



PBAK -MINUTES
May 20, 2025, at 2:30 PM
Zoom

Members Present: Lisa Vasquez, Owner, Forevers Bakery; Bonnie Brasure, Owner, Bleu Door Bakery; Rebecca Angell, CTE Culinary Arts Teacher, Vancouver Public Schools/FVHS Culinary Arts Program of Choice; Josh Svenhard, Owner, Eurobake Corp; Jesse Dodson, Bakery Consultant/Owner, Focus Bakery Solutions; Emma Vaitkus, General Manager, Farina Bakery

Guests:

Members Absent:

Labor Representative: Labor recruitment attempted

Clark College: Theo Koupelis, Dean of WPTE & STEM, Clark College; Alison Dolder, Department Chair, Clark College; Niira Krupnick, Career Services; Elizabeth Flores, Advisory Coordinator, Clark College

The meeting began at 2:30 PM, and a quorum was met.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The committee will meet next on October 28, 2025.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes from the previous meeting on October 29, 2025, were approved.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Alison discussed plans for the program to hire more industry professionals to support faculty and encourage them to teach community and continuing education classes. She shared that the program is currently undergoing background checks for two potential adjunct faculty members and that we have reviewed numerous interviews and resumes.

Alison announced that the program will host a summer camp from June 23 to 27, 2025, for systemically non-dominant students to collaborate with faculty in STEM, exploring how science relates to baking. Participants will use a 3D printer to create cookie cutters.

Alison shared that Northwest Food & Wine has donated supplies, materials, and lunch for students and their families.

Rebecca is in favor of the summer camp.

Alison shared details for the upcoming camp, currently geared towards middle and high school students. In the future, the program would like to host elementary schools.

Alison shared the highlights of the recent capstone project and thanked Josh and Jesse for participating as judges. Alison discussed the capstone project categories and displays. Alison shared the various business owners who also attended.

Jesse discussed student talent and products. Jesse appreciated the student's personality and creativity in each of their products.

Josh noted the unique risks taken and good examples of students pushing the boundaries.

MARKETING

Alison discussed that the program needs further marketing and shared past support from the IT department, which helped create instructional videos for the program.

Alison discussed a potential marketing video idea that would allow insight for people to see what it's like as a production bakery for program outreach and promotional efforts.

Josh discussed local companies, their marketing strategies, and recommended weekly engagement via social media. Additionally, Josh noted that home bakers are gaining traction for sourdough starters or smaller weekly content with tutorials.

Jesse recommended 1 to 2-minute content creation videos to gain more interest.

INDUSTRY FEEDBACK

Josh discussed tariff concerns amidst minimal flour milling. Supplies are transported 50 to 100 miles beyond the Pacific Northwest area. Canada plays a significant role in flour imports in our region and has ample capacity. The industry is experiencing a limited aspect of importing flour, facing higher prices due to the risks associated with tariffs and inventory holding.

Josh discussed that after the delivery charges increase, the risk of tariffs increases, and businesses are working towards finding different suppliers.

Josh provided updates regarding Wilcox insurance. He noted that egg prices remain high and are unlikely to decrease in the coming year, largely due to the ongoing impact of avian flu. He explained that much of the cost pressure is tied to insurance-related factors. Josh shared that the packaging stable with negotiations from China; however, sugar prices are increasing.

Emma shared that she has noticed a significant decline in sales of lower-cost pastries such as scones and hand pies. However, there has been strong growth in custom, upscale cake orders. While customers appear to be cutting back on everyday pastry purchases with their coffee, they are more willing to spend on high-end items for special events.

Bonnie shared that while sales have remained steady, rising costs are significantly impacting the bottom line.

Jesse explained that tariffs have had a major impact on equipment sales, with costs increasing by 25–50%. While a few companies still manufacture equipment in the U.S., most products are sourced from Europe and China. He noted that although investments in automation and semi-automation

Professional Baking
Advisory Committee Meeting
May 20, 2025

can help reduce labor costs, the associated changes also introduce financial uncertainty due to fluctuating equipment prices.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 PM

Prepared by Elizabeth Flores