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For Immediate Release

VCC College Board Moves to Squelch Public Input

Not only is Vancouver Community College amongst the worst affected college in the BC system when it comes to higher tuition and the worst bar none when it comes to program cuts and layoffs, its Board now has the distinction of becoming even less accountable and its Board meetings even less open.

At its January meeting the Liberal appointed VCC Board members voted to insulate themselves further from the public by passing a restrictive "Board Meetings Policy."

Board member Karen Dickson in bringing forward the Policy repeatedly said that the Board needed to be able to "conduct our business." Board Chair Gordon Barefoot said the Board needed "discipline" in making its decisions.

Key changes of the policy:

- 1 The tradition of opening the meeting with "Enquiries" where anyone could stand up and ask a question of the Board will be ended.
- 2 Business conducted within Committees will not be open to the public.
- 3 The public will not be recognized with an opportunity to speak or question an issue during a Board meeting.
- 4 Written applications from the public will be required in order to appear on the Board agenda.

"The Board could not identify any problem it was trying to solve. It was simply a matter of needing more control." "Is this the New Era of open-governance?" asks Lizz Lindsay, VCCFA President.

She added, "This Board acts as if it believes it is running a private business. VCC is still a public college and if the 'transparency' the government and Board talk about means anything then there should be as much freedom as possible, not as little as possible. And what's worse, just now the community needs the Board to join with it to speak out on behalf of its programs and students. This is a slap in the face to that community."

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