

Welding Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

via Zoom Conference Call

March 20, 2020

8:30-9:30am

Members Present:

Ted Nelson	Fast Global Solutions (provided input prior to meeting)
Rod Paplow	AGCO Jackson Plant
Paul Nelson	New Fashion Pork
Peter Theis	Praxair
James Slipke	Rosenboom
Brian Long	Carlson Stewart Refrigeration, Inc.
Cory Schreifels	Carlson Stewart Refrigeration, Inc.
Daryl Olson	Carlson Stewart Refrigeration, Inc.
Gary Stoks	SMI & Hydraulics, Inc.

College Staff:

Don Nordstrom, Faculty
Dawn Regnier, Dean

Called to Order: 8:30am by Rod Paplow, Vice Chairperson

Welcome & Introduction: Members present provided introductions. Don Nordstrom and Dawn Regnier provided an overview of the agenda and the Welding Program course list.

Proposal to Replicate Welding Certificate at Minnesota West Granite Falls Campus Discussion: Don Nordstrom and Dawn Regnier reviewed the proposal to replicate the Welding Certificate at the Granite Falls Campus beginning Fall Semester 2020 including the anticipated expense of hiring a welding faculty member, equipment and lab upgrades to support the instruction.

Advisory Committee Discussion:

Corey Schreifels: Indicated that Carlson Stewart supports the proposal and after things return to normal may provide support to acquire equipment resources. Expressed approval for the College to help prepare quality trained employees for industry. This is an opportunity to help employers recruit students into the industry.

Jamie Slipke: Echoed the comments made by Corey. Rosenboom is a solid supporter of the Jackson Welding program and anything we can do to increase the number of trained welders for the industry will benefit all. He stated that AWS is predicting an even more serious shortage of welders in the next two years.

Rod Paplow: Expressed agreement with Jamie S. indicating that right now with the down turn in the agriculture economy production demand is lower, however, when it turns around AGCO anticipating a serious shortage and a challenge to recruit entry level welders. Also agreed that the addition of the program in Granite Falls should not impact the student recruitment in Jackson.

Gary Stoks: Indicated he is definitely for the program in Granite Falls and complimented MN West for the work being done to revive technical education with the high schools in the area and concurred that the biggest challenge it to help high school students to become interested in the trades. Excellent jobs exist but it is hard to get the students interested. SMI could hire more welders, the challenge is to get applicants to come in. Also expressed the challenge with the Build SD program and the impact that has for students to work and live in SD which does impact SMI due to the close proximity to SD. Dawn Regnier introduced the Workforce Development Scholarships in Minnesota and asked that we hold this topic until the end in respect for members that need to leave the call early.

Pete Theis: Supports the expansion of the program indicated that from an equipment supply perspective he anticipates more production welding is moving toward robotics and encouraged that MN West add robotic welding to the Jackson Program.

Proposal to Add Computer Aided Fabrication to Welding Diploma Program Jackson Campus: Don Nordstrom discussed the proposal to add a CNC Press Brake and Drill Press to enhance CNC programming and include basics of fabrication, bending, fasteners because this year there has been more interest from the students in running a machine versus being under the hood, some are also interested in the Mill Wright setting versus the production welding. Discussed that the Fabrication could replace the Metallurgy 2 credit course.

Advisory Committee Discussion:

Jamie Slipke: Indicated that he agrees with the plan to add Fabrication but need to keep Metallurgy & Materials. The knowledge about metals and metal alloys is as important as the technical skill of how to weld. The knowledge base within industry is being lost with retirements and he believes that it is important to provide that theory in the College program. As for Robotics, the CO Bots are advancing at a rapid pace and ever changing. Adding robotics would require a separate program on its own.

Rod Paplow: Expressed agreement with Jamie S. Fabrication and welding are different entities within the AGCO production operation. Press brakes within industry are tied to lasers and expressed concern that it would be tough to get the necessary materials to train for press brakes. He concurred that it is critical that Metallurgy and Materials remain part of the curriculum. Metallurgy is incredibly important especially regarding pre-heating materials, the knowledge of alloys. He also asked Don if he is using the equipment to the fullest potential regarding RMD, MIG and Pulse applications. Don responded that much of the instruction concentrates on Globular Shielding gas, C25 for Short Arc, Flux Core and reserves Pulse welding for the second half of the second semester. Rod also indicated that the Access E platform for the current welders is now being moved away from within AGCO. Don added that he has been challenged to get reps from either Miller or Lincoln to come to the College because we have not been purchasing the equipment from them.

Agreement from other members to maintain Metallurgy and continue the Fabrication topics as is currently being done.

Jamie Slipke left meeting at 9:00am.

COVID-19 Instruction Plan to resume Classes on March 30: Don Nordstrom shared the academic continuity plan for the Welding Program delivering the theory/lecture classes via Zoom and D2L for Code and Qualifications. The hands-on components for Qualifications/Code/Shielded Metal Arc/MIG/TIG/ and Pipe welding is planned for face to face. Students will be divided into two groups of 8 and 10 and come into the lab on alternating days adhering to social distancing and lab cleaning and disinfecting between groups.

Workforce Development Scholarships: Don Nordstrom and Dawn Regnier provided information about the Workforce Development Scholarships available to students in high demand career fields including Manufacturing, Healthcare, Agriculture, IT, Transportation; students eligible for \$2500 with no strings attached to live and work in Minnesota following the College completion. Pete Theis suggested that Advisory Members can help spread the word about the scholarship opportunity to employees and family members and thanked the College for supporting opportunities for the students. Information regarding the Workforce Development Scholarship will be provided to the Committee.

Meeting adjourned: 9:25am