**Ranken Technical College**

**Strategic Planning Steering Committee Initial Meeting Minutes**

**January 22, 2021 via Zoom**

The meeting was called to order by Ranken Technical College President Don Pohl. Others in attendance were Stan Shoun, Peter Murtaugh, Crystal Herron, Dan Kania, Derek Babcock, Charles Corrigan, Barbara Primm, Barbara Bragg, Michael Holmes, Mark Penny, Kathy Reeves, Neal Severn, Earnestina Fields, Jeff Pitts, Phil Evans, Pam Jackson, Mike Train, Shari Elford.

Don Pohl welcomed the committee and thanked everyone for offering their time and input. He shared his PP presentation and gave a brief introduction. Don defined Strategic Plan as a tool that provides guidance in fulfilling a mission with maximum efficiency and impact. It is done on a 5-year cycle. The theme for the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan is “Building the 21st Century Workforce”. While thinking ahead to the planning time, it reminded Don of an

Eisenhower quote: “In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.” Plans are guidelines that will embrace and adapt to changes for the future. This will be a living document, not one that limits possibilities but rather embraces opportunities. Don then showed a short video “The Future of Work: Will Our Children Be Prepared?” It reiterated the need to be ready to adapt to change quickly as the world is ever-changing.

Don turned the meeting over to Mike Train. Mike shared that he likes the planning process; most of the group has likely been involved in planning for various organizations and he is excited about the opportunity to be involved in the planning for Ranken Technical College. He feels it is important as a guide for the college.

Don facilitated group introductions, beginning with the Ranken Technical College Board of Trustee members, following with our Industry representation, Community representation, Ranken Alumni, and Ranken Technical College Employees. Stan Shoun, Ranken Technical College CEO finished the introductions and asked Jeff Pitts to give the State of the College.

Jeff Pitts stated that the trajectory of the college has been impressive. Ranken needs to continue to focus on how they do the things they need to do; making sure we are meeting the “customers” goals (customers being industry). Ranken should be moving as far away from “traditional” as possible. Ranken is in a position of strength yet can’t stop; they need to continue to keep moving forward.

Stan Shoun then gave his input as to the State of Education/Economy. He added to Jeff Pitts’ statement about traditional. Stan noted that we do still use traditional methods to some extent. The Higher Learning Commission and Federal Financial Aid requirements warrant the need for some traditional methods; as long as that is still happening, we have to be aware and comply. Stan reminded the committee that in 2019 Ranken achieved the highest level of accreditation from the HLC.

Stan’s State of Education referred to a video he asked the group to view before the next meeting: “Success in the New Economy”. The link will be emailed to the committee following the meeting and posted on the Ranken website. Stan summarized the video by saying it points out 2-3 important things relating the economy and training.

1. Demographics are shrinking- the pool industry is recruiting from is getting smaller.
2. There is still a misalignment between lack of skills of the new hires and the skill level of the retirees.
3. We need to re-think the pipeline. 75% of all workers will need retraining. It’s a workforce problem, not a job force problem. Students are feeling that they must go to university to get ahead yet haven’t really received any skills or plans to follow a rewarding career path. They accumulate student loans and are under-employed which creates issues with the debt.

Stan again asked all to be sure to watch that video.

Stan moved on to going over the Strategic Planning Process. The committee needs to keep the plans flexible. Stan told the group their job is to come up with an overall plan using research and information that will help create solutions. The Strategic Plan and Operating Plan should interface, be intertwined. We want to keep it visible, and not hide it. We will put it on the Ranken website. The group needs to remember that we must be able to measure things to verify movement. It is important to remember that we can’t fix everything; we need to be realistic about how we move forward.

Stan went over the schedule/timeline of the committee. He showed the committee an overview of the process and guidelines for completion. There is some flexibility in these dates, however, the only hard date is May 18, 2021 as that is when this Strategic Plan will be presented to the Ranken Technical College Board of Trustees.

Stan moved on to an overview of the process itself. An Environmental Scan, or survey, will be done right away. This will let the committee see how others view Ranken. It will be going out to Ranken employees, Ranken students, Community representatives, Industry and everyone on this committee. After the survey, the committee will review Ranken’s standing documents, i.e., the Mission Statement, Ranken’s purpose and objectives, a SWOT analysis as well as going over the challenges and opportunities. The committee will go to the standing committees; they will meet and talk to the group to see how things could be improved. The standing committees are 1. Student Success and Diversity, 2. Operations and Staff, and 3. Education.

The assignments will consist of items the committee will be sent, asked to review, think about and make comments, then send back. The group will keep moving on. Stan asked if there were any questions or comments; there were none.

The first assignment will be to review the Ranken mission statement, purpose statement and values. Over the next week Ranken will get them out to the committee. Please get the comments and recommendations back by January 29.

Derek Babcock spoke to the group about where to go on the Ranken website for resources and information. Go to ranken.edu/strategic planning. The process will be on the website, as well as the video Stan would like all to view. Meeting minutes will be posted as well.

Mike Train concluded that he was excited about this process and he is interested to learn more about the strategic planning at Ranken.

Don Pohl made sure everyone knew they could always reach out to him if they needed anything or had any questions. He thanked everyone for coming and the meeting was ended.