

MINUTES OF THE SIX HUNDRED FIFTEENTH  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF THE MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

The Whitman Center  
Rooms 8 & 9  
7777 Lewis Ave  
Temperance, MI 48145  
5:30 p.m., April 24, 2023

Present: Florence M. Buchanan, Julie Edwards, Nicole R. Goodman, Krista K. Lambrix,  
Aaron N. Mason, Mary Kay Thayer

Not Present: Lynette Dowler

Also Present: Abigail Baum, Jenna Bazzell, Scott Behrens, Matt Bird-Meyer, Dana Blair, Jack Burns, Parmeshwar Coomar, Kevin Cooper, Lori Jo Couch, Curtis Creagh, Joseph Fenench, Jacob Garner, Nicole Garner, Miranda Gelb, Kris Gerlach, Mike Hayter, Kelly Heinzerling, Dean Kerste, Barry Kinsey, Brian Lay, Leon Letter, Kim Lindquist, Gerald McCarty, Justin McManaway, Joshua Myers, Ken Mohney, Marcus Nagley, Carrie Nartker, Tina Pillarelli, Kojo Quartey, Josh Rhoden, Jim Ross, Nathan Schnerder, Michael Snyder, Helen Stripling, Robert Tesznar, Linda Torbet, Trent Varve, Joe Verkennes, Philip Wahr, Celeste Williams, Patrick Wise, Anke Wolbert, Quri Wygonik, Grace Yackee, Penny Dorcey

1. Chair Aaron Mason called the meeting at 5:31 p.m. He asked those present to please sign the attendance as the Board secretary does keep attendance at each meeting.

Mr. Mason also reminded those in the room to minimize side conversations and other distractions to a minimum so that the Board can conduct its business, both for the Board's benefit and for the people trying to listen. Please be courteous with sound and cognizant of blocking other people's views.

Chair Mason also stated that the Board does hold at least one meeting a year (in April) at the Whitman Center as a thank-you to South County, which is very important to us.

Finally, there is a process for public comment. He will poll the audience at the beginning of the meeting. Anybody wishing to address the Board must fill out a delegation slip and give the completed form to Penny Dorcey, Secretary to the Board. I will call you up to speak after the consent agenda and new business. There is a time limit of 3 minutes for each individual.

2. There were two delegations present.

- B. 2. a. (1) 3. *It was moved by Ms. Thayer and supported by Ms. Edwards that the following items on the Consent Agenda be approved as presented:*

- B. 2. a. (1) Approval of minutes of the March 27, 2023, regular meeting and April 3, 2023, special meeting of the Board of Trustees.
- B. 2. a. (2) Board Authorization for the President to Execute a Probationary Professional Staff Contract - Gelb
- B. 2. a. (3) Board Authorization for the President to Execute a Probationary Professional Staff Contract - Rivera
- B. 2. a. (4) Board Authorization for the President to Execute a Probationary Professional Staff Contract – Gallardo

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (1) 4. *It was moved by Ms. Edwards and supported by Ms. Goodman that the board adopt the following resolution for Alumnus of the Year Mr. Larry Merkle:*

*WHEREAS, Larry W. Merkle was a member of MCCC's first graduating class on June 25, 1968 and holds an associate of science degree from the college, and WHEREAS, he continued his higher education, earning a bachelor's degree from Eastern Michigan University in 1969, and*

*WHEREAS, he was a member of the Michigan National Guard from 1970-1976,*

*and*

*WHEREAS, he found his life's calling when he joined the Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Department in 1971, and*

*WHEREAS, he was employed as office manager for Michigan Memorial Park Cemetery in Flat Rock and later the Monroe County Road Commission before taking a position with Roselawn Memorial Park in LaSalle as general manager, a position he had held for 27 years until his retirement in 2007, and*

*WHEREAS, upon joining the fire department, he quickly earned the respect of his fellow firefighters and was promoted to lieutenant, captain and assistant chief, and*

*WHEREAS, in 1983, he was selected to be chief of the Monroe Township Fire Department, and served in this capacity for 36 years until his retirement from the post in 2019, and*

*WHEREAS, under his leadership, the department became highly respected in the community and grew in personnel, equipment and technology to make firefighting safer and provide more services to Monroe Township, and*

*WHEREAS, he worked with elected officials to build a training facility on LaPlaisance Road, a satellite fire station on West Dunbar Road and a state-of-the-art headquarters on South Dixie Highway that now bears his name, and*

*WHEREAS, he is a state-certified fire instructor and served in many capacities in the fire and emergency medical services community, including president of the Monroe County Chiefs and Firefighters associations, co-director of the Critical Incident Stress Management Team, member of the Monroe County Medical Control Board and Monroe County 911 Board, and as the assistant clerk secretary for the Monroe County Road Commission, and*

*WHEREAS, he is a member of the Corl-Gaynier AMVETS (American Veterans) Post 1942, and*

*WHEREAS, he is often seen lending a hand at Merkle Funeral Service, assisting with gatherings, services and permanent memorials, and*

*WHEREAS, he continues to be an active, lifetime member of Trinity Lutheran Church, where he serves as an usher and formerly as an elder, and*

*WHEREAS, he is a man of great character and integrity who exemplifies the best of Monroe County Community College.*

*THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees recognizes and congratulates Mr. Larry W. Merkle on his accomplishments and accolades, and*

*THAT IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees honor him with the 2023 Monroe County Community College Alumnus of the Year Award and expresses its sincere gratitude and appreciation on this Monday, April 24, 2023.*

The motion carried unanimously.

4. Chair Mason read a letter of resignation from Trustee Florence Buchanan, effective September 1<sup>st</sup> 2023. Ms. Buchanan said He and Dr. Quartey will review the regulations to appoint a replacement for Trustee Buchanan.

Ms. Buchanan explained that her decision was not easy, but after much deliberation, she decided to step down as a trustee to avoid any appearance of compromise with her work with the Monroe County Business Alliance (MCBA). She has really enjoyed her work with the Board, but it is in conflict with her work for the MCBA.

Chair Mason thanked Trustee Buchanan for her dedication to Monroe County Community College and to the community. He stated that she has brought so much to the board both personally and professionally.

- B. 4. a. (3) 5. *It was moved by Ms. Lambrix and supported by Ms. Goodman that Ned Birkey be selected as the 2022-23 College Supporter of the Year.*

Ms. Lambrix stated that Mr. Birkey does do some agricultural consulting. He is involved in the agricultural program at the college and volunteers his time and expertise for many things at the college and is an amazing ambassador for MCCC.

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (3) 6. *It was moved by Ms. Thayer and supported by Ms. Edwards that the Board authorizes the President to secure the services of Andrews Hooper Pavlik, PLC, Bloomington Hills, Michigan, to conduct the college audit under a multi-year contract.*

Curtis Creagh reported that he sent out 19 Requests for Proposals (RFP) to secure the services of an auditing firm. Of those, four declined and one responded. The College's former auditors will be available until we receive an RFP. Mr. Creagh is requesting that the Board to authorizes the President to secure the services of the firm Andrews Hooper Pavlik, PLC, of Bloomington Hills, Michigan to audit the annual financial report of the College for a five fiscal year time frame, with each year priced separately for the college audit, Single Audit and IRS 990 and 990-T. A separate firm will be retained to prepare the financials of The Foundation because of the complexities of federal compliance.

The motion carried unanimously as presented with the stipulation that the Board will receive feedback prior to the administration executing a contract.

- C. 1. a. (1) 7. Former MCCC student, Celeste Williams, spoke in support of the faculty regarding negotiations.
- C. 1. a. (2) 8. Community member, Mike Hayter, spoke on behalf of his family in support of the faculty regarding negotiations.
9. Chair Mason reminded the audience again to please refrain from side conversations and comments and from blocking the view of the people in the back of the room. If anyone wishes to hold up a sign they should do so at the perimeter of the room where it can be seen just as well.
- C. 3. b. (1) 10. Dr. Quartey announced the following staff appointment, professional staff contracts, non-renewal, retirement, and resignation.

Staff Appointment:

Aaron LaDuke, Financial Aid Specialist-State Programs Coordinator, effective April 10, 2023 (replacing Allison Gallardo)

Professional Staff Contracts:

Miranda Gelb, Career Technical Education Coordinator - ASET, effective April 17, 2023 (new position; professional staff) – Grant-funded position  
 Yahel Rivera, Assistant Director of Multicultural and Community Engagement, effective April 17, 2023 (new position; professional staff) – Grant-funded  
 Allison Gallardo, Assistant Director of Financial Aid, effective May 1, 2023 (moving from High School Liaison and Student Groups Coordinator. Replacing Nickie Hampsher who moved to the position of Director of Financial Aid)

Non-renewal

Nien-Chu Wan (Alex), Assistant Professor of Electrical Engineering, effective May 4, 2023

Retirement:

Scott Wang, Associate Professor of Accounting, effective August 20, 2023

Resignation:

Andrew Robertson, General Maintenance Worker, effective March 23, 2023

- C. 3. a. (3) 11. Curtis Creagh, Vice President of Finance and Administration, gave the Board an update on the General Fund Revenues and Expenses for the period ending March 31, 2023.

Mr. Creagh, Vice President of Finance and Administration, reported that the statement shows revenues of \$27.1 million, showcasing the three major revenues, operations, state appropriations, and property taxes. Property taxes are at 745 percent and total revenues are accrued and posted now at 85 percent.

Expenses are at a total of 27.1 million (63.4 percent). None of the expense categories are over-expended (see page two of the statement for a breakdown). In preparation for the end of the fiscal year, a notice was sent out to the campus to be mindful of year-end spending.

- C. 3. b. (1) 15. President Quartey summarized his reports to the Trustees, which he sends every other week.

Dr. Quartey reported that the Faculty negotiation teams have met with a mediator present and have made incremental progress. Support Staff negotiations continue and progress is being made.

Dr. Quartey gave the following update on legislation from the House Subcommittee on Higher Education Community. He announced \$15.3 million SAF, or a 4.5 percent increase to operations grants for community colleges, which would be distributed through the performance funding formula. MCCC's increase was 5.1 percent, which was the third largest percentage increase among all 28 community colleges. \$254,400 SAF decrease based on FY 2021-22 North American Indian Tuition Waiver program costs reported by institutions. MCCC has received a minimal amount for this in previous years. The House added \$5.0 million federal Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) for career and education navigators for adult learners. Counties and community colleges would apply for grant funding through the Office of Sixty by 30 to supplement or create career and education navigators. MCCC needs this badly to supplement our "Reconnect" efforts. The House also added \$5.0 million SFRF for the Michigan Reconnect Entry Point program. Counties and community colleges would apply for grant funding through the Office of Sixty by 30 to engage applicants who have been approved for Reconnect funding but have not enrolled in an eligible program. The House added a \$100 placeholder for campus security and safety upgrades at community colleges. Safety is priority #1, so hopefully, when all is said and done, funding will be provided. The 4.5 percent tuition restraint remains, however, there is no cap violation language.

Congressman Walberg was on campus, Monday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. He met with Josh Myers, Aaron Mason, Mary Kay Thayer, and President Quartey. The congressman submitted a \$4.2 million "earmark" request for MCCC. Also, on April 5<sup>th</sup>, MCCC held two sessions of Active Shooter Survival Training. Each session was three hours long; there were approximately 50 individuals in the first session and 125 in the second. This was open to the community. On April 13<sup>th</sup>, Trustee Mason, Josh Myers, and Dr. Quartey attended MCCA's Community College Legislative Day in Lansing. They met with the staff of all our representatives and had a lunch meeting with Senator Joe Bellino.

President Quartey and Dr. Scott Behrens attended a D3C3 press conference in Detroit earlier today. MCCC is collaborating with the ISD and all Monroe County school districts to offer a dual-enrolled machining class for all high school students. This is another victory with the CTE Hub concept. Preparation for the Higher Learning Commission visit continues in earnest.

Chair Aaron Mason noted that DTE Energy has its own schedule as to how they are going to slowly phase out of coal, but now we are hearing that DTE may have a more aggressive plan. The College needs to make sure it is budgeting for a more aggressive shutdown as it builds the new budget.

Dr. Quartey announced that late Sunday evening of April 9<sup>th</sup>, the College responded to a possible bomb threat and called 911. Explosive detection canines were brought in from Lansing to sweep the campus. After a complete sweep, the threat was deemed non-credible and the all-clear was given by local law enforcement at 3:24 a.m. Law enforcement was able to trace the call and the investigation is ongoing.

- C. 3. b. (2) 16. The Board received an update on the Higher Learning Commission from Dr. Grace Yackee and Dr. Quri Wygonik.

Dr. Yackee informed the Board that Dr. Wygonik has several updates regarding preparations for the visit from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) in October.

Tonight's presentation focuses on one of the areas of concentration that the visiting team was looking at when they were here in 2019. They also recognize all the work the College has done regarding the Strategic Plan. Key Performance Indicators are a piece of the strategic plan and updating progress of the Strategic Plan. The Institutional Research Office has developed KPI dashboards within different content areas. The office has already presented to different groups on campus. Tonight's focus will be on the KPIs in which the Board might be most interested and will show the Trustees how to access the KPIs, as well as the dynamics.

Dr. Wygonik gave an outline comprehensive list of dashboards that are available to everyone on Board, showing how they can access and navigate those dashboards from a few locations. In May, she will update the Board on how the KPIs specifically allow us to set targets. Dr. Wygonik explained that the grayed-out triangles with an asterisk indicate the project coordinator's instruction. She demonstrated the process to the Board by going through enrollment analytics, showing unduplicated enrollment counts. When looking at gross utilization, the percentage of students enrolled in a course out of the total capacity that allows for enrollment in that course or series of quizzes, it gives a passphrase withdrawal rate and the full-time equivalent of the percentage. She then demonstrated how MCCC compares to other institutions, using the size of full-time equivalency (FTE) to show those comparisons. Also available are student demographics (replacing the former student profile report). With the addition of a new analyst in Dr. Wygonik's office, they will be able to automate and refresh the data allowing the dynamic dashboard to update as soon as the statistics are available. For example, the user will have the ability look at enrollment statistics and disaggregate by many different academic and socio and demographic characteristics and students. Dr. Wygonik also showed how to look at the market share, or the percentage of Monroe County graduates that enroll at the College. She noted that they are currently working on a dual enrollment conversion statistic that is currently under construction. They are also close to looking at the conversion of degree seekers once they graduate high school into the full population.

Dr. Wygonik stated that she and her team do look at trends for non-credit enrollment and as well as at students concurrently enrolled as credit and non-credit. They also have some student performance and progress measures that are of particular interest to faculty in the services area. Her office also intends to work more closely with faculty on the assessment dashboards. Dr. Wygonik stated that they have a very good data set in MCCC's curriculum, so they are beginning to build begun to build a dashboard that looks at how students are meeting benchmarks and scoring rubrics in that space. Although not available yet, soon users will be able to look at students' GPA performance, their tax rates, their withdrawal rate, and their GPA after transfer by accessing those data from the receiving institution on a regular basis as of now and student progress.

Dr. Wygonik is also looking at housekeeping items like retention fall to fall and fall to winter; and developmental math placement. Placement is especially important because it is indicative of a student's overall progress. Also, in this area, Dr. Wygonik is looking at reading scores, how long it takes them to complete credit during their college math, and at the enrollment of college mathematics, as well as how long it takes a student to transition and enroll in the credit bearing math. The process is very complex as there are many different math sequence requirements for different programs and transfer interests. All of this will be coming soon. Ultimately, the College is looking at how students are graduating or completing.

Lastly, there is a suite of satisfaction dashboards. The new CRM will be able to do conversions and determine whether a student is still here with us and whether they need something specific for a graduation goal, support services, work or transfer knowledge, help with developing work or transfer goals, potential retention factors, and major challenges to student success. There are many other dashboards as well.

Dr. Wygonik noted that there is a way to submit feedback such as questions, feedback, and different inquiries through a form on the KPI Dashboard. The information goes directly to Dr. Wygonik's office, so everything is automated.

Dr. Wygonik concluded by giving the Board a list of links to help them access and navigate the KPI dashboards. She also gave a shout-out to Brianna Pio as the "mastermind" of this project. She added that in May, the Board will receive an update on the Strategic Plan from herself and Joe Verkennes, Director of Marketing and Communications.

- C. 3. b. (2) 17. Dr. Grace Yackee, Vice President of Instruction, reported on instructional modalities before and after COVID.

Dr. Yackee noted that in 2013, the College applied for and was approved by the Higher Learning Commission to offer 100 percent of its courses and programs online. She gave special thanks to Jeff Peters, Coordinator of e-Learning and Instructional Support for his hard work on this project. When COVID hit, MCCC was one of few institutions that had already gone through the approval process and did not get to seek any type of temporary approval. In March 2020, we began moving everything online with the exception of courses that absolutely had to be in person. Moving into fall 2020, there were very few classes on campus. There were a few students who were not able to complete; however, we were very successful working with these students and getting them through their courses. This continued on into the fall of 2020 and the winter of 2021. Dr. Yackee noted that the College is still trying to get back to some level of normality because things are forever changed since the onset of COVID and we are using online learning in a way that has accelerated, both in terms of our course offerings and even in supplemental classes using Brightspace technology.

Dr. Yackee gave the board a handout showing that the fall of 2020 was the height of online and blended or hybrid learning. Online learning is fully asynchronous where faculty and students are separate. Students are expected to have assignments done by a certain time and complete the course within the semester. Blended or hybrid learning is where classmates have some in-person learning and some synchronous learning. Over time as we moved into COVID, those numbers slowly accelerated. When looking at the fall of 2015, about 11 percent of the course content was delivered online up until 2019, then there is an additional 4 percent followed by an acceleration into the fall of 2020, with a slight reduction in the fall of 2021 as more students returned to campus. That continued into the fall of 2022.

Dr. Yackee and her team continued to assess and evaluate student interest. They still fill the online courses first. She continues to look at early outcomes to see how big the modality measurement is impacting student learning. Dr. Yackee pointed out that under the enrollment section of the handout, she provided involvement and relationships to capacity. In terms of efficiency and productivity, the online classes stand out in terms of the percentage of seats. When looking at the breakdown, it is evident that we are moving more toward the use of hybrid classes. The handout shows the differences in efficiencies between the blended or hybrid and the in-person modalities.

Dr. Yackee stated that projecting for fall 2023 is interesting because the online sections appear to be lower, but it is still early and we have not had many online sessions. We are trying to encourage students to participate face-to-face. The College is trying to offer blended or hybrid classes where part of the class meets once a week asynchronously. Alternatively, there are some online sections that offer supplemental opportunities for students to come to campus to interact with the faculty and other students in the classroom environment. This is not mandatory. If there is a demand for an online class we add a section. We have found that stepping into online classes has not been as challenging as stepping into face-to-face classes.

Dr. Yackee says that we also offer classes at the high schools our courses, our faculty, and we evaluate, so the face-to-face, the in-person has been a real challenge. Blended classes help a little bit but we are finding interest in a lot of online classes. There have been extreme challenges in the last few semesters with students who are struggling in different areas. Dr. Yackee believes the distance from us on a regular basis for some students has played a role in that; however, we need to continue investigating. That being said, if there is a main demand we are offering it if the outcomes are similar and there is not a concern. There are some classes that are not successful in the online format.

Dr. Yackee noted that the quality of online classes is the same as that of face-to-face classes. The faculty and administration have standardized much of the work to make sure the support is there, and the faculty and the students are required to complete an orientation, in online teaching and online learning. We have worked with faculty and looked at the rubrics that they use to assess the courses and the quality of their courses. In 2020, some faculty had already been teaching online, so the move was not a big deal. For others, we had to move content online, which was a bigger challenge. Obviously, now we are two years out and have made progress for remote areas, but

there are still some areas, particularly occupational areas, then which the hands-on piece will continue.

- C. 3. b. (3) 18. Dr. Myers, Executive Director of The Foundation, reported on the April 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Board of Directors did approve an amendment to its endowment policy. That is a big change for them. Previously at the beginning of The Foundation, the minimum amount to establish an endowment was \$20,000. The board voted to increase the minimum to \$25,000. The major effect of that is a typical award under the previous \$20,000 amount would generate \$800. It will now generate about \$1,000. The board felt that was a doable change to keep up with the costs as well as something that would not dissuade the donors. A secondary change to policy added language that addresses the abandonment of endowment working toward endowment in the event that a donor stops working toward an endowment, rather than leaving those funds fallow, it gives us a procedure to move those funds into an active spend-down phase.

Dr. Myers was able to announce two new endowed scholarships, the Dannielle Lambert Endowment Scholarship, Danielle was a coordinator in our Upward Bound Program who passed away, and the Agricultural Endowed Scholarship. This was under the new \$25,000 endowment policy. These are the 76<sup>th</sup> and 77<sup>th</sup> endowed scholarships respectively. Dr. Myers also announced a major gift from the Mabel Kehres Charitable Trust number 2 (\$35,000). Ten Thousand of that goes to VEX Robotics, and the other \$25,000 is the first major gift to our Welch renovation. The Charles and Henrietta Knabusch Charitable Trust number 2 was a spend down on average over 20 years from their estate. Next year is the last year for that endowment. We have received over \$600,000 over the period of the trust from them. That is a significant amount of money in our community and they have done a great amount of good. Dr. Myers thanked Chuck Knabusch and Kaye Lani Rae Rafko who are the trustees of that fund.

Dr. Myers reported that the Joint Capital Outlay Subcommittee has completed two hearings. Now they have four community colleges at a time giving testimonies. MCCC will be invited to that soon. As soon as they report out at the committee Dr. Myers believes all is looking good for MCCC and that we are looking at June, hopefully, as we are listed as number four in the priority in the state. One of the other projects ahead of MCCC received funding, so Dr. Myers believes they will drop out. DR. Myers submit two different federal appropriations requests. One is through Senator Gary Peters' office in the amount of \$2.5 million for the Welch Health Education Building. The second is through Congressman Timothy Walberg's office in the amount of \$2.5 million to convert the Whitman Center over to geothermal and to do some structural stabilization to the foundation in the back.

Dr. Myers mentioned some changes to the executive committee. Unfortunately, Dr. Ronald Campbell, the first and only vice chair, is no longer going to be on the executive committee; however, he is remaining on the board. The committee is looking for a successor for him. If you know of any members of the community who might be good candidates to serve on the executive board please let Dr. Myers know. In closing, Dr. Myers reminded the Trustees that the Strike, Spares, and Scholarships fundraiser is back and they are looking for bowlers. He encouraged them to come out even if they do not bowl. This is a wonderful fundraiser.

- C. 4. b. (2) 19. *It was moved by Ms. Thayer and supported by Ms. Goodman that the Board go into closed session.*

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Yes [6]: Ms. Goodman, Ms. Buchanan, Mr. Mason, Ms. Thayer, Ms. Lambrix, and Ms. Edwards

No [0]: None

The motion carried and Board went into closed session at 7:05 p.m.

20. Open session resumed at 7:46 p.m.

- C. 4. b. (2) 21. Chair Mason noted the upcoming events.

22. *It was moved by Ms. Edwards and supported by Ms. Lambrix that the meeting be adjourned.*

The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Aaron N. Mason  
Chair

Florence M. Buchanan  
Secretary

pd/

These minutes were approved at the May 22, 2023, regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.