

# Welding Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

**Date:** 3/30/2026 **Location:** SRJC Lounibos Hall **Facilitator:** Danny Aschwanden (ITT)  
**Attendees:** Danny Aschwanden Program Coordinator. /ITT faculty, Tom Gutsch ITT Faculty, Rachel Smith,

Advisory Members and Industry partners: (David Cass - Moose Boats, Nathan Williams Santa Rosa Stainless, Luis Lara Ahlborn Structural Steel, Zane Cullen – Cotati Speed Shop, Proxy for Joel Lopez: Johnny Fruit Ahlborn Structural Steel)

Member not present: Dave Wiggins – Lux Metals

## 1. Welcome & Approval of Minutes

- Introductions were made.
- Last month's minutes were reviewed and accepted without changes.

## 2. Welding Certificate & Curriculum Modifications

### Overview of Proposed Changes

- Danny and Tom presented proposed updates to the welding certificate and course sequence.
- Goals: streamline the program, align with industry needs, and maintain strong hands-on training.

### Key Curriculum Proposals

- Combine **Weld 102 + Weld 103** (MIG + Flux Core).
- Offer **Weld 181 (Blueprint Reading & Metallurgy)** in-house.
- Add new courses:
  - Weld inspection & testing
  - Equipment maintenance
  - Career preparation
- Integrate **CAD training** (AutoCAD) through AppTech 45/46.
- Explore adding a **second instructional day** based on 83–84% positive student feedback.
- Incorporate **work experience/maintenance** as a formal work experience class.

### Timeline

- Curriculum proposal must be submitted by **mid-April** for potential approval by **May 2027**.

## 3. Equipment & Facility Updates

### Recent Grant-Funded Purchases

- **Miller 2K handheld laser welder**
- **Two 10×10 laser booths** for rust removal
- **Rhino carts**, drill press, and new fixturing carts
- Electrical upgrades in the shared fabrication space

### Upcoming Equipment

- **4-foot sheet metal brake** expected by end of April.

### Facilities

- Grant submitted for a **36×24 ft steel building** to expand storage and equipment capacity.

## 4. AWS Certification Testing

- Discussion on implementing AWS certification for students.
- **Luis** offered continued support coordinating testing and involving additional CWIs.
- Concern raised about long-term sustainability of volunteer-based testing.
- **Rachel** confirmed student exam fees may be covered by grant funding (deadline **April 6**).
- Agreement that students should contribute a small fee to maintain commitment (“skin in the game”).

## 5. Industry Updates

### Moose Boats

- Dave shared progress on a **diesel-electric hybrid boat** for King County Sheriff.
- First vessel of its size on the West Coast with a complex dual-power propulsion system.
- Pure electric not feasible due to battery size; hybrid provides redundancy.

### Sarah Stainless

- Nathan reported strong demand in **food processing equipment** manufacturing.

### Auburn Structural Steel / Mist Metals

- Current projects include:
  - Graynton Casino expansion
  - Multiple Kaiser pharmacy builds
- Work expected to remain steady for 3–4 months.
- Positive feedback on SRJC graduates, especially those moving into inspection roles.
- Emphasis on soft skills, teachability, and mentorship.

## 6. Enrollment & Program Demand

- Welding program currently at **170% capacity**, compared to **88%** overall SRJC enrollment.
- Nearly all classes full; only one HVAC class has openings.
- Industry partners report strong hiring needs and anticipate a busy spring/summer season.
- Johnny (Auburn) noted he is now an associate instructor teaching Weld 170.

## 7. Additional Announcements

- Trades Job Fair scheduled for **April 15**.
- Fall class enrollment opens **May 1**.

Meeting adjourned.