

BECON 5/28/2021

Guests: Mark Morse, retired postal inspector, running for County Commissioner in the next election cycle.

Speaker: Dr. Robert Wilmouth, President of Rocky Mountain College

Announcements:

-Dina reported that District went well-the trolley ride around Butte was great fun. Our cooler went for \$380; The basket of homemade products that Quentin's wife made went for \$90.

-The committee sheet went around to sign up for committees for the year. You all had a whole year off from committees, so it's time to double-down. Either come to breakfast and sign up, or email Dina with your desires of how you would like to serve.

Our very charismatic and engaging speaker this morning was none other than Dr. Bob Wilmouth, president of Rocky Mountain College. Bob discussed a variety of topics about RMC.

-Bob is in his 9th year as President of Rocky Mountain College; and he is not a traditional presidential-type.

-Bob came from healthcare as a Heart Surgeon.

-He was asked to step in as president; he had been working with the PA program for the 5 years leading up to his current role, as the PA program had been in trouble.

Leadership:

-If you take leadership seriously, it is more difficult than being a heart surgeon.

-The nice part of his job is that he gets educated doing what he is doing.

-You can compete and collaborate at the same time; Bob likes to compete.

-The students are educated, not trained at RMC. They are ultimately there for a degree, not to just play sports.

-What he hopes comes out of each students' experience is that they become critical thinkers and curious.

-RMC is a Comprehensive Liberal Arts College

-RMC is a private school, and to bring in graduate programs takes a lot of money.

-They first have to ask - Is there a need?

-Secondly, they have to ask - Is there leadership? (There are a lot of rules that need to be followed, as well as accreditation secured in order to start a new program).

-Third thing...you need \$\$\$\$. They needed \$1.4M to start the Occupational Therapy Doctorate Program. They can either raise it themselves, or go to the bank. They tried for a year to raise it, and ended up needing to go to the bank.

-There is a big ROI on the program, so they are confident that it will pay off.

-Then you need space to hold the program in.

-RMC currently has Masters in Accountancy, Educational Leadership, and Physician Assistant Studies, and Doctorate programs in Occupational Therapy, and in Medical Science.

-Approximately 50% of students come from MT; 30% are athletes; the ski team is largely Swedish.

-RMC is non-profit; 85% of the money they get is driven by enrollment. Enrollment is the bottom line.

-Enrollment fluxes, but Bob would love to see an increase by 5%; this would give them 1200 undergraduate students (They currently sit between 900-950).

-Athletics is a big player, which proved difficult during the pandemic.

-RMC also gives out a lot of money in scholarships, because it also drives enrollment.

-The fresh, new look at RMC reflects a new stone entryway, with new signage and a wrought iron fence which replaced the chain link fence that was there before. Place-making is important.

-They are currently working towards building a new science building and brand-new football field simultaneously. As a community partner they are looking to have Billings Central use their turf to practice, as they need a place to play.

\*Bob fielded two questions about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, as well as the new Rocky Vista medical school coming into Billings at the end of his talk, which he diplomatically answered with a bit of presidential-speak (his words) and a resounding 'no comment.'