



**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
February 16-17, 2022  
Dixie Lund Boardroom, Inlow Hall  
Eastern Oregon University  
La Grande, Oregon**

**Day One – February 16**

**Trustees Present:** Danny Bailey, Richard Chaves, Bobbie Conner (joined intermittently by Zoom), Karyn Gomez, Tom Insko (Ex-Officio), Bill Johnson, Dixie Lund, Tamra Mabbott, Cheryl Martin, Abel Mendoza (by Zoom), George Mendoza, Cedric Riel, Brad Stephens, Maurizio Valerio, Chris Warner

**Administrative Staff Present:** Emily Adams, Luke Aldrich, Chris Burford, Holly Chason, Vicky Hart, Lacy Karpilo, Ella Maloy, Lara Moore, Kimberly Newman, Tim Seydel, Sarah Witte

**Guests Present:** UC Chair Jeff Carman (by Zoom); ASEOU President Alexa Jamison; Ben Cannon, HECC Executive Director (by Zoom); Mark Pearson, EOU Foundation President

**Media:** None

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**Opening Announcements**

Chair Chaves called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m., announcing that this regular meeting is being held over two days to better accommodate focused engagement and discussion. A quorum was present. Chair Chaves welcomed new trustee Chris Warner to the Board of Trustees. Board Secretary Burford gave general announcements and provided an update on recent trustee appointments. Last week the state Senate confirmed two new trustees to the board, Christopher Warner and Christine Cronin. Chris Warner was appointed to serve the remainder of the term vacated by Susan Corey, so his term began immediately. Christine Cronin's term will begin on July 1. Trustees Bailey, Riel, and Valerio were reappointed to the board. Trustee Riel, who is currently serving as the student trustee, will begin a four-year term as an at-large trustee on July 1.

**Comment Section**

President's Remarks

President Insko provided a written report to the board in advance of this meeting with information on various EOU organizational changes, accomplishments, initiatives, activities, and funds received. He gave highlights from his report. Organizational changes have been implemented in EOU's enrollment

management structure, with all enrollment functions, including the EOU online team, now under the direction of Holly Chason, Associate Vice President of Enrollment Management and Institutional Effectiveness. The Department of Student Diversity and Inclusion has been reorganized in an expanded role as EOU's Center for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB). Both these organizational changes support the execution of our Strategic Plan. EOU athletics teams completed Fall term with each team's GPA exceeding 3.0. Overall, EOU student athletes achieved a 3.25 GPA in Fall term.

### Board Chair Remarks

Chair Chaves expressed his heartfelt appreciation for all the support and prayers he has received during his cancer journey. He announced that he is now cancer-free and shared about his practice of setting daily aspirational intentions during his time at the MD Anderson Cancer Center. He is carrying this practice forward and has set the intention that today will be a great board meeting. He then invited new trustee Chris Warner to introduce himself.

Trustee Warner shared that he is a native Eastern Oregonian, currently living in Portland. He has spent his career working in government, both on the federal and state level, and currently as the Transportation Director for the City of Portland. He has spent time working in Eastern Oregon and throughout the state on economic revitalization and with educational institutions. He seeks to contribute his experience and relationships to strengthen EOU, which is vital to the tri-state region.

Trustee Stephens congratulated the staff and the university for its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and successfully operating with in-person classes.

### Public Comments

Board Secretary Burford reviewed the different methods available to members of the public to comment on matters on the board agenda. He announced that no written public comment nor requests to give oral public comment were received for today's meeting.

### **Consent Agenda Items (Action)**

The Consent Agenda consisted of:

- The board minutes of the November 10, 2021 board meeting
- FY21 Financial Statements & Audit / Year-End Overview
- FY22 Quarter 2 Management Report
- FY22 Revised Auxiliary Budget
- FY22 Annual Board Performance Questionnaire

*MOTION: Trustee Martin made a motion, with a second from Trustee Riel, to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **Legislative Update**

Tim Seydel, Vice President for University Advancement, reported that the February legislative session is halfway through. He and President Insko traveled to Salem and were able to meet with people in-person at the Capitol for the first time in two years. They met with legislators, the Oregon Council of Presidents, and students participating in Lobby Day. The public universities are working together on a strategy focused on capital construction cost escalators, continued funding for the Strong Start program to support students most impacted by COVID-19, support for financial aid for indigenous students, expanding the rights of student-athletes, and development of funding needs for an equity package. EOU's specific priorities include executive appointments for trustees, securing resources for the Grand Staircase, increasing awareness for the Rural Engagement and Vitality (REV) Center, and building support for community college partnerships addressing equity issues. He reviewed some of the key bills

being considered, noting the strong focus on workforce investment. EOU is also included in a significant funding proposal to increase literacy teacher training and tutoring amongst K-5 practitioners. The College of Education is doing some great work in the area of teacher training in literacy instruction which is getting good recognition. Following his report, he responded to trustee questions. In response to a question on the state's revenue windfall and the opportunity for seeking investment, Seydel responded that we are seeking support for the staircase and facilities expansion. President Insko shared that we have a project in partnership with Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC) and Treasure Valley Community College (TVCC) focused on access and equity that we hope to advance as well.

### **Shared Governance Reports**

University Council Chair Jeff Carman and ASEOU President Alexa Jamison gave brief highlights from their written reports and responded to trustee questions. Faculty Senate was unable to send a representative to today's meeting. Trustee Valerio stressed the importance of ASEOU documenting the volunteer time that students give to the institution. Carman reported that University Council held a recent work session on the 2022 Great Colleges to Work For Survey to be released to EOU employees on March 7. They have set a target for achieving 70% participation across all employee groups and have implemented a communication campaign to encourage participation.

### **COVID-19 Response and Outlook**

Luke Aldrich, Manager of Organizational Transformation and Capital Projects Manager, and President Insko provided an update on EOU's COVID-19 Response. Efforts to help keep the EOU campus a safe and healthy environment for students and employees continue to significantly impact operations. Issues currently on the forefront are challenges with tracking and maintaining accurate pandemic data, enforcement of wearing masks at events, decisions on protocols for students returning from Spring break travels, and the many inquiries on EOU's response when the state indoor mask mandate is lifted in March 2022. Our process for evaluating and making changes to our COVID-19 protocols has not changed and this same process will be deployed in the case of future variants. We continue to engage with our local health officials and to look at the science and the guidance issued by medical and public health experts. While we strongly recommend vaccinations and boosters, we do not anticipate issuing a booster mandate. Trustee Gomez thanked Aldrich and Student Affairs for the excellent support they've provided to our students during this complicated and unpredictable pandemic environment.

Chair Chaves called for a recess at 2:18 p.m.

Chair Chaves reconvened the meeting at 2:34 p.m.

### **Annual Report and Strategic Plan Update**

Holly Chason, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Institutional Effectiveness, provided an update on EOU's progress and activities relative to the institutional strategic plan (The Ascent 2029). She noted that EOU produces an annual report that provides more detailed information and that this publication has been provided in the trustee materials. She began her presentation stating that our values and principles inform how we go about doing our work, our mission is what we're trying to achieve, the strategic plan is how we interpret our mission, and our achievement towards those targets constitutes mission fulfillment. Her presentation provided highlights on EOU's accomplishments in each of our six major strategic plan goals. From an enrollment landscape perspective, we are operating within an environment of declining enrollments, changes in federal Department of Education funding, and an approaching "demographic" cliff (decreasing number of students coming out of high school due to declining birth rates and an increase in diverse populations which often need more support). Community colleges have seen a substantial decline in headcount the last few years, which will impact our student transfer population. During this pandemic, we are seeing increases in student

enrollments in graduate programs, but undergraduate enrollment is declining. President Insko acknowledged that we have aggressive enrollment goals in an environment that is structurally pushing against enrollment growth. On a relative basis, we have performed very well but we must improve at attracting students to our institution, both online and on campus. We've got challenges, but we are up to the task. We are embracing technology, looking at how we deploy our marketing dollars, developing more relevant degrees, and growing our engagement programs to attract students to EOU.

Chason also reviewed progress on closing the gap on objectives that were identified in last year's presentation as lacking in receiving focus and resources. We have made progress in our objectives in excellence in teaching and scholarship, efficient degree attainment, and expanding revenue from alternative sources such as grant sponsorships, partnerships, and alternative uses of campus property. For the objective of being recognized as a leader in promoting rural community prosperity and resilience, we had identified the use of the Carnegie community engagement classification to be our measure. We are in discussions on whether that is a valuable measure to use for this objective. Trustee Valerio suggested identifying an alternative method for measuring our community engagement that would come from the communities we serve. Communities could develop an award that acknowledges institutions for their community support. He noted that the Ford Family Foundation is involved in community engagement in our rural area and may be a good resource.

Trustees asked questions and provided comments. Trustee Riel advocated for marketing and recruitment efforts in Tri-Cities and Boise, as these two areas are experiencing high school student population growth. Trustee Johnson asked about our strategy for leveraging our regional centers. Chason responded that our regional center staff will be transitioned toward a focus on recruitment and will work with our admissions staff to identify areas of opportunity to boost our on-campus population next fall. We are also conducting a search for an Off-Campus Recruitment Director. President Insko advised that enrollment strategy will be discussed in greater detail at the committee level. Trustee Gomez commented that our onsite program in Gresham may be an underutilized opportunity for us. The Gresham site offers a unique teacher preparation program that could see significant enrollment growth due to the large population. Trustee Valerio expressed interest in learning more about the gender gap in enrollments. Trustee Bailey asked how student feedback we receive is used in decision-making. Trustees Valerio and Stephens both noted that board and committee meetings are highly structured and they would like opportunities for extended discussions. Chair Chaves responded that trustees are volunteers and we are sensitive to how much time we are asking of the board so the meeting agendas are quite full to minimize the need for scheduling additional meetings.

President Insko asked trustees to continually consider if the executive leadership team's actions are consistent with EOU's mission, values, and strategic plan. Trustees can help by providing their perspective on whether the team is achieving the right balance in its decisions and is prioritizing appropriately. He welcomed trustee suggestions for improving the annual strategic plan update presentations, as this is an important accountability tool.

Chair Chaves called for a recess at 3:54 p.m.

Chair Chaves reconvened the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

### **Finance & Administration Committee Report & Action Items**

As the meeting was running ahead of schedule, the Finance and Administration (F&A) Committee section was moved to today. The board received an update from F&A Committee Chair Brad Stephens. He provided some highlights of the financial reports on the consent agenda.

### Ten Year Capital Outlook

Lara Moore, Vice President for F&A, gave an overview of the 10-year capital plan. Her presentation covered how we approach capital priorities, how we develop those priorities, and the process we use to determine what our infrastructure needs are. As we look ahead, we are considering what our spaces need to look like in the future, what our faculty need to provide the right kind of education, what students are demanding, and where we are headed. She advised that a more comprehensive update to our master plan is needed and we intend to engage in that effort in 2022-23. We plan to hire consultants, look further out in time, and refine several projects. We will be incorporating the strategic framework and longer-range enrollment and academic planning to shape infrastructure needs and demands. She then reviewed the status of projects in the 10-year capital plan. In response to a question from Trustee Johnson, there was some discussion on how far out the master plan amendment might look. Trustee Mabbott was very impressed with today's presentation and the capital planning process. She spoke in support of planning strategically and creating alliances with the city and other agencies. Many colleges have a university district zone with different development standards and incentives that better meet the needs of the college. Trustee Valerio, in considering Goal 5 Relevance and Interconnection, suggested that engagement with the community for input could be an element to include in our capital plan decision-making process.

### 2023-25 Capital Project Submission (Action)

The board considered the proposed 2023-25 capital project submission, which is for phase II renovations of Loso Hall. VPFA Moore gave an overview of the project and financing, with the work anticipated to commence in May 2025 and conclude by May 2028. The financing requested is XI-Q bonds, which is state paid debt. Due to the HECC's scoring rubric and the points necessary in the matching component of the rubric, EOU will need to commit a 3% match.

*MOTION: Trustee Stephens made a motion, with a second by Trustee Warner, to approve the 2023-25 capital project submission. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **EOU Foundation Report**

The board received an overview of the EOU Foundation's work during the past year and its execution on its strategic plan goals to engage, invest, and enhance. The presentation was given by EOU Foundation President Mark Pearson, VPUA Seydel, and Executive Director of Philanthropy Emily Adams. University Advancement staff and Foundation trustees have worked to create a strategic plan for the Foundation that aligns with EOU's strategic framework, specifically Goal 6, Financial Sustainability. The Foundation manages over \$21M in total assets and is awarding 310 scholarships this year to students in need of access and opportunity. 2021 was one of its most successful fundraising years to date. Chair Chaves congratulated the Foundation on its outstanding work and accomplishments. Trustees asked questions and provided comments.

In response to a question from Trustee Martin, VPUA Seydel advised that in addition to the Oregon Ag Foundation gift, we have received other large pledges in support of students enrolled in EOU's Agricultural Entrepreneurship Program. In response to a question from Trustee Johnson, Ms. Adams provided more detail on the Foundation's initiatives to expand and decentralize its operations through the creation of regional advisory councils. This serves to broaden our base of supporters and expand our visibility. President Insko spoke about the important role of trustees in support of philanthropy by serving to champion EOU's mission and make connections with individuals, companies, and foundations that are aligned with our mission. We must continue to develop more connections to engage others to help finance our work and make a transformational impact on lives.

## **Meeting Recess**

Chair Chaves recessed the meeting at 4:59. The meeting will reconvene tomorrow at 9:00 a.m.

## **Day Two – February 17**

**Trustees Present:** Danny Bailey, Richard Chaves, Bobbie Conner (joined intermittently by Zoom), Karyn Gomez, Tom Insko (Ex-Officio), Bill Johnson, ~~Dixie Lund~~, Tamra Mabbott, Cheryl Martin, Abel Mendoza (by Zoom), ~~George Mendoza~~, Cedric Riel, Brad Stephens, Maurizio Valerio (by Zoom), Chris Warner

**Administrative Staff Present:** Luke Aldrich, Chris Burford, Vicky Hart, Lacy Karpilo, Ella Maloy, Lara Moore, Kimberly Newman, Tim Seydel, Sarah Witte

**Guests Present:** Ben Cannon, Executive Director of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission; Ed Henninger, Dean of the College of Education

**Media:** None

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## **Opening Announcements**

Chair Chaves called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. A quorum was present. Board Secretary Burford gave general announcements.

## **AGB's Report to the Legislature Regarding Board Governance**

Board Secretary Burford advised that in response to a request from the Oregon Senate Education Committee, last fall the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) hired the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) to conduct a review of the performance of the governing boards of Oregon's public universities. AGB gathered information from a broad array of interested parties and submitted its final report to the legislature earlier this month. Context was given for the conditions that influenced the Senate Education Committee's request for this review. Overall, AGB's report is quite positive. It also provides a list of twelve recommendations for governing boards and a list of seven recommendations for statewide education leaders.

Trustees were invited to offer their principal takeaways from the report. Trustee Gomez asked about the processes we have for responding to public comment given at board meetings. She recommends that the board be informed if comments received from the public have been referred to an office so if she is questioned about it, she will be aware. Burford outlined the informal practices used for responding to written comment. Trustee Johnson found the AGB report very interesting, noting that EOU is performing well, and in almost all cases, is doing what is recommended for the universities. The recommendation for inter-institutional activities between the boards is compelling and doable and he looks forward to progress in this area. He is interested in learning more about the recommendations for the legislature and the executive branch in providing greater transparency in how they nominate and appoint trustees. Burford responded that he is skeptical that the recommendation for a broad statewide process for selecting and vetting trustees would result in better trustee selection for our institution. President Insko stated that it is his understanding that Senator Dembrow, Chair of the Senate Education Committee, is reviewing AGB's recommendations. If these recommendations were implemented for the universities, it would be inconsistent with the appointment process of all other Oregon boards and commissions. He also noted that there is a representative group, the Senate, that approves the Governor's appointments, which AGB may not have been aware of. Trustee Stephens commented that

he was very reassured by this report as it shows that EOU is already doing most of what has been recommended. He is very interested in the university boards receiving regular education and professional development, having increased exposure to students in the education process, and opportunities for informal gatherings with stakeholders, particularly faculty. Trustee Valerio is interested in learning more about how university shared governance works. To close, President Insko shared that the Oregon Council of Presidents (OCOP) will be discussing the role it can play in helping to convene trustees together from across the universities. He also pointed out that in designing our board meetings, we strive to combine them with other events and to create opportunities for engagement with stakeholders and community members.

### **Higher Education Coordinating Commission Report and Discussion**

Chair Chaves gave introductory remarks, noting that presentations were received from a HECC representative at each of our January committee meetings providing highlights of the HECC's draft evaluation report of EOU. He then welcomed Ben Cannon, Executive Director of the HECC, to provide the board with an update. A near-final draft of the HECC's evaluation of EOU was included in the meeting materials, as well as a two-page summary. Cannon advised that ORS 352.061 requires the HECC to conduct annual evaluations of public universities in Oregon according to specific statutory criteria. The HECC's approach is to assess the university's contributions to statewide goals for higher education. He then provided a high-level overview of the findings in its evaluation of EOU. This was a generally positive evaluation of EOU that builds on progress that the university has made over the last several years. He highlighted the significant improvements in EOU's overall financial position which was measured through a series of ratios that combined to create a composite financial index. Part of this is due to the infusion of federal resources that are one-time dollars. There remain questions about long term sustainability of EOU's finances, which is true for the other universities that were evaluated this year as well.

He advised that there is real interest and openness on the HECC's part to work with university leaders to reconsider the approach that the HECC takes to these evaluations going forward, which could potentially involve going back to the legislature to seek a change in the law. He then invited comments and questions.

Chair Chaves highlighted EOU's gradual improvements to its financial position. He agreed that the long-term financial sustainability of Oregon's public universities is not guaranteed and that a coordinated effort to approach the legislature to advocate for support of higher education is needed. Both Chair Chaves and Trustee Martin recognized President Insko's leadership in EOU's improved financial position. Trustee Johnson welcomes these evaluations and the transparency they provide and feels the report is a fair evaluation. He then asked how the legislature is going to use this information. He noted that the composite financial indexes are compared across the institutions, but comparison data in other areas, such as completion rates, are not provided. Cannon responded that these evaluations were intentionally developed to not emphasize relative performance across the institutions but to evaluate each institution against its own mission. He noted that the HECC produces much more in-depth student progress and completion reports called snapshots which provide a format that more easily supports comparisons across institutions. There is likely a value to universities for side-by-side metrics which could inform conversations among trustees and university leadership. Trustee Gomez highlighted that EOU's tuition and fees have increased 45.4% over the last ten years and that tuition affordability and university financial sustainability are important issues that need to be addressed. Trustee Valerio commented that the report seems to disregard EOU's rural location and its focus on serving rural areas and suggested that the context in which we operate may be a useful addition to the evaluation. Trustee Mabbott commented that the report does not adequately acknowledge EOU's rural role and emphasis

on access and affordability. In response to a question from Trustee Warner, Cannon advised that the HECC will be engaging with the universities and other stakeholders on ways to improve these evaluations, which may require going to the legislature to propose changes to the statute.

### **Governance Committee Report & Action Items**

Governance Committee Chair Dixie Lund was unable to attend today's meeting. In her absence, Trustees Mabbott and Valerio provided comments. Both spoke in support of the action item coming to the board from the Governance Committee, providing some highlights of the committee's process and deliberations in proposing a Board Statement on Diversity and Equity. The committee feels it is important for the board to have such a statement, with the understanding that it can be amended going forward as improvements are suggested. Trustee Valerio stated that the committee is presenting a powerful one-page statement that introduces an equity lens process into all future proposals coming before the board. This invites a new way of doing things that puts equity into action. The Governance Committee unanimously recommends approval of the proposed Board Statement on Diversity and Equity.

#### Board Statement on Diversity and Equity (Action)

Board Secretary Burford briefly outlined the various components of the statement, noting that the board will be engaging regularly in DEIA conversations through the equity lens process and the annual DEIA progress report and training. Trustee Abel Mendoza expressed that while this is a good statement, it fails to affirm the important values that we already practice. In looking at it from a student perspective, the statement is inadequate and is missing some important elements. The missing elements he identified are summarized below. He suggested taking additional time to develop the statement with it going to all three committees for input.

- A strong commitment to equity in student success is a governing principle of EOU, yet the statement does not link itself to that principle.
- The statement should reference EOU's commitment to student access and opportunity, as reflected in our decisions about tuition and fees over the past many years.
- The statement should include a commitment to inclusivity and creating a welcoming environment for all of our students – that all of our students are important to us.

Trustee Gomez commended the Governance Committee for presenting a proposal for the board's consideration. She is pleased that the proposed statement includes an equity lens element. However, she would like to see a more robust document and recommended that the equity lens portion receive review and input from those with expertise and lived experiences in diversity. She encouraged the board, at a future opportunity, to seek input from a broader group to receive recommendations for improving the statement. She also inquired whether those presenting proposals to the board will have the expertise to provide thorough answers to the equity lens questions. Lastly, she suggested that the board review this statement each year to determine if the Governance Committee should consider possible revisions.

Chair Chaves thanked the trustees for their input and suggested some possible next steps. He then invited a motion to approve or table this proposal.

*MOTION: Trustee Stephens made a motion, with a second by Trustee Gomez, to approve the proposed Board Statement on Diversity and Equity. With one nay by Trustee Abel Mendoza, the motion passed with a majority vote.*



Chair Chaves called for a recess at 10:27 a.m.  
Chair Chaves reconvened the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

### **Academic and Student Affairs Committee Report & Action Items**

Academic and Student Affairs Committee Chair Bill Johnson provided an update. He noted the strategic plans being developed at the department and college level. He recognized the college deans for their innovation and creative ideas, some of which lead to new programs, which is what we will hear about today.

#### New Academic Program: Master in Healthcare Administration (Action)

The board considered a proposal from the College of Business to establish a Master's degree in Healthcare Administration to begin Fall 2022. Provost Witte presented some key aspects of the program. This online only degree combines graduate business and highly focused healthcare leadership principles, systems and practices, with a specific focus on the unique challenges facing rural healthcare enterprises. Employment of medical and health services managers is projected to grow 32% in the next decade, much faster than the average for all occupations. Projected enrollments in the first year are 20, moving to 50 in the second year. Dean Henninger provided highlights of the external review which was received this morning and is required by the HECC before submission to the Provost's Council. Responses were provided to trustee questions.

*MOTION: Trustee Johnson made a motion, with a second by Trustee Mabbott, to approve the proposed program for a Master's degree in Healthcare Administration. The motion passed unanimously.*

#### **FY22 Presidential Compensation (Action)**

Chair Chaves presented his recommendation for President Insko's compensation for fiscal year 2022:

Base Compensation: 2.5% salary increase, retroactive to July 1, 2021

Goal Attainment: One-time award of \$10,000.

Meritorious Achievement Award: One-time award of \$6,000.

In developing his recommendation, Chair Chaves followed the process outlined in Board Statement No. 7, Presidential Evaluation. He briefly reviewed the process he engaged in, the information and data he considered, and his rationale for formulating his proposal. He noted the laudatory assessment of President Insko's leadership in AGB's Comprehensive Presidential Assessment Report. In total, the proposal results in President Insko's FY22 salary being the same as his salary in FY21.

Discussion followed with trustees asking questions, giving comments, and praising President Insko for his abilities and accomplishments. Most of the questions focused on presidential compensation comparator data and the practice of giving one-time awards. Trustees Mabbott and Stephens both shared their discomfort with the use of achievement and merit awards and their preference that presidential compensation is evaluated at the base salary level going forward. Chair Chaves responded that this will be further explored as part of the upcoming renewal of the President's multi-year contract. Trustee Johnson shared his disappointment with the proposal, noting its inadequacy and stating that this results in President Insko receiving a zero pay increase over last year, which is particularly deficient following a highly positive evaluation by AGB and during a period of very high inflation.

*MOTION: Trustee Martin made a motion, with a second from Trustee Valerio, to approve the Board Chair's FY22 presidential compensation proposal. The motion carried unanimously.*

**Adjournment**

With no further business, Chair Chaves adjourned the February 16-17, 2022 regular meeting of the Board of Trustees at 11:22 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ella Maloy.