

Governing Board Special Meeting (Monday, March 28, 2022)

1. SPECIAL MEETING

Procedural: 1.1 Call to Order, District Office, Room C105

Chairperson Ripley called the meeting to order at 12:33 p.m.

2. Discussion

Discussion: 2.1 Peer reviewers from the Higher Learning Commission will be meeting with the PCC Governing Board to discuss accreditation matters.

Chairperson Ripley introduced Dr. Benjamin Young and Dr. Ron Ramming, two peer-reviewers from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

HLC assigned Dr. Young and Dr. Ramming to get additional feedback today from the Board members and employees of the college after HLC received several complaints against Pima Community College.

Dr. Young's first question to the Board was what major events brought the Board before the peer reviewers today.

Chairperson Ripley responded by saying that the Board is here today because there were letters written to HLC by two Board members requesting that something be done by HLC.

Dr. Young clarified that HLC received a total of five different complaints with similarities. Although the College wrote a thorough response to the complaints, HLC recommended that a visit was necessary and assigned a team to come onsite to collect feedback on the Criteria 2C core component.

There was a discussion between Dr. Young and Chairperson Ripley about the number of letters written and the nature of the complaints. Dr. Young said there were similarities to the first couple of complaints and one was supplemental to the first complaint. Then there were two individual complaints dealing with a former employee. The other two dealt with a community advocacy group and then with a member of the Board; there was a supplemental document to that one specifically. Dr. Young added that HLC received two additional letters regarding a member of the Governing Board and one written by a former employee. Dr. Young noted that he and Dr. Ramming identified four areas of focus that could address all of the concerns in the five letters.

Board member Garcia offered to speak first. Ms. Garcia noted she received complaints from community members about the Board not being autonomous in decision-making and allowing people outside of the college to influence Board members. Ms. Garcia reported personally receiving complaints from community members and reminded the Board that members of the community are the Board's constituents. Ms. Garcia alleges that one of the Board members received a complaint in February, conducted an investigation, and responded to the complaint without informing the other members of the Board. She noted that the relationship between the College and Board is not transparent. She reported that this particular Board member did not follow the process and she is concerned that the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Chancellor are making decisions alone.

At this point, Dr. Young felt the discussion was getting off track. Dr. Young suggested having the group move on to the next question. He reminded the group that HLC assigned the peer-reviewers to gather facts. Dr. Young asked Chairperson Ripley if the Board members could be more "succinct" in their responses because there were several questions to get through.

Board member Gonzales asked if the majority of the complaints were from employees. Chairperson Ripley noted that she and possibly the other members of the Board are confused about the number of complaints HLC received. Ms. Ripley explained that the Board is aware of three letters, not five. Dr. Young clarified that the Chancellor and ALO (Accreditation Liaison Officer) received two additional letters on either March 11 or March 18. Ms. Ripley noted that because the Board only meets once a month, and their next Board meeting is in April, the Board has not been able to discuss additional letters. Ms. Ripley also noted that for any complaints or concerns that come to Board members, their first obligation is to forward them to the Chancellor, the Board's single employee. The Chancellor then sends them to the correct leadership team member, perhaps Legal Counsel, Deans, Human Resources, or Office of Dispute Resolution. Ms. Ripley said she believes that all Board members are following the process, but if someone here is questioning this, we need to address it.

Board member Clinco noted that the initial question from the peer-reviewers is asking why the Board is here today. Mr. Clinco said that over the past two years, the Board has been experiencing some divisiveness. He added that there are problems with some individual Board members not following the policies and procedures that the institution has established, and he noted that the complaints are an example of that. Mr. Clinco said there were complaints brought forward that did not go through the proper process. He added that the Board is working very hard to provide professional development training to Board members about the complaint process. There continues to be disagreement as to how the Board handles complaints; this has divided the Board. He noted that some Board members were unsatisfied with the College's investigated complaints. These particular Board members have taken it upon themselves to send letters to HLC and other state agencies. Mr. Clinco said the Board is here today because they have reached a level of dysfunction. Mr. Clinco believes the Board is still functioning based on the core components, but individual Board members are not following the procedures and policies of the institution; this is leading to the Board being out of compliance with HLC.

Board member Gonzales asked to comment on the Board's divide. Mr. Gonzales feels that he and Ms. Garcia ask questions to be informed and that the Board needs to learn to listen because they are the voices of the community. Mr. Gonzales prefers to follow a schedule and does not like surprises. Mr. Gonzales does not blame himself for the problems of the Board's divide and dysfunction; it is the cause of the entire Board. He noted that he is an elected member of his community and speaks on behalf of his constituents, asking difficult questions that may impact [sic] stakeholders, children, and families.

Chairperson Ripley responded to Mr. Gonzales' comments. Ms. Ripley stated that the Board has meetings once a month and allowed at least a week to review all the documents, presentations, and action items prepared for the Board meetings. Ms. Ripley noted that she has never once joined an Executive Session or Regular Board meeting ever feeling she did not have enough information. Ms. Ripley added that she has no proof there is secret information given to only some Board members. Ms. Ripley said that the Board should think individually but act collectively [sic]. Ms. Ripley noted that, in most cases, the Executive Session meetings are civil; the Board seems to agree on most issues. However, at some public meetings, the Board members have been surprised by what two Board members discuss during the Regular meetings; their comments sometimes go against Executive Session discussions. Ms. Ripley pushed back on some of Mr. Gonzales' comments regarding service to their communities. She said ALL Board members serve their communities. She noted that some of the other Board members are retired, volunteer their time to serve their communities, and care very much about the families in their communities.

Dr. Young asked about professional development activities among Board members. He asked about who determines what professional development activities the Board needs. Is the Board's decision exclusively, in collaboration with the Chancellor, or everyone?

Chairperson Ripley described the intense Board member onboarding process, which involves two days of meeting with different members of leadership and departments to become familiar with the College. Ms. Ripley also mentioned that the College offered her many opportunities for professional development with subjects on how to be a good Governing Board member. Some examples of the training were through the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) and the Association of Governing Board (AGB), for instance. Ms. Ripley said that, during the pandemic, Board members had access to reading materials and virtual conferences. Ms. Ripley added that the Board holds an annual retreat during which Board members meet together for two days to discuss the strategies and goals for both the Governing Board and Chancellor. Ms. Ripley mentioned that recently we retained the services of AGB to help us "be the best Board we can be."

Dr. Young mentioned that the Board provided good evidence of professional development but asked how the Board decides what professional development activities are needed. What does the Board do specifically to make these decisions?

Board member Garcia responded by saying that she feels the Chancellor makes those decisions for the Board. Ms. Garcia agrees with Ms. Ripley about the opportunities available for Board members but disagrees with the agreement recently to bring in AGB. She reminded the Board that ACCT came to the College to provide professional development training for the Governing Board to tell them how to be better board members. Ms. Garcia said the Board did not vote on this. She believes the Chancellor and Chairperson agreed on it without the Board's knowledge. She said this decision was misleading because she was under the impression that it was Board development, but then the Board was told it was to prepare the Board for the HLC visit. Ms. Garcia believes it was an intrusion into a process already in place. Ms. Garcia was confused about what AGB could do to help with the HLC visit. Her concern was that "they" brought in AGB attempting to align the Board members with what they are doing. Ms. Garcia added that it was decided to ask Narcisa Polonio, formerly with ACCT, to speak to the Board members individually, but that Ms. Garcia had not agreed to it.

Ms. Garcia directed her next question to Board members and asked if they voted for all of this. Chairperson Ripley responded by saying that the Board did agree and that bringing in these organizations was only to help the Board and that there was never an ulterior motive. Ms. Ripley said Ms. Polonio interviewed each Board member individually, determining how the Board could work as one. Ms. Ripley added that the Board is trying to be better and that she does not understand why Ms. Garcia thinks that something insidious is going on.

Board member Hay added that she has been in education for a long time and always looks for improvement opportunities. She reported that when the idea came up to bring in AGB to help the Board collectively, she thought it was a great idea. Dr. Hay said that she remembered Ms. Garcia saying here we go again when the Board decided to bring in AGB. Dr. Hay said not all Board members voted to bring in AGB but that it was a good idea.

Board member Garcia added that the Chancellor is the one who recommended the services of AGB. Dr. Hay responded by saying that the Chancellor knows who to go to for advice, input, and development. The Chancellor knows the field and knows who to go to for advice on becoming better Board members. The Board asked the Chancellor if they should bring in ACCT or AGB. The group decided on AGB. Dr. Hay said it made perfect sense to do that.

Board member Clinco added that each Board member attends conferences at ACCT and HLC. In addition to that, the Board brought in ad hoc educational opportunities. For example, there seemed to be a misunderstanding of HLC's role, the duties of the ombudsman, and the complaint process. Mr. Clinco explained that the Board had a Special Meeting with the HLC Liaison and State Ombudsman to provide additional education. Over time, as issues began to emerge, the Board Chair and Chancellor would bring them up to the Board to help find someone to provide additional education.

Chairperson Ripley added that there are only a limited number of professional development organizations to assist, and the Board has used most of them. The Board also uses the services of outside counsel for assistance. For example, the Board hired an attorney to assist with reviewing the Board bylaws. She added that going to the Chancellor for suggestions was the right thing. There was nothing insidious about asking AGB to help. Ms. Ripley noted that AGB wrote a very objective report on what the Board needs to do. It did not go anywhere beyond that.

Dr. Young suggested moving on to the next question related to personnel and Human Resources. Dr. Young asked if the Board is the only entity that can make full-time faculty and staff appointments at PCC. The Board members seemed confused with the question and asked Dr. Young to restate the question. Dr. Young asked if this Board is the responsible body for making appointments for full-time faculty and staff.

Chairperson Ripley first responded with no and asked if this question had to do with hiring. Dr. Young responded with yes and asked if the Chancellor makes recommendations to the Board. Board member Clinco said the final contracts are approved, as part of the consent agenda, on an annual basis as a recommendation from the Chancellor. Mr. Clinco added that the Board is not involved in the day-to-day aspect of any hiring. Dr. Young noted that he was hopeful that this one question was to be simple to answer, but it seems

like it is not. He added that in the HLC response, the College spelled out very clearly the processes and procedures for hiring employees, contract renewals, and dates the Board takes action. Mr. Clinco added that the Board does not sit on any hiring committees or interview anyone. Contracts come to the Board on an annual basis for final Board approval. Dr. Young said he is trying to ascertain that the Board has final approval.

Board member Garcia responded by saying the Board does not have final approval. Dr. Young asked her to clarify briefly. Ms. Garcia said that the College hired an HR person recently. There were several interviews and the Board had the opportunity to view forums to find out about the candidates' qualifications. Ms. Garcia believes Dr. David Bea, Executive Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, hired the HR person. Then that was it. She said that the yearly contracts that the Board approves include every single faculty member, but the Board does not have the last say on whom the College hires. Ms. Garcia said, for instance, that the Board did not make the final decision on hiring for the HR position. Dr. Hay responded by saying that this responsibility is delegated to the Chancellor and is not the role of the Governing Board. Board member Garcia agreed. Dr. Young's final note was that he just wanted to get to the answer.

Dr. Ramming asked what the Board's process is for handling legal matters. Chairperson Ripley responded by saying that the Board has Legal Counsel, Jeff Silvyn, and the Board goes to him for legal advice. Board member Clinco noted that if questions come up in a Regular meeting, the Board adds these items to the next Executive Session agenda and discusses them with Mr. Silvyn present. Mr. Clinco noted that things come forward to the Board members in different ways; if individual Board members have a concern, they can reach out to the Board Chair or Mr. Silvyn directly. Mr. Clinco said that all matters come through the General Counsel and the Board receives answers through Executive Session.

Board member Gonzales asked to comment. Mr. Gonzales said, about the full Board access, he does not believe what Mr. Clinco said is accurate. He believes that a couple of the complaints and grievances from ex-directors or administrators have come forth, but "we" have no knowledge of them and found out about them afterward. Mr. Gonzales disagreed with Mr. Clinco's comment about having full Board access. Mr. Gonzales noted that he is very disappointed when "we" hear information after the fact. For example, the employee is now gone and had contact with some Board members without the full Board's knowledge. Mr. Gonzales noted that this goes against policies and procedures.

Dr. Young asked the Board what they consider is the number one student success goal for the Chancellor. Board member Garcia said enrollment and graduation. Dr. Young asked the Board if he could ask the question and then wait for a response from the Board Chair for the initial Board response, then Ms. Ripley could assign a Board member to answer the question. He said this should help him get through the questions quicker. The Board members agreed.

Ms. Ripley agreed with Ms. Garcia's statement that graduating is important. She added that giving students the tools to graduate is also very important. For example, the Chancellor and Board approved providing students with laptops throughout the pandemic and access to grants to pay for tuition. Dr. Hay added that having well-paid faculty and staff available is important as well.

Mr. Gonzales asked to comment. He said that enrollment and providing resources to improve enrollment are important, but accessibility is equally important. Mr. Gonzales believes the Board needs to reach out more to the Hispanic community to increase enrollment. He has heard from administrator reports that enrollment numbers have been "spiraling down" even before the pandemic. Mr. Gonzales has asked since day one for information on specific populations of the Native American Tribes related to students and faculty. Mr. Gonzales would like to see the College more engaged in this area. Dr. Young interrupted and said that we must move on to the next question.

Dr. Young said that the peer reviewers looked at a draft of the Board's Fall 2021 to Spring 2022 Strategic Goals and Priorities. Dr. Young asked for the Board to walk them through how the Board progressed on those goals. Board member Ripley asked to see a copy of the strategic goals because it is a very in-depth document. Dr. Young provided Ms. Ripley with a copy. Dr. Young reported that the peer reviewers took note of the number one priority of strengthening Board effectiveness. Chairperson Ripley said that the Board became aware of the divisiveness and understood that something had to be done to help the Board work collaboratively. The Board also understood that they needed to be transparent. The Board decided to live-stream public meetings and have them recorded, to have documents prepared and out in the open, continue to strengthen communications and seek out professional development training. In addition, the Board has scheduled monthly study sessions to educate themselves on a wide range of topics.

Board member Clinco said that the Board strives to strengthen Board effectiveness, but they have not completely succeeded. There continues to be an issue with some Board members not entering into a dialogue with the Chancellor, on a one-on-one basis. Mr. Clinco said that the majority of the Board does this regularly. For those refusing to do so is causing a communication breakdown. This practice is preventing the Board from reaching this goal. Chairperson Ripley agrees that this is an ongoing problem and an area the Board needs to improve. Ms. Ripley believes the Board is getting there, but she is now asking the Board to please pick up the phone and give the Chancellor a call or email him. She added that the Chancellor's door is always open. Ms. Ripley believes that direct communication is pertinent.

Board member Clinco said he would like to cover the rest of the Board's priorities. Mr. Clinco feels the Board has made great progress on a number of goals. The Board is currently reviewing its bylaws with outside counsel at this time. He added that the Board has established a new Board committee to help increase enrollment. The Board continually monitors and oversees the financial aspects through monthly Board reports and through the Finance and Audit Committee. Chairperson Ripley added that the Board receives monthly financial reports in the Board packets.

Dr. Young reported that the peer reviewers reviewed the Chancellor's evaluation and saw some of the feedback. The evaluation comments said the Chancellor was working on improving one-on-one meetings with the Board.

Dr. Young asked if Board members equally have access to the Chancellor and his leadership team. Chairperson Ripley said all Board members have access to the Chancellor, but the Chair and Vice-Chair meet with him more often. She said that when she started on

the Board, she took advantage of monthly meetings with the Chancellor and sometimes met with him twice a month. She noted that all Board members have equal access to the Chancellor, but must schedule those meetings.

Board member Garcia asked to comment about having equal access to speak to the Chancellor; she agreed that they do, but when it comes to meeting with administrators, they do not. She noted that the Board must go through the Chancellor; he grants permission to meet with administrators and typically attends those meetings. Ms. Garcia reported that she was told not to contact administrators with questions but to contact Mr. Silvyn, the Board Chair, or the Chancellor.

Board member Hay added that the Board has learned through professional development that it is good Board practice to work directly with the Chancellor, their one employee. The Board does not micro-manage and does not work with the administrators. She added they the Board should not interfere or get involved with HR issues because those issues come back to the Board to adjudicate. That is why it is good Board policy to work with our one employee, the Chancellor.

Board member Garcia added that this process only works if the response they receive from the Chancellor is honest and truthful, and "they're" not putting a spin on it.

Dr. Young decided not to take a break and continued with the questioning.

Dr. Young stated that sometimes the team notices issues in the reading and some nonverbal tension. Dr. Young feels it was magnified in one report regarding some racial/social-economic or class distinctions and leaked into Board discussions. Dr. Young asked if there is a concerted effort to withhold Board leadership roles from certain members of the Board. Dr. Young and the team reviewed the history of Board members who have been Chair and Vice-Chair/Secretary and noted that some Board members have not served in different roles. Dr. Young said there was some language in the report that said there was once a one-year term then moved to a two-year slate, and, for whatever reason, the Board found this appropriate. Dr. Young asked if there is a hidden effort, a thought, a practice, or a movement to withhold membership roles from any members of the Board. Board member Ripley said, "No, absolutely not." Board member Clinco said no as well. Board member Garcia disagreed. Ms. Garcia said, at the last Board bylaw meeting, that both Mr. Clinco and Ms. Ripley stated that Board members Garcia and Gonzales should not be in any leadership positions because of certain actions they have taken. Ms. Garcia believes, based on that statement, that there are no opportunities for them. Ms. Garcia said that even when she and Mr. Gonzales made nominations, she said she felt like it was a maneuver so that certain things would happen. Ms. Garcia understands majority rules and that this is a democracy. Ms. Garcia is upset that they made these statements.

Chairperson Ripley stated for the record that she did not make that statement. Dr. Young interrupted the discussion to see if Ms. Ripley wanted to continue to poll the Board for an answer to the initial question. Ms. Ripley responded by saying she was not polling the Board. Dr. Young apologized for misreading her actions. He simply thought Ms. Ripley was going around the room to get the Board's response to the original questions. Ms. Ripley asked for any additional comments from the Board.

Board member Gonzales asked to comment about the one-year, two-year term. Mr. Gonzales noted that he has been on the Board for three years and believes the Board has denied him the opportunity to be part of leadership. Mr. Gonzales has asked to have the bylaws reviewed and changed to a one-year term, but the bylaw review is taking a long time. Mr. Gonzales would like the opportunity to take a leadership position. Mr. Gonzales said the Board denied him an opportunity again at the last election. Mr. Gonzales wants to see new people in leadership and believes it should be by seniority. Dr. Young said he asked the question because the report contains some language that says the role of the Chair and Vice-Chair should be rotational unless voted differently. Ms. Ripley stated that the Board voted for an annual election a few years ago. She noted that there was an election, the Board voted her as Chair, and she is sure that she did not comment that any one person should not be a Board Chair. There was a comment that one of the Chair's responsibilities is to communicate with the Chancellor. If a Board member refuses to talk to the Chancellor, it would be hard to manage a college of this size. Ms. Ripley said she did not direct this comment to any one person, but Ms. Garcia may have misunderstood its meaning.

Board member Gonzales noted that the operative word is "rotational" and that does not occur.

Dr. Ramming asked the Board if the make-up of the administration, faculty, and staff is reflective of the student body. Ms. Ripley noted that Pima's student body is close to 50% Hispanic or other minority. She does not believe the staff is at 50%. Ms. Ripley said it is difficult to answer the question without data and noted that she does not have those statistics. Board member Clinco added that the Board does not have the statistics with them, but he knows that it is not a general reflection of the student body. Mr. Clinco said Arizona law restricts us on how we can hire. We aspire to achieve better representation in our staff and want to ensure that it reflects the full diversity of our community and College. Mr. Clinco said this Board has a remarkable, distinct representation of different minority groups in our community. He added that we have one of the most diverse Boards in Southern Arizona.

Board member Garcia noted that she thinks the faculty number is lower than 50%, and with administrators, it is less than that. Ms. Garcia said that more and more administrators are leaving and said there is a specific reason for them doing so. Ms. Garcia said she would leave it at that. Dr. Young asked Ms. Garcia for clarification on her comment. Ms. Garcia did not respond.

Dr. Young said his team did a breakdown of the Executive Leadership Team and provided the following information: The Executive Leadership team consists of nine males and four females. Eight Whites, two Hispanics, two African-Americans, and one Pacific Asian Islander. Dr. Young asked if the ELT data compares to the population of Pima County residents and students. Ms. Ripley believes it is more a reflection of the community rather than the student body. She again mentioned that the Board does not have the data in front of them to be able to answer correctly.

Board member Hay noted that other institutions are recruiting our leadership. Dr. Hay mentioned that Dr. Bruce Moses is one of those administrators and added that great people being recruited away to leadership positions is a badge of honor.

Dr. Young asked if there was anything, he and Dr. Ramming did not cover in the introductions that may be helpful. Chairperson Ripley said the Board's efforts are to become a better Board and perhaps someday become a unified one. Ms. Ripley wanted to reiterate that we all have the same goal in mind, which is the greater good of the College, and we do not have a choice. There are

no alternatives. A Governing Board of this type has to self-police and help one another. The Board has to grow together. We are elected officials, we cannot fire each other, and no one else can fire us, so we need to make this work. Ms. Ripley said she plans as Chair to go forward in the same manner that she has been and the same manner as her predecessor did when it comes to professional development, transparency, and communication. Ms. Ripley asked if the other Board members had any comments.

Board member Gonzales stated that he agrees that we have a more diverse Board, but it must constitute [sic] the community. Mr. Gonzales noted that we should embrace this. However, Mr. Gonzales believes a statement made on June 9th disrespected his population. Mr. Gonzales said that he was told in public that he could not advocate and should recuse himself from anything that deals with Pascua Yaqui Tribe. Mr. Gonzales did not feel good about it and felt like it disrespected him, the communities, and the two tribal nations. Mr. Gonzales added that the statement was recorded.

Board member Clinco said that the Board is divided. He did note that more than 95% of the Board votes are unanimous. The Board is split on only a handful of decisions. It has manifested through significant disagreements. What you are seeing is an articulation of that. Mr. Clinco feels that at least three Board members believe that we continue to comply with the core criteria and perhaps two who do not. Mr. Clinco thinks the tone of the answers today reflects that. He believes that the College continues to meet its core mission, we continue to provide moderate oversight, and we continue to comply despite some of the internal frictions.

Board member Garcia said that we are in violation of some of the core criteria and if a further investigation is done they will see that because it is documented.

Dr. Young asked if the Board members are committed to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan, and if so, how is that demonstrated? Chairperson Ripley said the Board is committed to the plan and will work on that continuously as individuals and as a Board. She noted that it is important to her personally.

Dr. Young said, related to DEI if there were any demonstrations to that. Dr. Young said he noticed that there are awards and recognitions, but he would like to know if there is anything that the Board could share that shows this area is trending upward. Chairperson Ripley agrees that in addition to all that, we have DEI committees, teams, and clubs that share all the information on their events. In addition to that, we have asked for a Pride Index to be conducted last year. The results were not what we wanted and were relatively low, but the Chancellor is trying to improve on them. The College reported on the Pride Index at the last Board meeting.

Dr. Young asked for the Board's general reaction to allegations or rumors surfacing related to a culture of fear permeating the institution and rumors that employees sometimes won't speak up for fear of retaliation. Ms. Ripley said that an institution of this size relies on processes and policies. If a complaint or allegation comes up, we have departments like the Office of Dispute Resolution and Human Resources that are part of the process. She noted that we do not tolerate an environment of fear, and she has had conversations with the Chancellor about this. Ms. Ripley said the College conducted surveys, specifically the Climate Survey, that the Board takes seriously. These surveys are used to root out problems.

Board member Clinco noted previous issues with HLC related to Human Resources. Since then, the College has implemented processes and institutional changes, including an online portal for employees to express their concerns, a telephone number to call, and the Office of Dispute Resolution. ODR conducts investigations internally on any complaints. The Board held many study sessions over the past few years specifically around these concerns. ODR has reported to the Board about the number of complaints they have handled, the process they follow, and how effective the department has been. ODR shared this publicly with the Board. The Board has also been very clear that they do not tolerate this type of behavior.

Board member Garcia wanted to add that when the Board leaves today, she would like to give the peer reviewers documentation to show that people are in fear when they have gone through the ODR process. Ms. Garcia believes the ODR process is not working effectively because some administrators have hidden information, including the former Board Chair. Ms. Garcia said the documentation shows this. She added that something HLC should consider is how can you take care of an issue with the administration and the leadership, specifically the Chancellor, to bring them in line with what they should be doing? Dr. Young responded by saying they have all of the information they need. The onsite visit is to gather testimony only. Dr. Young said that this does not conclude or stop anyone else from any other kinds of appeal processes, but he has to say, on behalf of the HLC, that they have what they have. Dr. Young said he appreciated Ms. Garcia and thanked her.

Board member Clinco commented to Ms. Garcia. Mr. Clinco said he has been saying the same thing every time a Board member has a complaint or information related to a complaint. The Board should contact the Chancellor, General Counsel, or the Board Chair to deliver the information in order for an investigation to be conducted. This is per the policies of the institution and the Board.

Dr. Young said that before they leave, he would like to know from each member of the Board one thing they are willing to do to try to improve Board relations. Board member Garcia asked to go first. She said that she is willing to work with the other Board members. Ms. Garcia said, at first, that she worked with the Board and that they had a good working relationship for the first two years, but it was the mistrust and the things that came out that brought her to this point. The main thing would be to work on the trust issues at all levels.

Board member Gonzales said that there is a lack of respect among the Board members. The first year he sat back to listen, take in the knowledge, and tried to get familiar with the interworking of the College. Mr. Gonzales has witnessed too much disrespect. He said it is not a good feeling to come to Board meetings to be disrespected in public and executive sessions. Mr. Gonzales noted that he has not shared this information, but it does happen. He said it is unfortunate to say, but he is being truthful and honest. Mr. Gonzales said it has been challenging but that he is here because of the people and the students. He knows he has something to contribute.

Board member Clinco believes we need to commit to better communication because that is one of the fundamental things. He agreed with Chair Ripley that there continues to be an impediment. He is not sure if COVID contributed to this or having all meetings on Zoom, but this is the first in-person meeting in a long time. Mr. Clinco said he is willing to commit to better communication and working with outside facilitators to help.

Board member Hay says she will recommit to better communication, which means listening and communicating on both sides. Also continued development for all of us.

Chairperson Ripley echoed what the other Board members said about committing to better communication. We all consider ourselves communicators, but we can be better. Ms. Ripley will be more articulate and specific. Rather than throwing out the rhetoric and accusations and generalities, I think we all need to understand the specifics of what might be going on here as far as the Board's effectiveness is concerned. Ms. Ripley vows to be patient and try to understand and communicate stronger and more frequently.

Dr. Young thanked the Board for their time and for working through some of these processes, which could be awkward at times, but he believes he has all the information he needs.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Ripley adjourned the meeting at 2:02 p.m.