which is an improvement from the initial enrollment that came in at 30% below last fall. LCC conducted an outreach campaign to students letting them know that classes were reopening and as the quarter start got closer more students enrolled. LCC is finding that many students are attending part-time due to issues they are having to work through due to the pandemic, including many with children who are schooling at home.

Barry Walther shared that first-year student enrollment is down partly due to technology issues but also resistance to online learning. Students who enroll in the vocational trades certificates and degrees tend to be hands-on learners. He told the group there are eight to 10 students in second year classes which is as many as are allowed due to social distancing rules. Students are in the lab two days a week. He does expect to see an increase in enrollment winter quarter when students have completed basic shop skills they are taking now enroll in the diesel skills specific courses.



Winter quarter classes will be electrical systems and engine rebuild.

Bryce Lemmons asked about social distancing practices while in the lab. Barry said students are required to wear masks and instruction is one-on-one and students aren't allowed to work in teams. They haven't found anything to wear as hand covers that work with skills practice so students are required to wipe down equipment as they leave an area and then wipe prior to starting. Tamra added that LCC purchased individual tool kits so that students each have their own. Bryce praised the creativity of LCC faculty and staff to get students back into the lab and working on hands-on skills.

Tamra shared information about the Professional-Technical Restart Grant offered through the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. LCC's application included elements needed to restart or expand early childhood education, nursing, and diesel technology, including Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training and certification. LCC hasn't been able to offer CDL since March due to COVID-19 and social distancing orders. With Restart Grant funds LCC will be able to have additional driver trainers and truck operating to accommodate fewer students allowed in any truck at one given time. LCC will put guidelines into place for operating CDL that meets Department of Health and Department of Licensing requirements.

The CDL simulator has been in place since June and LCC faculty and staff participated in a week-long training. Jim Dillinger has incorporated the simulator into his coursework and Barry has plans to use some of the modules in his courses as well. Tamra thanked advisory members for their contributions toward the CDL simulator and LCC shared with members that the college will be scheduling opportunities for industry partners to come to campus and explore the simulator's capabilities. Bryce said the Signature Transport management team is definitely looking forward to exploring the features of the CDL simulator.

Bryce asked how LCC will be incorporating simulator into the CDL program. Simulation cannot replace all of the time required in the truck but will help alleviate wear and tear by getting students better prepared before getting into a truck. There may be some of the training time that can be counted through simulation but LCC needs to confirm that with the CDL Program at the Department of Licensing. Simulator will also be a remediation tool that driver trainers can use.

## **b) Industry partner updates**

Business and industry partners will share information regarding their current status and how they are working during the current environment.

Phil Martin said Foster Farms has been working all along and did not stop any operations due to COVID-19. One of its plants in California did experience some workforce issues when some employees chose not to work due to the pandemic. Otherwise all plants have been working as usual.

Terry Craig said ERS West also hasn't missed any work. They have implemented wellness checks upon entering the store and have barriers set up to observe social distancing. Masks are required by employees and customers entering the store. Otherwise the business has been operating non-stop.



Kerry Tuck said this quarter started out strong for DSU Peterbilt with parts and sales hitting record numbers and thanks customers including the college for their continued support.

Johnny Krause is in the service department at DSU and said his department has been hard. First they experienced a record month and then experience their worst month. They do see business picking up a little bit recently.

Lucas Richardson said Swanson Bark & Fuel has experienced a 300% increase in sales. They are considered an essential business and requests have exploded. He suspects that with so many people confined to their homes due to COVID-19 they are taking on improvement projects and requests for landscaping materials have gone through the roof. Employees are working overtime and the biggest challenge is bringing on new employees. Restrictions due to the pandemic make it difficult to interview, train and maintain social distancing. If anyone shows a sign of sniffles that can send the business into lockdown.

Bryce Lemmons told the group that Signature Transport has paused hiring and onboarding until they could figure out how to mitigate health screening. Two of their facilities experienced down time but have recovered. Operating in the shop has been the most difficult.

### c) LCC updates and next steps

Plans for Winter Quarter 2021

Tamra told the group that winter quarter will function much the same as fall and that it looks like spring will be operating the same. LCC is looking for ways to expand and offer more time in the lab and hopes to see spring open more.

She added that COVID-19 came at a particularly difficult time as the college was also in the midst of switching its internal management systems to ctclink which has affected financial, student enrollment, and human resource functions. Schedules have to be developed much more in advance and student services are busy helping students learn to navigate the new system.

## IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Jim Dillinger shared with the group that LCC currently offers an air conditioning class but its main focus is on automotive. He would like to expand into diesel heavy equipment and air conditioning maintenance on refrigeration trailers. LCC has received donation of refrigeration trailers from industry partners and has heard the need for individuals who have the skills to maintain and repair the refrigeration systems. He also noted that air conditioning systems in heavy equipment differs from what you find in passenger vehicles.

Advisory board members unanimously supported development of the training. Both Bryce Lemmons and Terry Craig said it is really hard to find individuals who can repair AC. Johnny Krause also said individuals with this skill would have an advantage when applying for a mechanic position. Phil Martin said almost every truck Foster Farms runs



has an AC system and refrigeration unit and it's difficult to find mechanics with skills to maintain and repair.

**V. PROGRAM OR COMMUNITY EVENTS**

Programs that LCC has traditionally hosted for middle school and high school students like Try-A-Trade, STEMtastic, High Tech U, industry tours are on hold indefinitely. Virtual career fairs may be an option and is being explored.

**VI. Meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.**