Electrical Technology
Fall Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

The advisory board meeting was held in the Electrical Technology classroom. The meeting started at roughly 5:35 and ended at 6:05.

- The advisory board discussed the current demographics of the program.
- I updated the board about the addition of the VTSU Electrical 1 class which I am now teaching as part of the program. This class is what any first year electrician in the state is taking.
- We discussed scholarship donations from advisory program members.
- We discussed coop and field trip ideas
- Lack of enrollment was discussed
- Asked for new advisory board members

Electrical Technology
2026 Fall Advisory Board Meeting Video Transcript

All right, so um we are here tonight for the electrical technology at RTCC's um fall advisory board meeting. And I've got uh Jim Marriam on the computer and I've got Greg Hans in the classroom. We may have some other people showing up. Um if not, I'm going to reach out to them in the future with a email. Both of you are quite familiar with my program so I don't feel like I'm going to spend a lot of time talking about my program other than the fact that the big change that I have this year is that I'm now set up with the BTSU group and I'm teaching the electrical one curriculum that they use for all first year apprentices. Nice. And and the reason why is because the state requires my program to complete one tier two IRC by the end of the year. And it's always I've always chosen the Vermont Electricians apprenticeship year one exam test out because those that go on to the apprenticeship are getting out of their year one. But in the past I found that some students don't don't always quite get the information that they think that they needed for the test. Um, and now that VTSU has such a great canvas platform, um, and they're sharing it with all the other electrical instructors in the CTE environment. Um, it just made sense that we all we're all doing this. Um, I've been really thankful for Greg because he has taught this same class, um, and he's been helping me, um, get some stuff stuff setup because I'm not necessarily a canvas power user yet. So I'm I'm really thankful for Greg's assistance. And the people at VTSU are good too but Greg's right here in the building he can swing down after school because he teaches up at the high school. And so really that's kind of the big change I'm doing this year is teaching that

class. As far as demographics go, I think I have I have, um, I don't have any students from the White River Valley School District. I've got, uh, one RU student and two students who just came to school from being home schooled and they're from the Randolph area. I've got two students from Northfield, two students from Williamstown, and then I've got like one, two, three, four, five students students from the kind of the spillover from the Central Vermont Career Center. Um, you know, one of them's from Mont Pillier, some of them are from U32, another one's from Spalding. And two years ago, Central Vermont Career Center was was at capacity and they uh told their students that they could come here. Um, they've now hired a second electrical teacher, um and I believe that after this year they'll probably they have space for all their students. Um, so I might see my numbers drop a little bit um because of that. I've had, you know, a a nice full class. I had uh 15 students last year and this year I'm at 12. So, because of them, because of their um fullness there, I've had extra students here. It's a little concerning, um I'll say with the um the Central of Vermont career center, they're they're working on a bond vote. I don't I don't know if you've been following this in the news at all. But they're looking to well, last year they tried to get a bond for some hundred million dollars to build a whole new school in Granville and that was that was voted no. Now they're trying to build a satellite campus on the U32 high schools property to expand some of their programming. Which Is this is this this is is in Spaldin. This is associated with E32. So, um the central the Central Vermont Career Center um has sending schools in their region just like we have in ours. And so if you live in like Waterberry, um East Montpellier, Montpellier, Duxberry, Spaldin, that area that part of the state, they all go to the Central Vermont Career Center. center. Oh, so Barry doesn't have a career center anymore? They do have a career center. They're trying to expand it. Oh, okay. And so, um, they're trying to expand it because they see their enrollment is has been growing. I don't know if that's necessarily true or not, um, but it seems like they're trying to, um, to grow. The other thing that's, um, So, you know, that if they get that to pass, you know, that could mean that some of the students that come here may go there instead. But really if you're in the White Rover Valley, so if you go to like South Royalton, Bethel, any of those schools, Randolph, Brainger Brookfield, Williamstown Northfield, if you go to those schools, you're supposed to come here unless we have a program that you want that we don't offer. Yes. So, we just have, you know, we've overall it seems like tech center is in general have some slightly lower numbers than we'd like to see. I hear that from other instructors around the state. And I'm not sure why that all is. I don't know if you know or not. It would just get a curiosity. Does you know, the the push towards really promoting tech center and tech degrees so to speak, the trades? Has that had any impact on for influence on people wanting to participate? I mean, we we promote pretty heavily. Um, we we were right now we're going to all of our sending schools to promote our TCC in the programs that we have here. Um, I'm just going to introduce Brandon Morris. This is the electrical teacher from Central Vermont Career Center. Um,

he and I work together really well. Um, you know, some people might think of us as competitors, but um, you know, we were we have our own students in our own regions and and Brandon and I have found that it works better to work together than to to work against each other. Um, so he's he's joining my advisory board and I'm going to be on his um and and do the same. But back to your question, um, I I think that sending schools in this day and age are struggling financially, um, and it's expensive to send their kids out of their school to come to a place like this. So, they, you know, unless it's a student who doesn't fit the normal classroom um kind of criteria, then they're they're allowing them to go, but I I do think that they're holding back some of their students. That's my own personal opinion, but um I think that's true. All right. Yeah, good good good point. Unfortunate, but good point. I mean, that it's no secret that um the average age of the tradesmen is, you know, Nearing retirement age and that there's a lot of room for new electricians and plumbers and all of that and we have people all the time coming here saying you know, I'm from PC construction. We're a large construction company. Great if you want to come work with me but just get out in the trades and work you know we we want to see more trades people. And that that's pretty much the message that we get from all of the the companies that we work with. But at the same time, um what I've been finding this year is that um at the same time companies aren't as hiring as aggressively as they were last year. And so it's it's a little bit like you say you want all these people but where's where's the jobs? You know, I've got like three seniors who are ready to go out on co-op and and they don't they don't have anybody who has a position to take them on. And it's tricky it could in the electrical business, you know, you have a master electrician and they can have, you know, a journeyman working under them and that journeyman can have one apprentice. Um, it used to be that they could have uh multiple apprentices. And so I think that's also hard. Um, the supervision of apprentices, especially a high school student, and also um the fact that I've had people say, "Well, we just don't have the time to take the time to train somebody, right? We're so busy. I don't want to take the time to have a student come on who might hold us back so to speak. Which I feel is unfortunate cuz we all, those of us who went through the trades, somebody had to stop and show us how to do these things. So, it's unfortunate." Yeah. Yeah. Brandon, what do you have to say? Um, yeah, you know, same deal. We were kind of going through the same thing and you know, that's kind of why we've talked building the uh curriculum to just keep them in house for the full year seem to be an easier route and then co-oping out a following year or a graduating senior. Um, you know, I I remember a couple years ago I had two students working for an electoral contractor and they really liked them but they were slow in work so they were were looking at layoffs and I basically told them like we we can't do a layoff or we can't do layoffs like if they're done, they're done, they need to look for a new job. And um, we were able to to terms that they could keep them busy for uh the same amount of time they'd be in the classroom. So for example, we're four hour a day, five

days a week, one day they're covered in here. So that's 20 hours that they had to complete through the week and the contractor was able to do that during their slow season. Um, so it kind of was a benefit for everybody. Um, not not knowing if that's going to fix your problem or not, but might be an alternative um to look at, you know, because that especially for those one man operations that don't have the time to teach them, let let's be honest, half of it is cost, right? So maybe maybe giving that alternative of saying, well, could you could to keep them busy during the school year for uh 20 hours a week. You know, so that way it's like, you know, hey, we got we got a service scheduled for Monday and that's where I need all hands on deck, but I don't really need you Thursday or Friday. Uh it gets rid of that big commitment and it's flexibility. Um, so we were able to make that work state-wise because they were completing the same amount of hours that would have been uh hosted in education. So, that's a possibility. The other other side of that too is, you know, you working really close to BTC. I question if an employer is putting them through second year, can you count those that hour and a half two nights a week towards that 20 hours and now you're only looking at two days of work a week? You know, with the flexibility of the slow time or the winter work or the time to train. Just keep that flexibility. It gets money in the the students' pocket. It gets them progressing in their field. It helps build a relationship with a strain of am I wasting money or am I not? And it kind of, you know, two birds one stone kind of deal. I don't know if that helps you, but that might be something you might want to look into. Because really the the thing that sometimes people don't understand is that our programs are one year programs. And so you come in as a junior and you learn all the electrical stuff and you pass the test at the end of the year. And then you come back as a senior and at least the way we do it here because we've had more room is our seniors then get the co-op job. But until they get a co-op job, we have second year students in a program that they've already completed. And the state doesn't like to see that and we don't like to see that and it's, you know, that's it's something we haven't really figured out a good way to deal with. I don't really have time in the day to, you know, create a second one year curriculum because of the one year process. And so that's kind of the some of the things that were trying to figure out is just the best way to have second years who haven't had a co-op who can't get out on co-op right away. So where Brandon's lucky, he only accepts like five students. He has a lot more first year students, but he has more of a population to pick from than than we do down here in Randolph. So that's um so that's a lot of the big part for right now is just you know making sure that I'm I'm getting good contacts that we're getting people you know there's another new electrician in Randolph Ryan Aken with the Aken Electrical Service and he's really excited to work with us but he's still you know he just got going over the summer and he's still building up his his company so those. Maybe, you know, by this time next year, he'll have enough opportunities for a student to come on. Um, I had a student last year with Cypher Electric out of Randolph. He's also on my advisory board.

Um, he couldn't make it, I guess. Uh, sent out the link at the last minute, he might pop on. Um, and so that's kind of where I'm at. Um, you know, the curriculum's all the same. We're doing all the the same kind of stuff. We teach the NCR core, Osha 10, we do the first aid CPR, which we've completed this fall. The first aid in Osha 10. Um, the other big thing that I'm hoping that I can work with my advisory board on is creating some more electrical specific scholarships. Um, and these aren't, you know, these aren't huge huge ticket things. Um, there are just little ways that I can give back to my my students who really have shown strength in the electrical trade. Um, Derek Cypher, we've we he helped create the Cypher Electrical Award where he, uh, he and I worked together to pick a junior and he puts together a little tool bag for them. Um, so that when they come back as a senior and they go out on co-op, they have some tools to get started with. And then he donates, uh, like a impact gun, screw gun kit, um, that we give to a senior as they they leave and and continue on in the electrical trade. Um, so that's another thing that we're trying to get some advisory board members to help maybe support if they can in in any way. Yeah, and then You can So, you can put me down on Peter for that. Okay. Um, we So, Norwich Norwich technologies could could put in something for that. And I can get a hold of you later on and, you know, it's like March or April is when we start to look for scholarships. Um, I also have Yeah, just hit me hit me early so I don't forget about to be honest. Okay. All right. And uh we would definitely support that. All right, great. Um, do you by chance have any interesting projects going on or coming up that maybe uh we would be a field trip opportunity? Yeah, I mean we have we have two masters, couple journeymen. a couple of prentices. So, so we have we own we own runtime solar, which is basically an O&M. Right. Operation. So, there's a lot of um work replacing inverters and doing you know service work that you know, that would be the most easy way to plug in because that's that's us self-fulfilling that work. a lot of times on our bigger projects we sub out that work and I don't want to mix you know, the sub in what we might want to do. But but in terms of things that we actually 100% control all of our runtime solar work um is something that it's interesting, you know, I'm I'm I can I'm happy to connect you and show you some projects. Right. Because you guys have stuff around the Randolph area, correct? Yeah. Um, yeah, we have stuff around the Randolph area all over central for Yeah. So we could we could find something. So that's you know, that's the other thing is my students, you know, they they like to see the projects. They don't always ask a lot of questions. Um, they may look bored, but I do feel like they get a lot of benefit when we go out on some of these sites. So that's just kind of the other thing is just getting them out there and seeing different things, getting them some even if they're not full on paid co-ops is just maybe a one or to-day job shadow where somebody locals like, "Hey, you know, like Brandon said, oh, we're we're about to, you know, pull in a 300-foot service and we could use two extra hands today, you know, having the paperwork all in place for the liabilities and whatnot just, you know, hey, two students come come to work on Tuesday." So, those are so those are

some more opportunities that I'm always looking to to provide for my students. Yeah, I think we could probably fenangle some some of those things Yeah. with you. Again, go early so that's all set up but Right. you know, we do some um, like re-powers for people, so something might have been damaged, uh, done incorrectly. And so it's not like a full out project, but it's smaller and more hands are helpful and it's in a very concentrated way, a good way to see everything that happens. Exactly. Um, do you often the top of your head, have you seen anything in through your business where maybe there's some like new and upcoming technologies or trainings that you feel that students would benefit from knowing other than what they are learning currently as a electrician's apprentice? Um, you know, what what our crew went through for training last spring was we had about I'm going to get the number wrong. 20 30 level 3 EV chargers that we own and operate. So actually our runtime team actually installed most of those. So we did from civil work to everything, um all the electrical work. We did that with the exception of the they they used ABB they had to use ABB texts to uh commission the TB chargers. So we have some of them right down in front of Town Hall in Downtown Street in in Randolph. Uh that we did last fall and then um we've done numerous over the course of the spring uh for tax reasons and now we're working with the state on another uh I don't know how many it is. Eight eight eight sites. We won't we wouldn't take all of them, but there's maybe another 15 chargers through those those sites. Great. I um I remember them working on that one in town, so that that's nice that you guys got that. Yeah. Yeah, so that's another place where that's a good all hands on deck when certain stuff has to get done. Yep. Um but you feel like what you know of the apprentices that maybe are working for your company even though they're not our students. you feel like the uh their learnings are where you would expect them to be from the at least from the electrician's apprenticeship program? Yeah, absolutely. I mean they're they're not 16, 17 years old. They're Yeah. A lot of these people, some of these people, you know, went to college and said, "You know what? That sucks." I'm going to go into the trades. Right. Yeah. Yeah. Um, so I'd say most of our apprentices are probably in their mid 20s. Right. Well, you know, hopefully, you know, we get them through here. Their first year, the second years, ideally, you know, I have some students who are on their co-op either last year or this year, they're taking the second year apprenticeship class through the state. So, they're leaving high school, you know, halfway through it. You know, and potentially in their early 20s becoming master electrician. So, that's really the beauty of this program. Uh Um, so, you know, I had a just a couple other questions here. Um, you know, we we review the state proficiencies all the time. I think that they're good. Um, we teach, you know, like I said, NCCR, we do all the principles and fundamentals of electricity. I cover smoke detectors and motors and generators, um, all the stuff about residential. I get into renewable energy a little bit. We do conduits. Something new that I'm doing is I'm trying to teach a little bit of load monitoring and I bought a basic like I think it's called Emporium. It's basically this little

device that you wire up. I wired it up in my house panel and there's an app on my phone and it you know there's six or eight circuits you can wire it to. And so I'm I'm trying to use that more technology to get them to understand, you know, how electricity is monitored and what it costs and that kind of stuff. So, um, I don't know if you can think of anything else that you think off the top of your head would be really important to be teaching in our classes right now. I wonder if you could have a conversation with uh 11 electrical go it's been so long. Sorry. Hey uh Sorry. So a long day. Sorry, come back. Come back to you. Yes. Okay. Inspector. You know oh yeah. What's going on with the inspectors? So, I haven't had a job inspecting in so long cuz I'm not doing a lot of electrical work that for permits and stuff right now but yeah, I wonder have you reached out to it? I haven't. I haven't this year. No. No, just maybe they can come. in for a couple hours and talk to you guys or Brandon, now you have uh inspectors on your advisory board? Yeah, the reason I was late is I just had to do an inspection on my own job uh here in Barry. So he's he's pretty readily accessible. Um, you know, I I have students to do a permit, like fill out a permit and see what that looks like and he comes in and does an inspection on some of their word. Um, we've done like the habitat for humanity job Uh, we did that 100%. I pulled the permit for that. That was all inspected with him, with students. Uh, we did the Granate Museum that was also inspected state level. Um, so, yeah, I I could definitely give you that that contact for him as well. And I will say one thing we started doing is we I found a way to incorporate like rib relays and you know, because I I want to do controls but I want to keep it minimal Normal. So, you know, the rib relays is a good way. It's a low stake, easy to read, uh diagnostic and you know, the outcome is super easy. So like we had it with a we were doing furnace systems and they were doing like pumps and there was an alarm system but then we had a we had a rib relay on an exhaust fan. Um, so if you can find ways, that might be something to incorporate the little voltage side. now just want to think about. Yeah, funny you mentioned that we had a the whoever the school district uses to maintain their like security cameras and fire alarms on core. They were in the building here like two weeks ago and I got them to come in and talk to the class about what they do because it's part of the electrical field that I don't really spend a lot of time talking about nor do I even really know that much about it. And some of my students were like, "Oh, that's the that that's the job that I want, you know? So I think that um, you know, that low voltage thing is, you know, control technologies and um, that whole building automation thing is is a a whole another fun side of electrical work that that I certainly should spend some more time promoting. Yeah, and we we uh, I used to work for Norse Incorporated, so we do some fire alarm. Um, I don't have a programmable panel but we do we do not programmable like an FIC or FLC older panel that I had. That that kind of is a little bit on the low voltage side too. We do a small unit on that. That might be something you want to look into. I'd be happy to help with that as well. I also have a contact with it's called Minute Man and they do security and fire alarm and they're based out of like New York,

Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. Again, just thinking about seniors or working opportunities. Yeah. Uh, more is better. So, Yeah. Yeah. Happy to share. All right. Yeah, I had I reached out. I had one student two years ago really interested in fire alarms and I reached out to Vermont Life Safety. Um, and the and the one of the owners or whatever came down and gave a presentation and he he brought us an old for a newer programmable panel. I believe like the autodialer in it. He said it had gone bad so they couldn't use it anymore, but it still worked enough for a student to wire in a bull station, a horn strobe and a smoke detector. So that that was pretty cool. Also you uh they're close fairly close to you, you might be able to reach out to to them and and get them to come in and do something with your class too. Um, I guess you know, the the other thing that um we've talked about before um and it's nice because Brandon and I work so closely or we're so close together is I'm just, you know, I'm always looking to expand our advisory board. So, you know, um if you have any other ideas of people in the area, um send me an email, you know, I I've uh reached out to some of the other electrical companies in Barry, but they they don't seem to be too interested in in joining for one reason or another. Um so that's just something else to keep in mind. It's I would really like to expand my my presence more south of Randolph because I don't think there's a lot of, you know, Hartford doesn't have a an electrical program, they have a construction program. Um, but the majority of my students are from the Mont Pillery Berry area. So my focus the last two years has been in that area. Um, but I'd like to get away from there just because, you know, Brandon's got has a lot of students in that area who that will be looking for jobs. So I don't want to take all that away from his program either. So So So there's no electrical program in Hartford? No, not at this time. A lot of people there. There are. Yeah. And there's a lot of trades needed in the upper valley. Yeah. Yeah. Um Rutlands Tech Center, they have a pretty good program now. It's kind of a it's like a they do like a half and half with plumbing or they They take the first part of the school year and they they do electrical and plumbing together and then the students kind of decide which way they want to go and then they spend the rest of the year with that. And then I think the next closest one to us is up in High Park. Is that where Green Mountain Tech Center is? Essex has one that's combined with plumbing and and electrical world. Yeah. And then there's one up in St. Johnsbury. So, you know, Brandon and I are We're lucky that we kind of dominate this part of the state but there's not a there may be five of us around the state that have these programs. Yeah, I would I could say that the Hartford area is underserved. Yeah. Being a white river junction employer. Yeah. That might be you know somewhere where I can spread out to but it's hard you know some some students don't want to have to drive that far and I and it's it's unfortunate because I do feel like there's a lot of work out there. It's just not right here. Um, so that's really I think that's the gist of my meeting. Um, you know, I we talk about the same things every meeting, you know, we have a pretty strong program here. Um, the state has done a good job at at telling us what we need to do and we just do those

things. Um, it's really just kind of getting input from the people in the workforce to see what needs they have any special new tools that they think we should be teaching in our class. My other electricians weren't here tonight but I'll be reaching out with them via email. So I would say if nobody else had anything that they wanted to bring up we could probably move on with our Good evening. So I thank everybody for coming and I'll probably send out another little questionnaire after this in the next week if you want to just throw in some more ideas. Jim, I'll touch base with you on some scholarship stuff and you can give me the runtime solar contact and I'll reach out to them. Yeah, absolutely. And thank you Peter. Thank you Brandon Brichman. Thank you everybody. We'll talk to you. You're going to eat all the cheese. Too late. Looks like all the olives are gone. Oh, he's going to be sick tonight. All right, have a good night. Good CJ. Thanks again. All right, so everyone. Yeah, I got a call from a customer yesterday. His house burned down a lightning storm or something and he's rebuilding. And he asked me to do the electrical. I'm like, "Oh, it'd be awesome." New construction? Yeah. Love it. can't. Teaching. That's in Hartford. Heartland right there. Heartland. Uh yeah. That's where I started my business, so I have a lot of customers there. Do you ever Let me shut this off.