MINUTES OF THE SIX HUNDRED TWENTY-SECOND
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Monroe County Community College
The Board Room, z-203
1555 S. Raisinville Rd.
Monroe, MI 48161
5:30 p.m., February 26, 2023

Present: Lynette M. Dowler, Julie M. Edwards, Nicole R. Goodman, Krista K. Lambrix, Arron Mason (chair), Joel A. Spotts, Mary Kay Thayer

Also Present: Jenna Bazzell, Sandra Beedee, Scott Behrens, Phillip Borawski, Elizabeth Bradley, Franklin Brook, State Representative William Bruck, Jack Burns Jr., Curtis Creagh, Kay Beth Davis, Candice Ferrell, Christopher Gossett, Amanda Gregory, Melissa Grey, Amy Harbaugh, Jeff Harbaugh, Kelly Heinzerling, Emily Johnson, Reese Johnson, Leon Letter, Spencer Lyke, Sarah Mason, Gerald McCarty, Joshua Myers, Jennifer Schyllander, Sydney Godfrey, McCarty, Joshua Myers, Katie Navock, Kojo Quartey, Jay Schumacher, Helen Stripling, Beverly Tomek, Linda Torbet, Holli Vallade, Joe Verkennes, Quri Wygonik, John Wyrabkiewicz, Xay Loose, Grace Yackee, Penny Dorcey (recording secretary)

1. Chair Aaron Mason called the meeting at 5:48 p.m.

2. There were thirteen delegations present.

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

B. 2. a. (1) Approval of minutes of the regular meeting of February 26, 2024
B. 2. a. (2) Board Authorization for the President to Execute a Continuing Administrative Contract – Letter
B. 2. a. (3) Board Authorization for President to Execute a Continuing Faculty Contract to Administrator—Letter
B. 2. a. (4) Board Authorization for President to Execute a Continuing Administrative Contract—McCarty
B. 2. a. (5) Board Authorization for President to Execute a Continuing Faculty Contract to Administrator—McCarty
B. 2. a. (6) Board Authorization for the President to Execute Probationary Administrative Contract—Navok
B. 2. a. (7) Board Authorization for the President to Execute Probationary Administrative Contract—Hampsher
B. 2. a. (8) Board Authorization for the President to Execute Probationary Administrative Contract—Mason
B. 2. a. (9) Board Authorization for the President to Execute Probationary Faculty Contract—Gregory
B. 2. a. (10) Board Authorization for the President to Execute Probationary

The motion carried unanimously.

B. 4. a. (1) 4. It was moved by Ms. Thayer and supported by Ms. Edwards that the following resolution of commendation for Mr. Jeff Harbaugh be adopted:

WHEREAS, Mr. Jeff Harbaugh, has decided to retire from his position as power systems chief with Monroe County Community College, effective February 29, 2024, and

WHEREAS, he has given more than 31 years of dedicated service to the college, serving as a student assistant, Group I general maintenance worker, Group III power systems trainee, Group IV power systems operator and Group V power systems chief, and

WHEREAS, he proudly served his country as a member of the United States Marine Corps for four years, and served an additional two years in the reserves while attending MCCC, and
WHEREAS, he is a 2005 graduate of MCCC, earning an associate of applied science degree and holds a high-pressure steam boiler operator’s license and the Certified Building Operators endorsement, and

WHEREAS, he has served as a mentor, role model and trainer for his co-workers and has helped to foster a high level of professionalism within the facilities department staff, and

WHEREAS, he has served in many leadership roles during his tenure at the college, including on the Presidential Search Committee and the Board of Directors for The Foundation at MCCC, as a member of the Professional Enrichment Program and on numerous hiring committees, as well as assisting with New Employee Orientation, and

WHEREAS, he served as president of the MCCC Maintenance Association bargaining unit and has participated on several of the contract negotiation teams, and

WHEREAS, he has been a voice for change and innovation on campus, embracing and helping to implement numerous technological and mechanical updates, including the award-winning campus-wide geothermal HVAC system and connected automation controls, and

WHEREAS, everyone associated with MCCC has benefited from the diligence and commitment he has put into his work on behalf of the college and its mission, and

WHEREAS, he will be remembered as an admired co-worker and outstanding employee who demonstrated an impeccable work ethic, love of learning and commitment to the college and its students.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees recognize Mr. Jeff Harbaugh for his dedicated service and contributions to the College, our students and the community, and

THAT IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees expresses its very best wishes for his continued success, well-being and happiness on this Monday, February 26, 2024.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. 3. b. (1) 5. Chair Mason read the following update to the Board:

“At our last meeting, we had numerous people speak during public comment time regarding a non-agenda item. Specifically, they spoke on various issues and circumstances centering around unfettered and safe access to use of public restrooms which are labelled as either Women or Men. Within the meeting and in follow up to the meeting, I requested that Administration provide to the Trustees specific relevant policies of the college and current legislative updates relevant to our board Trustee’s edification as it pertains to policy and to do so before our next meeting, which is today’s meeting. Dr. Quartey provided the requested information to us, and I hope you have had time to review it in detail. Some of you may or may not have had an opportunity to have further discussions with Dr. Quartey. I strongly encourage you to review the Bill Summary regarding the expansion of the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act as I think it narrows the arguable issues down quite significantly. If you’d like further discussion and review on this as an agenda item, please let me know or work with Dr. Quartey as they may develop an agenda item or update on the matter for us in a future meeting.

That being said, I have already expressed to Dr. Quartey that there appears to be a need for an informational edifying campaign. From my own review, I offer the following understanding to the Board - Regardless of your personal views, interpretation of where case law was before this moment, or how you may have solved the problem better, our legislatures and Governor has decided to codify into law a gender-identity based right to access. Consequently, the labels of “Women” and “Men” on public institution restrooms may mean something different than how you have understood it your entire life or how you would want
it to be interpreted. Simply, “Women” really means those that most closely gender-identifies as women, and “Men” means those that most closely gender-identifies as men. That is probably an over-simplification. Also, as I read it, this is not only the case for college campuses in Michigan, but even in the k-12. I do know from my Board Service at Monroe Public Schools that these were active topics 20 years ago as we looked at facility management and planning for the future.

I also expressed to Dr. Quartey that there is probably a need for employee training on the matter. Although we are an educational institution, I also expressed that it has been my personal experience that this sort of training is best provided by a law firm experienced in employment and public institutional law. This sort of training not only helps effect a desired result of non-discrimination, but it can also protect administration and the institution from discriminatory acts of its employees, whether intentional or not.

I also expressed to Dr. Quartey that if we had a magic wand, we would go back 50 years and redesign all of our bathrooms into some gender-neutral design so we could maximize respect and sense of safety for each and every individual. Obviously, we can’t do that, but I told Dr. Quartey that I would be interested in knowing whether there are any other achievable facility possibilities that would offer more privacy such as ways to reduce gaps in stalls, and I thought the Board might see value in that as well. I also expressed gratitude for the attention and care that was put into the creation and planning for some gender-neutral options on campus that could serve as an additional choice. I expressed caution on how that is offered to individuals. It is an extra option offered to maximize every person’s sense of safety and comfort. It is not a substitute for free and unfettered use of a more traditional restroom that may be located in a more convenient location.

I apologize for this lengthy review of what was a public comment topic from last meeting. I do know that a lot of time and energy has been spent by Dr. Quartey and (probably) staff navigating this issue recently, and I wanted to share my feedback with the whole board for full disclosure so I am not acting in any apparent directive manner (to the president) or outside my role as just 1 of 7 of a Policy Board. I do take relief in knowing that Dr. Quartey has been navigating this issue with a heart and sense of decency for each and every student, staff, and the public, no matter our differences.”

C. 1. a. (1) 6. Elizabeth Bradly, MCCC Student and co-chair of the Gender and Sexuality Alliance Club (GSA), delivered a letter to the Board from the GSA to be read at a later date.

C. 1. a. (2) 7. Sydney Godfrey, student, addressed the Board regarding transgender rights. Sydney stated that they are speaking on behalf of all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer students that live in Monroe County and of Monroe County Community College. Sydney spoke on behalf of fellow LGBTQ+ students and staff. Sydney directed their comments to the people that do not want transgender individuals, students, staff and members of the public alike, using the bathroom that aligns with their gender identity. MCCC is a college that affords great opportunities to all of its students celebrating diversity and inclusion, offering amazing accommodations and having strict policies on harassment and discrimination. Sydney wanted to note the above before introducing that there is an active nationwide attack against all LGBTQ+ individuals in the US right now.

According to the ACLU American Civil Liberties Union, in 2023, at least 510 Anti-LGBTQ+ bills were introduced into state legislatures. Eighty-four were passed. As of Friday, February 23 2024, there have been another 200 that have been introduced with four passing in 2024. This is directly impacting LGBTQ+ individuals across the country, especially LGBTQ+ students and public education facilities. Most relevant today, on May 25, 2022, Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt approved SB 615, a law that requires students at public schools and public charter schools in Oklahoma to use restrooms and locker rooms that align with the sex listed on their birth certificates. This law directly impacted the life of a 16-year-old, non-binary student at Owasso High School, Nex Benedict. On February 7th, 10th grade student, Nex Benedict, was attacked in a school restroom by fellow classmates. There was a physical altercation, but Nex went home alive with bruises on their face and scratches on their scalp. Tragically, on
February 8, 2024, Nex Benedict passed away from sustained injuries to their head hitting a wall.

Policies that allow transgender people to use the correct bathroom, the bathroom that best matches the transgender person's identity, do not legalize harassment, stalking violence or sexual assault. This anti-trans rhetoric against people using the bathroom eventually leads to discriminatory hate crimes against LGBTQ+ individuals. This impacts people and students across the country, leading to more discrimination, detrimental psychological impact and hostile violent deaths. There is no excuse for discrimination based on gender identity or expression. Everyone should be able to safely and comfortably use bathrooms and other gender facilities.

C. 1. a. (3) 8. Jay Schumacher, student, addressed the Board regarding unsafe bathroom situations. Lack of action by the Board has turned a place Jay should not have to give a second thought about walking into, into a hostile environment that affects Jay daily. Jay cannot safely use the men’s bathroom, nor the lady’s bathroom. While there are single use restrooms but, as many students and Jay have noticed, many other students will glare, stare, whisper, and talk about students that they see going in and out of those bathrooms. Although Jay can pass as a woman and go into the women’s bathroom, Jay asked those present to imagine having to go use the bathroom of the opposite gender and to think of the discomfort they might feel being in there. Add in the complication that of a single-use bathroom that is occupied or out of order, which is something that has been happening within the year. Walking across campus during the middle of a class is not an option, and having to hold the need to use a restroom is not healthy. That is not something that anyone should have to go through just because somebody has decided a person does not look like they belong in that bathroom. It is important to mention that many people do suffer at the hands of other people just because of how they look.

C. 1. a. (4) 9. Spencer Lyke, student, addressed the Board regarding a student concern regarding restroom use. Spencer addressed the Board at their last meeting and wanted to share more about that experience. Spencer is neither male of female, due to their combination of chromosomes, so they are biologically neither. In early September, Spencer was unable to use the gender-neutral bathroom. When they entered the men's room, they were immediately met with two hostile aggressive students who insisted they were in the wrong bathroom and insisted Spencer had to leave. Spencer felt unsafe and wasn't willing to risk confrontation, and so, they left and went to the Women’s restroom where they were questioned about whether they were in the correct bathroom. While describing the incident to a staff member who encouraged me to file a harassment report, Dr. Quartey walked in and asked Spencer to tell him the situation. Dr. Quartey gave Spencer the locations of other gender-neutral bathrooms on campus and recommended I use those as an option.

After the January Board of Trustees meeting, Spencer was contacted by Dr. Behrens and on February 2nd, they attended an intake interview with him. Spencer was told that investigation would be opened to discover why their experience was not recorded. Since then, they have not heard whether or not the investigation was opened and has not been contacted by either Title IX coordinator.

Spencer strongly urged the Board to investigate the situation and take accountability for the lack of action being taken. Spencer also addressed the GSA’s request for safety while trying to use the restrooms. There has been panic regarding the interaction of younger students with trans college students, and fear possible sexual and or physical violence in those interactions. Spencer reviewed some statistics from 2019 study by Harvard University in which 3673 transgender students, ages 13-17, were interviewed about their schools’ support for trans students and their safety on campus in the bathroom and a locker room that aligned with their biological sex. The research indicates that 36.9 percent of trans girls and 33.8 percent of trans boys were sexually assaulted. In schools that allowed students to use the bathroom matching their gender identity, those numbers dropped to 14.9 and 24.5 percent respectively. In comparison, the national average of sexual assault is 15 percent of cisgender girls and 4 percent of cisgender boys. Special restrictions placed transgender and non-binary students at significant risk of danger and will escalate the hostility that Spencer already experienced. Spencer encouraged the Board to think that through this argument that it is affecting the students like them who do not fit the sex binary and are actively fighting back, and the students who will not come to campus because they have seen the hostility happening that has been ignored, and the students who are wondering about coming to college that we need to create a safe environment for.
C. 1. a. (5) 10. Xay Loose, MCCC student, addressed the Board regarding the current bathroom situation on campus. Xay commented on how a lot of the opposing arguments that the Board is going to hear today talk about how trans people make some people uncomfortable in these [bathroom] spaces and statistically, it just does not make sense. If you ask trans people about their experiences, you will know that they are a lot more uncomfortable in these spaces than the opposing people are. Trans people go into the bathroom understanding that it is not safe for them and that they could end up in situations that are detrimental to them. Xay feels that if people just need to understand that trans people are people too and at the end of the day, they are really just trying to use the bathroom. If everyone could reach that understanding Xay believes everyone could get past this roadblock. Xay believes this is something worth talking about, but right now people just do not seem to want to do that.

C. 1. a. (6) 11. Reese Johnson, student, addressed the Board regarding support for the LGBTQ campus community and the need to ensure their safety in and access to campus restrooms. Reese runs an organization called PRISM. She said that LGBTQ+ calls for education and resources. For the past three years. Reese commented that she has had the honor of becoming and making friends with of many people within the LGBTQ+ community, including trans people as well as people who identify as non-binary. “The one thing that I can tell you in complete certainty is that one thing that trans people need is a restroom. They need a place to go, they need a place to feel safe, and they are allowed to all those spaces, and allowed to exist here.”

“Bathrooms pose a much bigger issue for people in the trans and non-binary community as historically, bathrooms have been an extremely dangerous place for them, as we were reminded of last week, when 16-year-old non-binary student, Nex Benedict was killed by their classmates in an Oklahoma school bathroom. Reese believes that the most important thing that we can do as humans is be honest and open with our feelings. Reese stated that, this is not just an issue about bathrooms. My mom once told me that people care less when they do not understand, and so it is our job to help people create a better understanding. This is why I work so hard to educate people. I am not here to argue with anybody or scream in their face, and she is here to stand with you and work with you.” This is why she offers a two-hour ally training session that provides people with a better understanding and education of the LGBTQ+ community, as well as other minorities. If that is something you are interested in, Reese would love to work with your. “Reese is certified by the University of Colorado. As a student and employee of MCCC, Reese is speaking in support of the MCCC GSA students and everything that they stand for. Her hope that is the rest of the community can dig deep and find empathy and compassion that she knows exists in everyone. And with an open mind, shift to be better, to have common, human decency. Reese thanked the GSA and its supporters for continuously working hard to ensure that this college is safe for everyone, including myself and my friends. Ms. Johnson said to her trans and non-binary friends and peers, “you have a place here on this earth, in this town, and especially at this school. We hear you; we love you, and we accept you; most importantly, we still continue to stand up and speak with you.”

C. 1. a. (7) 12. State Representative William Bruck, from Erie, gave the Board a brief legislative update. Mr. Bruck stated that he sat on this board for six years and had never seen as many people at tonight’s meeting.

Representative Bruck said that although there is currently not a lot of activity in Lansing, he sits on the higher education committees and there are a few things occurring that impact do impact the community colleges. Last year, PA 186 was, which extended the sunset on the jobs training Act. It passed that through committee. Recently, House Bill 5147 was passed through committee. House Bill 5147 would repeal section 7 of the Higher Education Authorization and Distance Education Reciprocal Exchange Act, which allows colleges and community colleges that allow people to take courses out of state and to be counted in state. There are many other bills yet to consider, so if the Board has any questions, please reach out to Representative Bruck because he sits on that committee. He thanked the Board for allowing him to speak tonight.

C. 1. a. (8) 13. Sandra Beedee, community member, asked the Board for an update from the February 16, 2024 meeting between a community group and the President, and his Cabinet, during which bathroom safety for women and children were discussed. Discussion was held on looking into some resolution to the restroom problem, and possible implementation of a plan.
Dr. Quartey responded that he will provide a report and give some information on that meeting at another time as this was not a Board meeting.

C. 1. a. (9) 14. Franklin Brook, community member, addressed the Board in support of LGBTQ+ representation and protections. Brook stated that they and many others in the community feel they are not being properly represented or protected in this college in the wake of protests by anti-trans and gay groups. He reminded everyone that it is incredibly dehumanizing to reduce people down to their genitals. In 2017, a senior member of the anti-LGBTQ group Family Research Council, gave the following advice during their Annual Voter Summit in Washington, DC. Brook quoted, “transgender identities are tough sell, so focus on gender identity and divide and conquer.” “So, focus on gender identity and divide and conquer. For many, gender identity on its own is just a bridge too far. If you separate the T from the alphabet soup, we’ll have more success.” Since then, the groups religious extremist, right wing voters, and politicians have focused their attack on trans people and the progressive change and freedom they embody.

Brook noted that the rising crime statistics report released by the FBI shows the number of hate crimes in schools from 2018 to 2022 rose rapidly, nearly doubling over the five-year period, accounting for nearly 10 percent of all hate crimes in the country. In 2023, the U.S saw its fourth consecutive, record-breaking year for anti-trans legislation in our country, and a 33 percent jump in reported hate crimes, based on gender identity, over the previous year. Brooks says it is blatantly clear these actions have nothing to do with bathrooms, clothes, sign, flags, or anything like that. This is just willful ignorance. If you are comforting these people, you are supporting their hate. This is a community institution of education. I ask you to do better.

C. 1. a. (10) 15. Katybeth Davis, community member, addressed the Board regarding the current issues with safety in the Bathrooms. Ms. Davis is speaking as an alumnus and also, to support the students that attend the College. She said that she has been honored being on the Alumni Advisory Board and for the students she's met. There are some great students here. Ms. Davis is extremely proud of everyone who has spoken up on this issue. I cannot explain what it is like to see people waving and speaking and letting their voice be heard. She commented that it is Black History Month and here we are talking about segregation. It all ended 60 years ago. We all knew Monroe was a little behind the times that happens. It has been historically proven that we are just not as progressive as the rest of the state is, but I am glad that what is going on in our blue state with the expansion of the Elliott Larsen Civil Rights Act, and everything that is going on, that we bring in to get with the rest of the team because trans rights are human rights. Black rights are human rights. We are all people; we are all humans. We just want to live and use the bathroom. I just really wanted to say anybody that would oppose that the bathrooms be gender neutral, are the same people that support discrimination. So, keep using your voices.

C. 1. a. (11) 16. Jenny Schyllander, community member, addressed the Board regarding support for MCCC LGBTQ+ and gender diverse students. Ms. Schyllander is a 30-plus year resident of Monroe County, a retired school counselor from one of Monroe county’s nine public school districts, and the parent of two adults who attended Monroe County Community College. I currently work part-time as a success coach here at Monroe County Community College. Ms. Schyllander is representing her own personal views, as a parent. She is here in support of the students of MCCC, particularly those who identify as gender diverse and LGBTQ+ and is heartbroken to hear that these students have been experiencing harassment in the restrooms on our campus.

As parents, we are always concerned for the safety of our children, when they are out of our sight. As the parent of a person who identifies as non-binary, her worry is compounded. Ms. Schyllander emphasized that she should not have to worry about them exercising the right to something so basic as using a public restroom with confidence that they, as a trans person, will be safe from harassment or worse. However, at this moment in this country, she does have to worry, as do the parents of gender diverse high school students as they research colleges that are safe for their future students who attend.

Ms. Schyllander implored administrators, to not let this fear be the thing that MCCC becomes known for. She urged the student body as a whole to consider their actions
toward those who identify as gender diverse and LGBTQ+. She urged the administration to emphasize the core values of diversity, inclusion, and respect, as they claim to on the MCCC website. She asked that they protect our gender diverse, LGBTQ+ students by listening to them and taking the actions that they ask for in this moment, as well as every day. She noted that we are called to be our best selves, as we all participate in MCCC’s mission to enrich the lives of our community.

C. 1. a. (12) 17. Jenna Bazzell and Melissa Grey, addressed the Board regarding “two choices” to resolve the bathroom situation. Their comments do not reflect the views or opinions of any organization they might be a part of. They are speaking tonight as citizens, members of the community, as part of the LGBTQ plus community. They are also speaking as allies to transgender non-binary, and other gender diverse people.

Ms. Grey stated that the last time they addressed the board, they spoke about the signs GSA posted on restroom doors that were an attempt to stop and prevent harassment. However, our concerns are beyond signs. Our hearts are broken for the students of MCCC. Many LGBTQ+ students at the college have survived a lot of bullies in the face of a national and local wave of moral panic about gender, targeting gender youth in particular. MCCC students have been endangered and left to fend for themselves.

The MCCC administration, which includes the President, Cabinet, and members of the Board of Trustees, will be referred to as MCCC administration. The administration has not confronted and corrected transphobic propaganda and instead has colluded with baseless fears. The administration has also focused on the feelings of both peddling transphobic misinformation and done little to show support to students or trying to reduce the actual dangers to campus. The administration has compounded the harms of real harassment and bullying. The colleges actions and inactions are also dangerous in at least two ways. First, they take attention away from the real risks to those who are being harassed and assaulted. Second, they allow placing the attention and fear onto innocent people who are trying to manage the essential functions of their lives. Putting a target on the backs of transgender and gender diverse students on this campus.

Ms. Bazzell stated that the College statement on restroom access was only released after the President and Board of Trustees was called on to do so had the January 2024 Board of Trustees meeting, where it was identified that a Title IX violation was disclosed. The MCCC administration only has two choices; the administration can continue to ignore the harassment and the bullying happening on this campus, or they can investigate the bullying and harassment and determine what led to ignoring the problem for at least several months. The MCCC administration can continue to remove the signs from restroom doors and continue to say there will be no signs on the restrooms, or allow and promote the GSA signs calling for respect and the restrooms. The MCCC administration can continue to remove the banners and oppose initiatives that promote respectful behavior in the restrooms, or endorse inclusivity and acceptance within all gendered campus restrooms. The MCCC administration can continue to push their needs aside and prioritize both national and local politics, or request and listen to the concerns of LGBTQ MCCC students. “The MCCC administration can continue to collude with community members about this historical moral panic about gender or you can choose students. You can choose them.”

C. 1. a. (13) 18. Dr. Quartey, MCCC President, made the following comments. He asked the room to indulge for a few minutes while he related some personal stories saying that first of all, safety is priority one the MCCC campus. He then shared a story, that was not intended to minimize anybody else’s experience. In 1987, Dr. Quartey was a Ph.D. student at the Mississippi State University, completing his final year. His fraternity, the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity was the same one that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Thurgood Marshall belonged to, and it moved to Fraternity Row. The first few days that he and his brothers were there, there was some commotion outside. There was a white fraternity outside calling us the ‘N’ word and using expletives against us. They called the authorities who came and dispersed the other fraternity, but the next night they came back, and they came back over and over and over. Dr. Quartey and his fraternity brothers were forced to move, although they had every right to be on Fraternity Row.

Dr Quartey went on to say that there are other stories as well. In 2022, his 20-year-old son was physically attacked at a local eatery in Monroe, just because of his color. He also spoke of the three young black men that he brought to Monroe in 2014. They were
compelled to leave campus because they were accused of stealing a basketball from our gym, although they had nowhere to hide it. Dr. Quartey asked from the outset where these young men could hide a basketball asking, “Where did they put it, in their pocket?”

Dr. Quartey declined to tell his own personal stories here in Monroe, but he did say that he and others like him have suffered from minimization, dehumanization, and the robbing of their dignity every day. So, how are we not supportive of others like us, in many ways? Clarifying that he meant blacks, Hispanics, immigrants, and members of the LGBTQ community; those who tend to be dehumanized and demonized. There was a time not long before he was born that black people were not allowed to use restrooms with people who looked like the majority of the people in this room tonight. We need to affirm the humanity and dignity of every single person and he support his students.

Dr. Quartey said that his job is to be supportive of the students, not just the job, which to him is more than a job; it’s a vocation. As a public institution, and the administration has made this clear, we cannot circumvent or disregard the law. The Elliot Larson Law is clear. He reported that recently, he and his team surveyed the other institutions, and our sister institutions across the state and around the country are not having these problems. They fought this battle three, four, or five years ago. They are well past the stage. All he wants to do is keep the campus safe for everyone. Where are our values of dignity and respect of everyone on campus? Our whole purpose is to educate and we need to do all of that through long conversations, more education, more interaction, and some training. I am not your enemy, and I do not think we are each other’s enemy.

President Quartey explained that all last week, he was at Harvard at a crisis management and higher education class. The group heard from presidents whose lives have been threatened. He is fortunate that at least his and his children’s lives have not been threatened in this community. But the danger comes from those who do not threaten, but act. For him, what hurts most is having people that you care about and are trying to protect turn against you. Dr. Quartey mentioned that he has been in a situation like this before, as a human being as a person who walks around looking like he does. Sometimes in life you try to be a good person and do the right thing and it backfires and attempts are made to tear you down. Unfortunately, some of us are easier to dehumanize. He urged those present in the room to work together instead of against each other. Let us give each other a little bit of grace. Let people use the restroom. That is what they are trying to do.

Dr. Quartey went on the say that he has offered to meet with GSA and their advisors, and so far, they have not agreed to meet with him. He remains the resident optimist and attempts are made to tear you down. Dr. Quartey mentioned that he has been threatened. For him, what hurts most is not the threat, but the action. Sometimes in life you try to be a good person and do the right thing and it backfires and attempts are made to tear you down. Unfortunately, some of us are easier to dehumanize. He urged those present in the room to work together instead of against each other. Let us give each other a little bit of grace. Let people use the restroom. That is what they are trying to do.

Information in the restrooms has been updated. Recently, we surveyed other schools, and this is not a hot issue on their campuses, at least at the schools that we surveyed. We have posted locations of single-use restrooms on our website and provided an emergency number that anyone with concerns can call or text. This is one of the suggestions that came out of that public meeting we had. We have drafted statements affirming the right of individuals to use the restrooms as designated by law. I support all students, and I want to say the College affirms the option that individuals use the restroom that corresponds to their gender identity. That is the law and we cannot circumvent that. Dr. Quarteit invited questions from the floor.

Chair Mason circled back to comment about the follow up from the meeting. He stated that there is an ongoing process between the Board and the President getting educated on the topic and also addressing some of the gaps in people’s understanding who that be students’ or other people’s understanding of the issue. I think there is an ongoing process, not just signage, but an ongoing practice to trying to figure out what is right. Dr. Quartey commented that he just wants to ensure safety on campus.

C. 1. a. (14) 19. Jenna Bazzell and Melissa Grey asked to reapproach the Board. Ms. Grey asked for clarification and stated that GSA co-advisors have never received an invitation from “you” to meet about this. I believe a week ago you reached out to a GSA co-chair who has replied to you.

Ms. Bazzell continued the conversation stating “But you have never reached out to its advisors about what is going on, on this campus. We were not, we were not reached out to in 2019, we are not really worried about that point in time, but we were not reached out to now.”
Dr. Quartey explained that he did not want to go back over all of the information at this time, but stated that he and his team did reach out to the GSA chair or the co-chair, and then he sent a request to Linda Torbet, Executive Director of Human Resources to have a meeting with both Ms. Grey and Ms. Bazzell. He was supposed sit in for Dr. Behrens. Linda Torbet, Executive Director of Human Resources confirmed that she had had a number of meetings with Jenna and Melissa and communicated to them two or three time that Dr. Quartey wanted to meet with GSA.

C. 3. a. (1) Dr. Quartey announced the following staff appointment, continuing administrative contracts, continuing faculty contracts to administrators, probationary administrative contracts, probationary faculty contract, retirement, and resignation.

Staff Appointment:
Samuel Gonzales, Computer Support Specialist, effective February 19, 2024 (replacing Jacob Drew. Position upgraded from part-time to full-time)

Continuing Contract for Administrators (effective 7/1/2024-6/30/2025):
Leon Letter, Dean of Business
Gerald McCarty II, Dean of Student Services

Continuing Faculty Contract for Administrator (effective 7/1/2024):
Leon Letter, Dean of Business
Gerald McCarty II, Dean of Student Services

2nd Year Probationary Administrative Contracts:
Katie Navock, Director of Enrollment Management, effective February 20, 2024 through February 19, 2025
Nickie Hampsher, Director of Financial Aid effective February 20, 2024 through February 19, 2024
Sarah Mason, Registrar, effective February 27, 2024 through February 24, 2025
Beverly Tomek, Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, effective July 10, 2024 through July 9, 2025

1st Year Probationary Contract (February 19, 2024 – February 18, 2025):
Amanda Gregory, Associate Professor of Paralegal, effective August 19 through May 8, 2025 (new position)

Retirement: Effective Aug 19, 2024 (through May 8, 2025)
Jeffrey Harbaugh, Maintenance Chief, effective February 29, 2023

Resignation:
Teresa Drouillard, General Maintenance Worker, effective February 6, 2024

C. 3. a. (2) Curtis Creagh, Vice President of Finance and Administration, gave the Board an update on the General Fund Revenues and Expenses and other changes for the period ending February 29, 2023

Mr. Creagh reported, that overall, the College is in good financial shape with a revenue and expense balanced budget of $28.7 million. In addition, and included in the budget, the Board approved transfers of $500,000. Specifically, for the revenues, year-to-date, we have an overall recorded by $15.8 million versus $12.6 million representing 5 percent and 47 percent, respectively. However, note there are a couple of ITEMS including revenue that are atypical. One relates to state appropriations, in that, in lieu of capital outlay, this year we received a one-time payment from the state of ITEMS funding. An item stands for infrastructure and technology, equipment, maintenance and safety. So that's approximately $761,000. The state gives us a prescribed list of what we are allowed to use those funds on. The second item relates to property tax revenues. In early January, we received a one-time payment from the Village of Dundee for taxes collected in the past over multiple years and they were held by the Local Development Financial Authority (LDFA) until the projects for which they were collected were completed ($658,000). So, when looking at the statements you see $15.8 million versus $15.6 million so we would have recorded that revenue at $14.6 million versus $12.6 million, which represents 52.7 percent to 47 percent for 2024 versus last year respectively, but that is still an increase over last year. Without the additional one-time lines for revenue, so we have increased the state appropriations for the property
C. 3. a. (3) 22. Mr. McCarty reminded the Board that they had previously discussed Deregistration (DREG) at the September and October meetings. He recently completed his research on the program and gave the board a summary update.

Mr. McCarty stated that the overall goal was to provide information to Cabinet so that they can determine whether the DREG practice should continue. If so, they need to see whether or not there are changes needed to update the practice. Mr. McCarty mentioned that he met with all college departments potentially affected by the DREG practice to learn if or how this practice affects their operation, and then develop clear procedures for working with students before the semester begins so they can clearly identify how they intend to pay their account.

The research project came about in the fall of 2023 because the financial aid office was very understaffed in the fall and subsequently, the winter of 2024. This provided an opportunity to gather data to determine whether performing DREG tasks had a significant impact on the College’s income.

Mr. McCarty explained that the DREG list contains a list of students who have not paid their balance by the College established due date (usually the day before the first day of class). The ultimate goal is to take as many students of the list as possible. Work on the DREG list typically begins two weeks prior to the state of classes.

Students can end up on the DREG list in several ways 1) They have a balance over the minimum amount of $75; 2) They have not signed up for payment plan; 3) They are not dual enrolled; 4) They do not have financial aid awarded; or 5) They have not been flagged by an MCCC employee with a “SAVE” notation. There are between 270 and 400 students on the DREG list.

Mr. McCarty noted that two weeks prior to the first day of classes, the students are called, and sent emails and test messages. Student must respond to indicate they will take care of their tuition balance. The vast majority of these students do not respond, or their voicemail is full. A minimum of three attempts are made to contact the student. Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Success sends an email to the students asking them to contact the College regarding their tuition balance. The President also makes phone calls during this time. When a student responds and indicates they intend to make a payment, apply for financial aid, bring in documents to complete their financial aid file, indicates an employer is paying their tuition, has the Michigan Educational Trust (MET), Michigan Reconnect, Michigan Tuition Incentive Program (TIP), Michigan Future for Frontliners, Michigan Futures for Frontliners, Michigan Achievement Scholarship, or MCCC Scholarships, they are removed from the list.

Mr. McCarty added that, for the remaining of the students on the list (about 60-80), the Financial Aid Office looks up their information a few days before the drop day and takes them off the list if they paid cash in a previous semester, had employer paid previously, had applied for financial aid regardless if they needed to turn in documents to complete their file, had Michigan Reconnect, TIP, MET, Futures for Frontliners or scholarships in a previous semester, or if they have purchase books. The rest of the students are dropped at 100 percent the day before classes begin. The College receives about eight to 10 calls each semester from students complaining because they were dropped. In many cases, these students are not able to register for the classes from which they were dropped, which is upsetting, especially if they are in programs that follow a specific rotation. This can delay their education. Sometimes the students take the semester off due to not finding a schedule which will work for them. Since MCCC
does not have a written policy on the DREG practice, should a student complain about being dropped from classes, MCCC has nothing in writing which would explain why the student was dropped.

Currently, the financial aid staff are the only staff who have access to not only the financial aid computer screens but who can also view the business office and bookstore screens. The Financial Aid office has the access necessary to make a determination of whether to drop or keep a student. Sometimes these students are close to graduation.

Mr. McCarty stated that this fall there were 273 students on the list. This was an opportunity to collect some data so he determined by going through the list and removing students that we would have had 53 students that could have been dropped, and the total dollar amount of the tuition for those 53 students was a little under $81,000; however, since we did not drop anyone, we had 17 students other than 53 who eventually paid their account in full, totaling $28,000 in revenue. Mr. McCarty estimated the dollar amount of staff salary from winter 2023 to complete the DREG would be $11,888. When we look at it a different way, the financial impact of dropping those students is a little over $41,000, which is good amount of money. When you compare that to a $29 million budget, you can see it is not actually that much when factoring in the amount of time and all the different things that go with implementing the DREG.

Mr. McCarty presented some student completion data to the Board. Of the 53 student who could have been dropped, 22 received grades of “E”; 19 received grades of “D”; Nine students withdrew from their classes; and Three students dropped their classes at 100 percent. The grade distribution for the 17 students who paid in full were, nine A’s, Nine B’s, two C’s; 1 D, and 6 E’s.

Mr. McCarty also looked at the timelines of when students paid their accounts. He should the Board the first set of data, which reflects the payment dates for all 273 students on the DREG list. Next, he showed them the second set of data, which reflects the payment dates for the 53 students on the DREG list. Some students on the DREG list eventually received financial aid and did not need to make a payment and some students made more than one payment during the semester. For all students on the list, October, November and December were very busy months. There actually had a lot of people who decided to pay off their account in January, so that they could register for the next semester. If you look at just the 53 the DREG students, the data shows that October and November were the biggest month for payments.

Mr. McCarty went e “Next Steps.” Cabinet now has data to determine whether the DREG practice should continue, and if so, make any necessary changes to update the practice. They can also develop clear procedures, cross departmentally, for working with students before the semester begins, and help them clearly identify how they intend to pay their account. Process mapping sessions have also been scheduled. This also give Cabinet a chance to clearly communicate with faculty, staff, and students on this issue before fall 2024 semester begins.

Dr. Behrens announced that he is scheduled to present on this topic at March Michigan Student Services Association of Community Colleges. They have asked that we come and present. Mr. McCarty add that the association also asked for MCCC’s data, when they found out we were working on this in December.

C. 3. a. (4) 23. Dr. Scott Behrens, Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Success, gave the Board and update on Disability Services C. 3 a, (3), and introduced Crystal Palmer, CCO, Monroe County Mental Health Authority (MCMHA), and Adam Anastasoff, Director, MCMHA, who reported on the partnership between MCCC and MCMHA.

Dr. Behrens reported that MCCC disability staff have been truly overwhelmed as we have seen huge increases in mental health issues. He thanked Gerald McCarty for working with the Healthy Mind Study. MCCC surveyed all its students just over a year ago. What we found is that over a third of our students had mental health issues, and the staff were overwhelmed having to navigate every issue. That was happening on campus as well. We added a new full-time position there, but in order to address mental health, we have formed fabulous and amazing partnership with Crystal and her team that is just transformative.
Crystal Palmer, announced that she is the Chief Clinical Officer at Monroe County Mental Health Authority. She gave an overview of MCMHA’s mission and services. MCMHA has been in business for over 50 years. They provide mental health services, outpatient services to those who have mental illness, ADD, intellectual developmental disability, and substance abuse challenges. They have 24/7 crisis services, which she will talk about in more detail shortly, and last year, they served about 3000 people in the community. As we know, especially after the pandemic, mental health has and substance abuse has ally impacted many people. Our goal is to serve the community and promote wellness. They provide an array of services that are listed in the handout. Many of the flyers that are in the packet will cover those services a little more in depth.

Ms. Palmer stated that the most important thing she wanted to talk about were the services MCMHA provides to MCCC. They have a staff that comes to MCCC, her name is Amber Kreichbaum, Mental Health Consultant, she is literally stationed at the College, providing mental health services. That was made possible through the partnership with the College that is really moving forward with knowing how mental health can impact students and getting them the services that they need. The she can either treat them here or if they need longer term services, she can refer them to our facility.

The other piece that is really important is Certified Community-based Health Clinic (CCBHC). These services to anyone. In the past county mental health could only provide services to those who were on Medicaid and uninsured, and those who were the most severe. Now we are allowed to actually serve those who are mild to moderate, and the severe population, so we no longer have to refer out. Anyone can come to MCMHA and receive services for mental health and then we can provide outpatient services for substance use disorder. Our numbers have increased slightly. We just started our CCBHC status as of October 1, 2023, so we are still working out the bugs, but this does allow us to serve more people and continue our partnership with the College.

Adam Anastasoff, Access, Crisis, and Jail Diversion Services Director, gave an overview of Amber Kreichbaum the crisis services offered by MCMHA. They have a 24/7 crisis line that is available to anybody, regardless of insurance status, residency, or ability to pay; anybody can call. The crisis line is available 24/7 365 days a year. The person who answers the phone is somebody who is employed by Monroe CMH, not from any outside contracting agency. When people call, we will triage the need. We figure out what is going and how we can help. If we can just do something on the phone, we will do so. If further intervention is needed, we can deploy our crisis mobile services.

The crisis mobile services were implemented October 1, 2023 and are available 24/7. They can serve any need in the community in its Monroe County base so it can go anywhere in the county. The service can be deployed from MCMHA’s afterhours access services if they define a need from who is calling. The mobile services are partnered with law enforcement. Law enforcement in the community receive a lot of behavioral health calls. They define the need, and then call us and we come out into employ and help them with whatever that need is, even if it’s getting somebody to the hospital. We try to keep everybody in their home safety plan and figure out how we can help them address the need further with outpatient services. As for as far as access goes, people are able to get services with us by going through our access center. People can be referred we have a universal referral form so providers or outside sources can refer to us and we can follow up on those referrals, but then individual can call as well and request services. We then do a screening on the phone. It is brief 20 to 30 minutes screening, and then we schedule them for the biopsychosocial assessment, which is the full assessment to get them involved in services.

Ms. Palmer noted that the costs for services at MCCC can be covered by Medicaid and we are in the process of being able to bill private insurance. Those who are still uninsured, we use our general funds to pay for those services. Both student s and staff can use the services, especially the crisis line. The crisis lines are same number. Individuals can call the front desk Monday through Friday, or they can call the afterhours number. They will assess anybody with any need. If there's something that we cannot serve, we find the appropriate resources and get them plugged in. So, speech therapy may be an aspect of that. We don't provide speech therapy directly but it can be part of that treatment.
Mr. Anastasoff said that they do have multiple locations. We have the Rasinville Campus next door. We do have an office at the Benesh building, which is on South Monroe Street by Tim Hortons. We have access clinician housed there every day from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. They are available for walk-ins and appointments, and other to be closer to downtown area. They do accept walk-ins at the Rasinville office as well. And we do have a presence at the MCOP Opportunity Center that has a peer-based presence. Our peers are there to assess the need, figure out what is going on, and then they can refer them to our access department for further follow up.

Dr. Behrens thank Ms. Palmer and Mr. Anastasoff. They came on a couple of years ago and talked about providing services. We meet every other Thursday at 9:00 a.m. The partnership is amazing. They come forward and recommend services. They get our concerns they get our students and if you ever want to see Ms. Kreichbaum, she is perfectly situated in an office with Disability Services in the tutoring and testing center. I would say the majority of students have an onset of an issue or essentially during testing.

A detailed PowerPoint of the Partnership handout between MCCC and MCMHA handout is available from the President’s office and is part of the permanent Board file.

C. 3. a. (5) 24. Enrollment Demographic Report (Behrens, Wygonik)

Dr. Scott Behrens and Dr. Quri Wygonik, Director Institutional Research, Planning & Accreditation, co-presented an enrollment demographic report, providing insights on enrollment trends and strategies for higher education institutions.

Dr. Wygonik gave the updated using the performance indicator dashboards as a visual of the report. She showed the Board how to navigate to the dashboards from the Institutional Research page landing page (https://www.monroeccc.edu/institutional-research), selecting key performance indicators (https://www.monroeccc.edu/key-performance-indicators), and then selecting the module that fits the research requirements of the user (enrollment analytics, student demographics, student performance, student progress, and student satisfaction). She indicated that moving forward they, effective winter, is combine their enrollment reports and present an extension of what they present in the fall semester. Dr. Wygonik began with the student demographics suite. Anyone that can access the website can access this dashboard.

Dr. Wygonik pointed out that the default setting is five semesters. She demonstrated how to access a comparison of headcount between Winter 2023 and Winter 2024, noting that as mentioned by Dr. Behrens at the last board meeting, enrollment is slightly up 2 percent, year-over-year. Dr. Behrens commented that when looking at the 25 and older group you start to see the Reconnect students. In 2022, we had roughly about a 11.6 percent increase in enrollment. The enrollment team really went after those students. Now we are seeing a diminishing return. Joe Verkennes and I discussed this and at that time, we captured over 10 percent of all students eligible for that program, which was absolutely phenomenal, and MCCC was one of the top two or three in the state. The enrollment management team plans a hard push again this year as now the eligibility age has dropped to 21. That will be in effect after this semester.

Dr. Behrens moved on to the FITIAC status. FITIAC stands for First Time in Any College. He commented that with the new educational advocates, under Katie Navock, Director of Enrollment Management, we have been able to fully use our new CRM doing after that 80, they have really been able to start using our new (FITIAC) students. The dashboard shows a significant gain in this population this semester. We usually get those students in the fall. That is largely responsible for our age in students. He noted that high school graduation rates were down significantly this past year. He commended the Advocates Team and he believes they will be able to do great things in the fall. With that said, we are expecting to have a huge drop in graduation gains from our nine area high schools this coming spring and summer. That concerns Dr. Behrens except for the fact that the other day and said that we had a 12.5 percent increase in Applications. The new CRM application process allows us to see that kind of data. Dr. Behrens commended Mr. Verkennes who was a huge advocate of that process.
Dr. Wygonik showed an Excel file with a table her office put together that shows comparative table for winter semester. The table shows the 2023 graduating class and the students from our Monroe area high schools that are enrolled at the College. We want to focus on the change from 2022 to 2023, which shows an increase in our market share, but it is relatively stable from winter 2023 to winter 2024, which is partially due to the Advocates who bring in new students from the market share pool. Dr. Behrens commended Brianna Pio for her work on this table. He said that this is very usable for the Advocates and they can really target high schools in particular.

Dr. Wygonik moved on to the final data point. Curtis Creagh, Vice President of Finance and Administration, is monitoring this data and Ms. Wygonik’s office will be putting together some projections for hi for tuition setting. Dr. Wygonik explained that she and her team have updated billable contact hours and credit hours. The winter semester shows that due to increased enrollment of 2.2 percent, we are up.

Dr. Behrens noted that one of the goals of our grants has been to increase enrollment of minority students and do a much better job of interacting with them as a college. He showed the Board a comparison of enrollment by race ethnicity, pulling out white people and “unknown” (declined to report). Looking at students who have reported race ethnicity, we see an increase in racial ethnic minorities. This is a huge goal of D3C3, as well as a goal of MCC. Dr. Wygonik reported that enrollment of the “unknown population is relatively stable but consistently higher that is desired. Dr. Wygonik move on to the next data point, comparing part-time, full-time status, showing gains in full-time students. Dr. Behrens explained that this is important because we are trying to work with our students and help them recognize that the faster they finish their education, the faster they get a job and make more money. This is a balance of figuring out what students can do effectively and finish college, but are huge number of students that are taking one or two classes at a time. Looking at the persistence data shows us that when they take classes in this manner, they do not finish.

C. 3. b. (1) 25. President Quartey summarized his reports to the Trustees, which he sends every other week.

Dr. Quartey reported that he met with Cabinet to confer about the Restroom Use and Non-discrimination Statement Policy President Quartey reported that the general audit in now complete and has been appropriately submitted to the state. Work continues on the submission of the Single (Compliance) audits for HEERF, Financial Aid and Upward Bound by the March 31st deadline. He noted that earlier in the meeting the Board heard about the funds the College received from the Village of Dundee.

Regarding the Monroe Link Plan, Dr. Quartey met with TC Clements and Dr. Steve McNew and had a personal conversation with both. They are going to meet to ensure that MCCC is included as part of that link. The listening sessions are ongoing. Dr. Quartey was in crisis management training last week Harvard and learned several things that we can certainly use during these difficult times at MCCC. AACC is holding its national conference on April 4-9. Dr. Scott Behrens, Gerald McCarty, and others from the campus are planning to attend the conference. Dr. Quartey is presenting at the conference on “Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Challenges”. MCCC was ranked 5th out of all the community college requests for Capital Outlay. Dr. Quartey announced that the MCCC History Book is in its final review stage. The book covers 2000 through 2022.

C. 3. b. (4) 25. Joshua Myers, Executive Director of the Foundation, announced that nominations for Alumnus of the Year are due to the President’s Office by March 11, 2024. The committee recommendation is due to the Board at the March 25th regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. Nominees must be past and/or present students who have earned 24 credit hours or more or past and/or present students who have graduated from Monroe Community College.

The nomination form and a history of past recipients is available on the College website at https://www.monroeccc.edu/alumni/alumnus-of-the-year.

Dr. Myers announced that the nominations for the College Supporter of the Year is due to the President’s office on April 1, 2024. The committee recommendation is due to Board at the April 22, 2024 regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.
The nomination form and a history of past recipients is available on the College website at https://www.monroeccc.edu/college-supporter-of-the-year-award.

C. 4. b. (1) 26. Chair Aaron Mason read the following summary of the Presidential evaluation.

“The Board met on June 20, 2023 to discuss the year’s performance of the President. Each Trustee submitted ratings and commentary on key functional areas of the college. One Trustee was not present, and another Trustee left the meeting before it was adjourned. The Board met again on November 27, 2023, to conclude discussion with the inclusion of the formerly not present Trustee. The general consensus of the Board’s ratings and commentary on the President’s Performance was that the President is meeting the expectations of the Board and in some functional areas exceeding. The Board expressed some concern about employee turnover including in the areas of finance. The Board was very complementary on the President’s dedication to the college and outreach to students and community, but expressed some concern over the general climate surrounding faculty relations.”

C. 4. b. (2) 27. Chair Mason appointed the following Trustees to the Board Officer Nominating Committee:

Board Officer Nominating Committee:
Mary Kay Thayer
Krista K. Lambrix
Nicole R. Goodman

C. 4. b. (4) 28. Chair Mason noted the upcoming events.

C. 4. b. (5) 29. It was moved by Ms. Thayer and supported by Ms. Goodman that the meeting be adjourned.

The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Aaron N. Mason
Chair

Nicole N Goodman
Secretary

These minutes were approved at the March 25, 2024 regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.