

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

The Board Room, Z-203
La-Z-Boy Center
5:30 p.m. January 27, 2025

Present: Lynette M. Dowler, Julie M. Edwards, Nicole R. Goodman, Aaron N. Mason, Linda Roberts, Kristy Svatek Whitson, Mary Kay Thayer

Also Present: Amanda Althouse, Jenna Bazzell, Scott Behrens, Ned Birkey, Jack Burns, Peter Coomar, Kevin Cooper, Curtis Creagh, Samuel Gonzales, Christopher Gossett, Kristin Brown, Melissa Grey, Kelly Heinzerling, Rick Hubbert, Stephanie Kasprzak, Barry Kinsey, Michael LaHote Spencer Lyke, Linda Marsh, Gerald McCarty II, Joshua Myers, Tina Pillarelli, Kojo Quartey, Helen Stripling, Kristy Svatek-Whitson, Frank Thomas, Beverly Tomek, Mick Valentino, Joe Verkennes, Carl Whitson, Quri Wygonik, John Wyrabkiewicz, Grace Yackee, Penny Dorcey (recording secretary)

1. Chair Aaron Mason called the meeting at 5:31 p.m.
 2. Chair Mason administered the Oath of office to new Trustees, Kristy Svatek-Whitson and Linda M. Roberts.
 3. There were four delegations present.
- B. 2. a. (1) 4. The Board agreed by unanimous consent to pull item B. 2. a. (2) from the Consent agenda and to move it to New Business.

It was moved by Ms. Dowler and supported by Ms. Edwards that the Board approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- B. 2. a. (1) Approval of minutes of the November 25, 2024 regular meeting.
- B. 2. a. (3) Authorization for the President to Execute an Administrative Contract – Chisholm
- B. 2. a. (4) Authorization for the President to Execute a Continuing Faculty Contract – El Amin
- B. 2. a. (5) Authorization for the to Execute a Continuing Faculty Contract – Lechner
- B. 2. a. (6) Authorization for the President to Execute a Faculty Contract- Iqbal
- B. 2. a. (7) Authorization for the President to Execute a Faculty Contract – Goodwin
- B. 2. a. (8) Authorization for the President to Execute a Continuing Faculty Contract – Gregory
- B. 2. a. (9) Authorization for the President to Execute a Continuing Faculty Contract – Griswold
- B. 2. a. (10) Authorization for the President to Execute a Professional Staff Contract - Schreiber

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 2. a. (3) 5. *It was moved by Mrs. Thayer and supported by Ms. Roberts that the Board authorize the President to execute a continuing contract for Curtis Creagh, Vice President of Finance and Administration.*

The motion failed unanimously.

6. The Board agreed by unanimous consent to move delegation remarks by Ned Birkey forward in the agenda.
- C. 2. a. (1) 7. Ned Birkey gave an update on the Agricultural Program. He introduced Kristen Brown, MCCC/MSU Agricultural Program Coordinator for Monroe County Community College and Michigan State University.

Ms. Brown commented, that she is new to the program, but the project Mr. Birkey has been working on very close to his heart. Having the farm so close to the college and on the property are a huge asset for the students. She thanked

the Board for the opportunity to be part of the program and said that she has enjoyed her time at MCCC thus far.

Mr. Birkey gave the Board, two handouts, one explaining the project and a diagram. diagram of the larger display on his board. He commented that “if you driven by campus, you know that the college has granted him, and Andy McCain originally, the 12 acres just north of the buildings for what is called the student ag farm. The farm was originally set up eight years ago, partly as a lab for the ag classes. Mr. Birkey announced that he is presently teaching the plant pathology lab, and collecting plant samples (roots). He showed the Board a larger diagram of the project. Michigan State University will fund the project.

Mr. Birkey is proposing the first permanent facility for the ag program, which will be located on the original 12 acres as indicated by the yellow circle on the diagram He said that the building is basically a pavilion. The drawing of the pavilion was rendered by Mr. Birkey’s son, who is an architect. His daughter-in-law is also a licensed architect.

Mr. Birkey explained that he met with Dr. Quartey and Jack Burns, director of Planning and Facilities, a couple of weeks ago to get their perception and approval. Tonight, he is seeking the Board’s approval, as the structure would be permanent. The pavilion could be used by classes, summer groups, for field days, and other multiple uses. He explained that the structure is simple like a State Park pavilion with just a roof and a concrete floor. For now, he wants to keep the building simple and hopefully when the Welch building expansion happens, the plan is to run electricity from there to the pavilion so it has lights and a coffee pot.

Mr. Birkey explained that, assuming the Board approves the project, his next step is to go to Township Planning Commission, to get their approval, and then to the township board to get their approval. Earlier today he received an email reply from Jennifer Rivera, Director of the Institute of Agricultural Technology (IAT) in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at MSU, today and he believes she may come up with enough money to pay for the materials for the project. He also has a retired building instructor from Eastern Michigan, who is working on bids for the materials, and then plans to get volunteers to actually, build it. His goal is to have the pavilion up by this summer.

Mr. Birkey said that other plans for the building include a weather station (WS on the diagram) that he and Dr. Kevin Cooper, Dean of Science and Mathematics, and Keith Mason, MSU Outreach Specialist, have been working on together. This will allow MCCC access to weather data at the pavilion 24/7. Down the road, Mr. Birkey is proposing to add some bee hives on the plot to help pollinate the vegetable plants. Tonight, however, he is specifically asking the Board to approve the building of the pavilion.

Dr. Quartey said that he and Jack Burns Jr. have discussed the project with Mr. Birkey and it is not just for the ag program, as he stated earlier. It is for any use at all, including other classes.

Mr. Birkey restated that MSU will fund the project and anything not covered will be paid for by the Ag Advisory Council and other donations, Doctor Quartey and Sue said no college money. WE the program began eight years ago, Dr. Quartey and Suzanne Wetzel, former Voice President of Administration, said that no College money can be spent on the ag farm and to date, Mr. Birkey is proud to say that no College funds have been used for the ag farm.

Mr. Birkey reminded the Board that they do have a detailed architectural drawing; however, they still need a site plan. Mr. Birkey’s son was actually here over the weekend and looked at the site, so he could do a site plan. The site plan and that was the only other thing that Mr. Burns said he needed. The township will need that for their approval as well.

It was moved by Ms. Thayer and supported by Ms. Edwards that the Board to approve the conceptual construction of the pavilion with the exact details to follow at a future meeting.

Chair Mason called for discussion of the motion.

Mr. Birkey noted that there are 13 community colleges that MSU works with through the IAT College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at MSU. So MCCC is one of 13, but this summer the person in charge of the program, Dr. Jennifer Rivera, mentioned the magic word, money. Currently, we do everything with donations, grants, or volunteers. Today, Dr. Rivera said she had enough money to pay for the materials, which we estimated to be \$15,000, plus the concrete.

Chair Mason mentioned that the bike trail goes right by the ag farm and bikers could stop at the pavilion and sit outside. Mr. Birkey commented that We he and Keith Mason built the original eight raised beds, they left a big area in the middle specifically for something like this pavilion. They had a donation at that time and then COVID hit and everything fell apart. So now, with the ribbon cutting for the Welch Health Sciences Building expansion and the MSU funding, this is a good time to move forward.

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (1) 8. Ms. Thayer explained that the Board Nomination Committee (Mrs. Thayer, Ms. Goodman and Ms. Lambrix) met earlier last semester and agreed to keep the officers the same, with the exception of replacing Ms. Lambrix as the Vice Chair. Ms. Thayer recommended Trustee Dowler as the Vice Chair.

It was moved by Ms. Thayer and supported by Trustee Svatek Whitson that Aaron N. Mason be elected Chair of the Board of Trustees for a two-year term; that Lynette M. Dowler elected Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees for a two-year term; and that Nicole R. Goodman be elected Secretary of the Board of Trustees for a two-year term.

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (2) 8. *It was moved by Mr. Mason and supported by s. Roberts that Curtis E. Creagh Vice President of Finance and Administration, be named Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of the Community College District of Monroe County, Michigan for a two-year term.*

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (3) 9. *It was moved by Ms. Dowler and supported by Ms. Edwards that the following resolution of Commendation for Mrs. Deborah Baker be adopted:*

WHEREAS, Mrs. Deborah Baker has decided to retire from her position at Monroe County Community College, effective January 31, 2025, with her last day of work being January 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Baker has diligently served Monroe County Community College as a Cashier for the past 16 years; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Baker began her career at MCCC in 2008 as a part-time Cashier and transitioned to full-time in 2009, becoming an invaluable asset to the department and the college, especially with the consolidation of the Switchboard and Cashier positions; an

WHEREAS, Mrs. Baker demonstrated a commitment to the college's success by actively participating in and contributing to various employee events and committees, helping the college meet its goals; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Baker effectively managed a wide range of essential tasks associated with her role as Cashier, consistently demonstrating creativity and initiative in streamlining processes; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Baker exemplified a dependable work ethic, earning a reputation for her proficiency, problem-solving abilities, attention to detail, and dedication to ensuring the smooth operation of the office and division; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Baker was known for providing excellent customer service, offering assistance with professionalism and warmth to students, stakeholders, and vendors who sought help or information;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees recognizes Mrs. Deborah Baker for her 16 years of dedicated service to Monroe County Community College; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees expresses its very best wishes for her continued success, well-being, and happiness in the next chapter of her life, with heartfelt appreciation for her contributions to MCCC, on this day, January 27, 2025.

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (4) 10. *It was moved by Ms. Goodman and supported by Mrs. Thayer that the following resolution of commendation for Mr. Michael Costello be adopted:*

WHEREAS, Mr. Michael Costello, has decided to retire from his position as General Maintenance Worker with Monroe County Community College, effective January 31, 2025, and

WHEREAS, for 16 years, he has been considered an outstanding employee who has helped to foster an excellent maintenance program in the Facilities Department, and

WHEREAS, in the performance of this duties he has secured the Certified Cleaning Technician endorsement to assist him in maintaining the College's buildings, and

WHEREAS, he has served as a mentor, role model and trainer for the custodial student assistants from the Monroe County ISD Transition Center and the Project SEARCH Transition-to-Work Program, and

WHEREAS, he has demonstrated a high level of commitment and dedication to our students, faculty, staff, and community, and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees recognize Mr. Michael Costello, 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, January 27, 2025.

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (5) 11. *It was moved by Ms. Dowler and supported by Ms. Goodman that the Board approve Policy 3.18, Student Employee Wage Rate, as revised.*

Curtis Creagh, Vice President of Finance and Administration, Announced that this year there are two different rates increases; one that started January 1, 2025 and another that is scheduled to start on February 21, 2025. The rate increased from \$10.33 to \$10.56 for January 1st; however, there are a lot of manual operations to get those rates set up. The administration decided to go right to the \$12.48 rate now, rather than increasing the rate twice, but with the language of no less than \$10.56 added.

Dr. Quartey added that one of the challenges the campus is facing is that students can go and work at McDonalds or Wendy's for \$15 to \$17, which is more that student wage rate, so there is some external competition. The wage increase is a state mandate.

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (6) 12. Chair Mason noted to the Trustees that there is a recommended motion for the proposed Board resolution for Maintenance and Improvement Renewal ballot language. This is a time sensitive item with a timeline involved. He asked Dr. Quartey to present some background for the motion.

Dr. Quartey explained that the millage is critical to the College's existence. This is a renewal, the Headlee Act is not included in the language. The last request, which included language for both the renewal and the Headlee Act, failed. The deadline to get this on the ballot is February 11th, so the Board needs to make a decision tonight if the College plans is to move forward with the millage renewal request. The initial approval is to consider the strategy and tactics, all of that which we brought forward to you.

Dr. Quartey gave the Board some statistics from election in November 2024. He provided the Board with a report with information on the last election. He stated that even though it was an overall loss, there were some areas in which it won, such as the City of Monroe, the City of Milan, parts of Frenchtown, parts of Bedford, and we came close in some areas. There was, of course, some active opposition, but there are some possibilities as we attempt to interact with our community and move forward in May. He The point is, if we do not attempt a renewal now, we miss an opportunity. The current renewal expires by the next election.

We could also attempt the renewal in August or November. That gives us three opportunities. If we do not make an attempt in May, then we only have two opportunities. So that is a Board consideration. Chair Mason added that each of those election dates have a defined deadline. Chair Mason cautioned the Trustees not to read too much into the failure of the last renewal request. He urged them to look at the data provided to them on precinct results. Dr. Quartey provided the Board with all of the information in his report.

Dr. Quartey went on to say that, at this point we cannot be sure if we will have nay groups campaigning against the millage like they did in November, but he assured the Board that he and his team are having dialogue with our community at this point in time.

Joshua Myers, Executive Director of the Foundation, gave the Board a few quick points to consider. The chair did mention it was a very narrow loss. Looking at the total amount of county-wide votes we were 2.65 percent away from actually winning. Had we had Another point to consider is that this renewal is about maintenance and improvement. He believes the College has a really good case statement for being good stewards of the funds that we have used over the previous two millages. But that is not just what this mileage is about. We have a lot more projects we need to do here on campus. There is a lot more infrastructure that needs to be improved, but it is not just about creating new projects. The reality is that the College has been absorbing costs out of the General Fund through these millages, to do maintenance and improvement on campus, that, if the millage did not exist, the College would then have to absorb the costs from the General Fund.

Dr. Myers went on to say that he just had a conversation with John Wyrabkiewicz today regarding maintenance and improvement about the impact the renewal millage has had on campus. Next year, the College is scheduling at least \$500,000 in capital improvements in technology, probably another \$500,000 the next year. So, over the next two years, the College is looking at \$1,000,000 in technology capital improvements that have to happen. We have the mileage, that's \$1,000,000 we get back in the General Fund to do all the things that we do. If we do not pass the mileage, those dollars are not going to be able to be spent helping students, or paying employees to help students. The College is 80 percent personnel, so we are looking at our single largest tax payer in the county going away. It is either is going to be significantly reduced, or gone during the period that this mileage will be approved. So, there are some really potentially tectonic changes to our General Fund that this mileage will help us with as well.

The Board asked for information regarding the millage projects at the next meetings leading up to May so that they could discuss those projects. So, if community members want to what the funds are actually going toward. Dr. Myers mentioned that thanks to Jack twice a week. He said that the Board could also discuss them in Board meetings and they would be a part of the minutes. These have been posted since the last election. The other good news, is that the benefit of losing an election is that you already have the ballot language ready to go, so there is no running through legal and all the things that lead up to. So, this is really just a matter of hitting the election deadline. are not really rushing anything.

Dr. Myers advised that the College really still look toward the fall in terms of making a full push through a strategic plan of getting out information to the voters, but there are a lot of people in this county who voted yes already and they presumably have a good idea of what we are asking.

Mr. Burns announced that all the projects are on the website and Mr. Burns posts weekly reports. Anyone can see previous projects, what the money has been spent on, and there is a list of future projects. We may capture parts of other projects within other projects though. Without the millage Maintenance and Improvement millage, The College would end up where it was previously with the deferred maintenance deficit, and that is never where you want to be as an institution.

Mrs. Thayer commented that it has not been long since the last election. She thinks there are “a lot of band aids to put on in the community.” She believes that going forward in the May election is pushing “our luck.” Because trying to get everyone onboard, and resolving the conflict over the Eliot Larson Act is a big undertaking. She prefers the College waits until the November election.

Mrs. Dowler commented that, although the information is on the website and we have future plans that may all be approved, it would be very helpful for the Board to be armed with just basic talking points. We can go to the website and do the research ourselves, but it would be great if in the coming Board meetings, the administration could provide the Board with a synopsis of talking points, so that when we are unexpectedly asked at Kroger in the checkout line, “Hey, what’s this millage all about?”, we can give an educated clear answer. Dr. Myers stated that the team would work on a business card with an elevator pitch.

Chair Mason said that there were two balanced, moving issues, that affected the millage request last November. One was the Elliot Larson Act and the community’s reaction. So, what would be helpful as well if some of these capital improvements involved added single-use restrooms. The College does budget for maintenance in an annual budget. Over time, if you do not do that, eventually you have to. At the time College facilities were falling apart. He suggested the administration address some those questions regarding the projects, or the ability to recapture tax money back, to show that the College is fiscally responsible and is not just spending money on operations, it is compounding grant money back from the state. That would be helpful as well as part of this conversation.

Ms. Roberts commented that she was employed at the college for the first millage and she actually knocked on doors as an employee, but what was presented to us at that time was that it was a one-time, five-year millage for taxpayers. Then there was a second five-year mileage, and now the College is asking the community to go into 15 years and taxpayers in the Community and in the nation are struggling right now. He stated that this is what she is hearing in the community and that is something to consider. As Mr. Mason said, said, we did use the budget for maintenance, and we absolutely needed the millage early on to make repairs to the buildings that were old and falling apart, but there is still a concern out in the community.

Mrs. Thayer added that prior to the millage Maintenance and Improvement Millage, the College went for almost 12 years without a budget for

maintenance and repairs and the buildings were in dire need. We do not want to get there again.

Ms. Edwards asked if there was ever a plan to not go for another.

Dr. Quartey responded that that is not typically how it works when you have deferred maintenance and deal with capital improvement. There is still a great need for capital improvement on our campus, and as the buildings get older, that need continues to escalate. Mr. Mason brought up a third point of consideration that impacted the last millage. With the inflation that we had and with the escalation of insurance costs and the way the escrow accounts work on people's mortgages. It is based on a budget for them and if the bills go up super high then they go to pay that bill out of the B escrow. Also, the escrow is underfunded.

So now the property management is to collect that underfunding back from that homeowner and budget for the next year, so it is like a double hit. So, homeowners felt the increase in taxation, even though it is capped, but they felt it on the insurance level as well.

Dr. Myers mentioned that the impact on homeowners was \$4.00 a month on \$100,000 home, which four years ago and even eight years ago was different story. So, those who have a \$200,000 home pay \$8.00 a month. He also mentioned that currently, website is not front facing. It was front facing while we were going for the Headlee adjustment and the and the Maintenance and Replacement millage. The page gives all of the projects, by building, that have been completed in phase one and phase two over the first two millages, and then what is or will be completed by the end of this phase, and then phase three would be upcoming projects. Dr. Myers will get the link from Mr. Verkennes and get them to Ms. Dorsey and she will send them out to the Board. More information will be provided to the Board during the next meetings.

It was moved by Ms. Goodman and supported by Ms. Edwards that the Board authorizes the following ballot language be placed on the May 6, 2025, regular election ballot:

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has determined that, in its exercise of its statutory duties and in order to best serve the needs of the College, a zero-increase renewal of .85 mill be levied by Monroe County Community College for a period of 5 years (2026–2030) to be used for renovation and upgrade of the College's infrastructure and facilities, which will include safety projects, accessibility projects, technology projects, learning environment projects, and maintenance projects.

WHEREAS, the Proposed Ballot Language will read as follows:

ADDITIONAL MILLAGE PROPOSAL

This millage proposal would allow the Community College District of Monroe County to levy a zero-increase renewal of .85 mill for a period of 5 years (2026– 2030), for renovation and upgrade of the infrastructure and facilities of Monroe County Community College, which will include safety projects, accessibility projects, technology projects, learning environment projects, and maintenance projects.

Shall the total limitation on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all taxable property in the Community College District of Monroe County, County of Monroe, Michigan, except property exempted by law, be renewed by .85 mill (\$0.85 per \$1,000 of taxable value) and levied for a period of 5 years (2026–2030), to provide funds for renovation and upgrade of the infrastructure and facilities of Monroe County Community College, which will include safety projects, accessibility projects, technology projects, learning environment projects, and maintenance projects? If approved, this millage would raise an estimated \$6.7 million for the College District in 2026 (this is a renewal of a millage which will expire with the 2025 levy).

Yes

No

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this ballot language be submitted to the County Clerk of Monroe County, Michigan, for submission to the electorate of the Community College District of Monroe County at the regular election to be held on May 6, 2025.

THAT IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that all other resolutions and/or all parts of other resolutions that conflict with this resolution are rescinded.

Chair Mason opened the floor for discussion. Topics included timing of the millage (advantages of now versus later), the ability to combine millage funds with state funds; investing and reinvesting in the College and community; the effect of enrollment fluctuations; Workforce Pell on the horizon; improved campus infrastructure; the need for quality instructional spaces; technology needs for students (both online and on campus); marketing the millage; Board education; and the correlation between enrollment and employment.

Mr. Mason requested a comprehensive report on the millage strategy and information with the addition of millage links for presentation at the February meeting. The Board needs to be prepared answer questions from the community in regard to the millage.

The motion passed five to two; with nay votes from Trustee Svatek-Whitson and Trustee Thayer.

C. Information and Proposals

1. Delegations

- C. 1. a. (1) 13. Stephanie Kasprzak, Executive Director, Monroe County Opportunity Program (MCOP) and the Opportunity Center at ALCC, reported that the MCOP is celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2025, so she is visiting all of the MCOP's amazing partners this year to express her gratitude and thanks for partnering with us, and the Community College has definitely one of those partners. Ms. Kasprzak has held her leadership role at MCOP for 20 years. For many of those years she has worked very closely with President Quartey on some amazing projects. She highlighted three of those projects, not only for the new trustees and the ones who have been around a while, but also, if MCCC renews its millage, she would be happy to be part of the team that goes out and helps you secure that millage.

Ms. Kasprzak said that she was glad to be able to hear Mr. Birkey's presentation on the pavilion because the urban garden has been a wonderful partnership with the Community College, not only to provide emergency food to the Lord's Harvest Pantry, Ned and Pete bring produce over a couple days a week, sometimes every day and it feeds a lot of hungry people. That has been a tremendous partnership and Ms. Kasprzak is glad to see it growing and expanding. Secondly, for a couple of years they have had a summer employee that at the Opportunity Center who came to the garden and helped Ned and Pete with whatever they needed, and to learn valuable skills as they grow into their work life and career life; and they also had kids at the summer camps, come to the Opportunity Center to see the garden and pick vegetables and plant vegetables to see how everything works. So that is all part of what we do together in this community. Secondly, Ms. Kasprzak talked about the Heck's Market Food Pantry. The Food Pantry started because one of MCCC's former students, who is now an employee, wondered of the College would have a need for a food bank at the College. The student's name is Joe Hess and he also worked with Randy Daniels, former Vice President of Student and Information Services, to do a survey of the students to see what the need was. The need was great enough that MCCC found a space, MCOP provided the food, and there is going to be a rededication in February to begin online ordering for students. That has also been an amazing partnership between the two entities as well, to make sure that students, if they are hungry, making sure that they are not hungry. Finally, Ms. Kasprzak is so excited for the new Reconnect 21 grant that the College just received to work with adult learners, So MCOP is going to be focusing on a lot of that work at the Opportunity Center to get those who are 21 and older back in the College, MCOP will be providing transportation, childcare, and mentorship for the people at the Opportunity Center who would like to take advantage of that new grant. This is an amazing step in the right direction.

Ms. Kasprzak reiterated that Dr. Quartey has been an amazing partner along this journey. She thanked MCCC and everyone continuing to partner with MCOP.

- C. 1. a. (2) 14. Mike LaHote is a resident of Monroe County, and the executive director of a non-profit here in Monroe. He noted that he is retired and his life experience has prompted him to offer his help in resolving the issues that are roadblocks to the success on upcoming millage. He has a great amount of experience in that area and many ideas that can help. As a neutral person he is not tied to any political organization and he is not connected to the College. He is a private individual who has the desire to help you get over this hurdle that that exists with the community and the people that have concerns. He can help educate them, find out more from them, and give them a voice to convey what they want.

Mr. LaHote would like to be a part of whatever it takes to make this College continue and to serve the community and the students. He has so much to give back to this community. When he sees things like opposition from people who want to go after your mileage and your donors because of an issue, he knows that he can be easily resolved them. Communication is key so that these people have the opportunity to share why they are feeling so insecure. Both sides should talk about that and work those things out rather than just take sides. That is not productive. The children who come here, for the most part, they are not part of all of the issue. They are just here for and the education and want to come and learn and better their lives. They want to be more a part of the community. Mr. LaHote hopes that there is some way that he can help and be a part of the process. It just benefits the community so much.

If the Board interested in his services, Mr. LaHote is happy to send a proposal.

2. President and Staff

- C. 3. a. (1) 16. Dr. Quartey announced the following staff appointments, probationary administrative contracts, continuing faculty contracts, third-year probationary faculty contracts, temporary full-time faculty contract, a retirement, and resignations:

Staff Appointment:

Emily Grabowski, Cashier, effective January 2, 2025 (replacing Sarah Rorke)

Michael St. Charles, Cashier, effective January 6, 2025 (replacing Deborah Baker)

Shaylynn Rollman, Financial Aid Assistant, effective January 6, 2025 (replacing Madelyn Outen)

Stacy Pearce, High School Liaison/Administrative Assistant, effective January 8, 2025 (replacing Carol Smith (PT) and Pamela Geiger PT))

Michelle Leicht, Administrative Assistant Lifelong Learning, effective January 13, 2025 (replacing Rebecca Fournier)

Nick DeArmond, Power Systems Trainee, effective February 3, 2025 (replacing Jacob Johnson)

Eric Clark, General Maintenance Worker, effective January 22, 2025 (replacing Mike Costello)

Professional Staff One-Year Probationary Contract:

Kellie Schreiber, Educational Advocate, effective February 10, 2025 (replacing Hazel McPherson)

Third-year Probationary Administrative Contract:

Curtis Creagh, Vice President of Finance and Administration, effective July 1, 2025 through, June 30, 2026

First-year Probationary Administrative Contract:

Christy Chisholm, Director of Nursing, effective December 20, 2024 through June 30, 2025 (Replacing Nicole Garner who served as interim during the vacancy left by the departure of Kimberly Lindquist)

Continuing Faculty Contracts:

Maria El-Amin, Associate Professor of Physics, Negotiated date, TBD

Hans Lechner, Associate Professor of Geosciences, Negotiated date, TBD

Third-Year Probationary Faculty Contracts:

Talha Iqbal Associate Professor, Electrical Engineering Technology, Negotiated date, TBD Associate Professor, Electrical Engineering Technology

Second-year Probationary Faculty Contracts:

Amanda Gregory, Associate Professor of Paralegal, Negotiated date, TBD
Ben Goodwin, Assistant Professor of English, Negotiated date, TBD
Selina Griswold, Associate Professor of Business, Negotiated date TBD

Retirement:

Mike Costello, General Maintenance Worker, effective January 31, 2025

Resignations:

Nancy Lucero-Altamirano, Assistant Director of Multicultural Community and Engagement, effective January 10, 2025
Sarah Fenik, Admissions Assistant, effective January 24, 2025
Larry Smith, Academic Skills Coordinator, effective February 7, 2025

- C. 3. a. (2) 15. Curtis Creagh, Vice President of Finance and Administration, gave the Board an update on the General Fund Revenues and Expenses for the periods ending November 30, 2024 and December 31, 2024.

Mr. Creagh thanked Kelly Heinzerling, Director of Auxiliary Services and Purchasing, for the new chairs in the Board room and for getting here for the first Board meeting of the year.

Mr. Creagh told the Trustees that both the November 30, 2024 and December 31, 2024 statements were in their Board packet, but since those are cumulative, that is how he will present them. He reported that there is \$31.2 million of revenues and expenses and in addition to that, the Board approved \$1.4 million in transfers as well.

Mr. Creagh reported recorded revenues this year of \$10.9 million against that \$31.2 million this year as compared to 9 million last year. That is a 35 percent to 31.5 percent change, year-over -year, largely because revenues have changed in that period due to a one-time payment from state appropriations because of the MPSERS program, an increase to the Tuition and Fees rate for in-district tuition, and an enrollment increase. Property taxes begin coming in in nominal amounts during December, but they increase in January and February, so we are expecting big property tax changes next month. Additionally, the "Other" category is comprised mainly of the College's investment income. Five percent of \$187,00 is investment income. Year-over -year, the budget is looking good.

Mr. Creagh said that in terms of expenses, the College still has \$31.2 million, and have recorded \$12.3 million compared to \$11.1 million last year. Year-to-year we are at 40 percent and 39.6 percent compared to 40.5 percent.

Mr. Creagh reported that the All of the information has been provided to the auditors and they are reviewing it.

Chair Mason asked Mr. Creagh if formal year end practices had been put in place yet to ensure that the trial balance has been adjusted for entries, as mentioned in one of the auditors' comments?

Mr. Creagh ensure the Board that that project that all is that in the works to have those procedures in place and get closer to the year month to month. In order to get the report, we have a soft closing of those periods around the 15th. That gives us about two days. Frank and I consistently check the calendar and that helps much more at the at the year's end. For the year end procedures, there are actually some written pieces that say who is responsible for which process.

Mr. Mason requested updates on the progress of the single-audit and the year-end procedures at subsequent meetings, as it would be very helpful to the Board.

- C. 3. b. (1) 16. Barry Kinsey, Director of Workforce Development, announced the Fall 2025 Enriching lives recipients. Mr. Kinsey congratulated the new Trustees. Mr. Kinsey commented that tonight, he is pleased to divert from the normal practice of awarding one Enriching Lives Award per semester, and instead, he is going to award two awards.

Mr. Kinsey stated that, this fall semester, there were six nominees for the Enriching Lives Award. All six were outstanding nominees that make Monroe County Community College a better place to attend school and to work. Normally, we would award one award, but this semester, we have two candidates that stand out, and we chose to break tradition and present them both with the award. The first recipient is Troy Cox, Chief of Safety Services. Some of the things the nominator had to say about Mr. Cox follow:

“I've had several interactions with Troy this month related to security issues. He has been professional, polite, and handled himself with integrity in each of these from students concerned about personal issues connected to potential stalking, to the ISD incident this month, which would have been in November. If you're not aware of the ISD had a harm person that was on campus, that left campus and went to a nearby homes so that we were we were notified of two reports of gunshots on campus. They weren't on our campus. It is. We're housed one mile from campus track, gun club, so that wasn't on our campus either. He and his team are putting themselves directly in the line of danger to ensure safety and security on this campus. I can't think of much more than enriches our lives than that right now.” Mr. Kinsey congratulated, Mr. Cox and thanked him for making Monroe County Community College a better place I've had several interactions with Troy this month related to security issues, I've heard of others. He has been professional, polite, and handled himself with integrity in each of these. From students concerned about personal issues connected to potential stalking, to the ISD incident this month, to reports of gunshots on campus. He, and his team, are putting themselves directly in the line of danger to ensure safety and security on this campus. I can't think of much that enriches our lives more right now.”

Mr. Kinsey noted that the next recipient is also very deserving of this award. She is Kelly Riley, Professional Counselor. Ms. Riley's nominator had this to say about her:

“Kelly is an incredible human being and super understanding to student's situation. Kelly is an academic counselor that has a tight schedule specially during registration periods, I have seen her multiple times meet with students even if they did not have an appointment to answer questions and help them get ready for the new semester (accessibility).

I also participate in the emergency scholarships panel with Kelly, she brings important insight and empathy from her experience with working directly with students. She aims to assist students who have unexpected emergency needs with great kindness.”

Kelly has done an incredible job presenting before hundreds of students for admissions events. She is relatable and easy to understand. She engages students through conversation and questions.”

Overall, we are very lucky to have Kelly on our team!”

Mr. Kinsey congratulated Ms. Riley and thanked her.

Mr. Kinsey announced the names of the other nominees, Chris Gossett, Manager of Enterprise Data Services; Katie Navok, Director of Enrollment Management; Helen Stripling, Dean of Health Sciences and Director of Respiratory Therapy; and Makenna Baldwin, Registrar Assistant and Processor.

- C. 3. b. (2) 17. President Quartey summarized his reports to the Trustees, which he sends every other week. Dr. Quartey reminded the Board that he sent them his report last week along with several attachments.

President Quartey reported that he has had several internal meetings. He met with Trustee Roberts and Trustee Svatek-Whitson. Trustee Svatek-Whitson had not seen the campus renovations before. The meetings were positive. He had several interactions with Troy Cox this month related to security issues, and has heard of others. He has been professional, polite, and handled himself with integrity in each of these. From students concerned about personal issues connected to potential stalking, to the ISD incident this month, to reports of gunshots on campus. He, and his team, are putting

themselves directly in the line of danger to ensure safety and security on this campus. I can't think of much that enriches our lives more right now. President Quartey has also engaged in external meetings with others in our community who are supportive of MCCC, to discuss how they can further support the College. The tone of these meetings is positive. He plans to meet with the Republican Party on Monday morning along with Dr. Behrens and Chair Mason. President Quartey also met with Mike LaHote who has a proposal for MCCC (a draft of the proposal is attached).

Reported that due to the high estimates provided by the construction managers on the cost of the additions and renovations of the WHEB, Mr. Burns and his team solicited additional estimates from another firm. Those estimates are significantly less. At this time, we are still reviewing and discussing final estimates for the project. President Quartey will be joining the other community college president today regarding the President Trumps recent executive order. Tomorrow he will meet with college presidents Yesterday he joined a nationwide gathering of community college presidents. There are many who are very concerned. Dr. Quartey commented that he reached out to the College attorney and his advice was, do not panic, stay the course.

President Quartey reminded the Board that he had a significant discussion with them earlier regarding the millage. He also mentioned that the College was in the middle of administrating an internal survey of all employees concerning some of the challenges we are having on campus. The survey will be anonymous, confidential, and anonymous.

- C. 3. b. (3) 18. Scott Behrens, Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Success, and Quri Wygonik, Director Institutional Research, Planning & Accreditation, reported on the Winter 2025 enrollment.

Dr. Wygonik demonstrated to the Board how they could access the enrollment the data on the dashboard. She announced that enrollment numbers are on the right of the screen and are up three percent from last winter. Dr. Behrens will talk about practical strategies that led to increases in enrollment and answer those types of questions for you. For the new Board members, Trustee Roberts has familiarity with the dashboards, but it is still good to go through the exercise. Here you will find umbrella menus for several types of KPI dashboards. New for this board meeting, we published Open Access for the year-over-year enrollment dashboard so you can look at how we are trending right now compared to this time last year during the registration period. Dr. Wygonik thanked Katie Navock's team for helping shape how this dashboard functions and is used. She also thanked Brianna Pio for being the data architect behind the dashboards.

If you zoom in and select Census, you will see a Census Day bar. That shows where we are at on Census Day, which is Day 81. It shows you that 2,467 is the stabilized enrollment as of the Census Day, which was Thursday the 16th. And if we pull in our semesters in term, we can deselect 23, you have to select all and then deselect, then go back to default by hitting the back arrow, up at the top.

Dr, Wygonik showed a trend line comparison over previous term. She said that if we if we look at Census Day and hover, it will show us the 2,467, tracking it up to start term. If we don't have the same date reference in a previous year. If you do not see the trend line continuing in previous years, that would indicate you do not have the previous year's data; however, what we are focusing on today is your ability to look at how we track each day of the registration period, which is something the College was not able to do the previous to last academic year. Dr. Behrens was doing it, but he was manually going in and updating a spreadsheet, so the technology has really been incredible and I hope his team would say it has really helped them in their daily review of registration activity and planning for how many students are coming and going daily.

The other dashboard that we want to look at is the headcount dashboard, you just have to go back. If you look at the student demographics dashboard, there is a dashboard series. It shows us if we select the defaults on a fall, but if you select your winter term it gives you that same. It shows the stabilized head count of 2467 and here is where you can slice all of the characteristics of our students by socio-demographic factors (gender, student race, ethnicity diversity, top academic programs (new).

At the request of Dr. Behrens, we are now trending the high school graduating class size below these graphics. Dr. Myers mentioned some of the existential things that we face. We see a decline in high school graduating class size over the past few years. So,

there is that to consider as we think about how our pool of first time in any college students (FITIACS) is just decreasing over time to factors unrelated to what we can control. Dr. Behrens noted that, as Dr. Wygonik was saying, we used to do all these manually in Excel spreadsheets. Each morning we would have to look data, do a report, figure out the enrollment, and plug it in. That really helps us figure out where we need to focus, and what we are doing, and what the impact is.

Dr. Behrens explained that the graduation size of high schools is important because that gives us an idea of the graduates coming up that will be potentially be coming to the College. When we look at those numbers, we see 2,884 and we have not been close to that since it has been a somewhat unsteady decline in high school enrollment. So, you really have to start asking other questions like how do you get more students here? How do you engage? It also helps us project into the future to see what enrollment will look like as well. In spite of that, MCCC has actually increased enrollment over the winters. The first one actually this morning right here, 2021 from the year before, we were actually up about 11.5% and that's where we really worked with Joe Verkennes, Director of Marketing and Communication, and his team going after Michigan Reconnect students. We actually raised the average age of student by two years during that year, by targeting those 25 plus years of age, and then we can analyze that data. It might be time to start going after those students again, especially with the 21 and older year population.

Dr. Behrens moved to a year-over-year dashboard, which is the one they used to keep Excel spreadsheets by. He explained that the reason that this is powerful is because you cannot make a difference unless you can see your data on a daily basis. Before that, he believes this was the first connection over data. When you look at the graphs we learned very quickly, and the enrollment team learned what they needed to do and we took off, but we were constantly breaking that down. He showed the Board how when you drill down into the data, which we can do with enrollment status, using FITIAC students, how we can see we actually did better than average this year, but it was a late push and you can actually see where we were doing something active in the enrollment department to try to modify the data. You can see the increases, which is really powerful because you can see whether or not your actions are actually working and then adjust on the fly. The goal is to never get to the last day and for the first time find out you failed. Dr. Behrens also demonstrated the above by drilling down continuing students, which showed we had a nice year there year-over-year. Dr. Behrens showed the Board how they could actually see the year-over-year data for the end of year count. Continuing students landed at 1,932. One of the things we did throughout negotiations is to talk extensively about if we could just have another week, it would really be helpful when we get back in the winter to get going within one week of classes. We also have enrolled credit hours against billable contact hours, how we actually bill tuition and fees. So, we are trending those year-over-year when the data are available, which is helpful for financials. Dr. Behrens said that the Board will be pleased to hear that when his office presents this at conferences, MCCC is far ahead of other, bigger institutions. We exchange business cards with other colleges and we have them emailing us constantly for information. We give sessions to other institutions over Teams and Zoom, and explain our technical logic for how we make our database connections. He thanked MCCC's Information Technology team for supporting his many requests, and he thanked the Enterprise Data Services team for the SQL developer.

Dr. Behrens demonstrated reenrolled students because this really gives us a sense of the Reconnect students. You can see that the first year was, and remember this was a large part of our 11.5 percent was due to this number. Dr. Behrens noted that one of the things he and Mr. Verkennes talked about in marketing is that you get a diminished return on efforts. With Reconnect, if you recall, we were in the top of the state in that first year and so we got 10% of every eligible person in Monroe to come back to College (308 students). So, we thought about how many more students can we get by continuing to put money into that campaign. This is where it might be time to start revisiting that whole initiative. That is how we use the data.

Mr. Behrens stated that he does receive reports from the state about the success outcomes of our Reconnect students, if the board is interested in seeing how successful we are according to state standards. Our reconnect students are with meeting post-secondary outcomes. Dr. Quartey and Dr. Behrens receive those reports and they can package a short presentation for the Board to show them the true return on investment of those efforts in the Board's support.

Dr. Behrens mentioned he is tracking De-registrations (Dregs) right up until the end of the enrollment period, but his is also doing massive calling and talking to students. We want to make sure that we have real students who are going to show up and do something. As you know Dreg has been a big issue, so we talked about different ways to deal with it. This particular semester dreg started with a list of about 500 students at the end of November. So, we launched a massive campaign. This is where CRM really helps. Every student gets multiple contacts. So, every student gets multiple contacts. They might not have paid, but we may know that they have aid coming in so they are ok. By the time we are done we know who we are letting in the door, or letting out the door. Dreg students are captured in the count every year. If we are Dregging, any student that decreases from the total registrant group that is being tracked. We started looking at daily registration historically after payment deadline, multiple times leading up to beginning his semester, and then the final headcount was 100 percent correct the day after. Also, one of the things you can really see is within this data, when you drill down into it, is when the Dregs occur. It is highly transparent. Our campus is asking for that and Dr. Behrens believes the board is as well. You cannot get any more transparent than the daily registration dashboard.

- C. 3. b. (4) 19. Joshua Myers, Executive Director of The Foundation gave the Board an update from the last Board of Directors meeting.

Dr. Myers reaffirmed that The Foundation continues to serve those most needy students on campus and devise new interventions based on the feedback that they are getting from some of our frontline people who are facing these students and hearing what their challenges are.

The Foundation just created a new program called the Gift Card Program. They are now on a monthly basis, providing gift cards from Meijer to the Student Success Center to give out at their discretion for students facing an emergency. So, if a student comes to sit down, we meet weekly. As I've told you before, to address student emergent financial emergencies through Foundation requests. Sometimes that is not soon enough. So, students may not have any gas in the tank and they are afraid they are not going to be able to get back for class. The Foundation has empowered the Student Success Center to give them a \$50 gas card so that they can fill their tank up and make sure that we keep them going and that, that one week that they are waiting for a decision will not interfere with their persisting.

The second one is very good news. On February 20th, the Student Success Center is having a grand reopening of the Heck's Market Food Pantry. He gave the Board a brief background context for the new Trustees. The previous food pantry was not located in a discrete area so it was moved to admissions, but admissions was not able to help them during high traffic periods. The new food pantry will be re-housed in the Student Success Center and it will have an online clicker grocer list. Students can submit their orders, make an appointment, park outside the and Student Success Center, and someone from inside will carry the order out to their car.

Dr. Myers cannot speak high enough about the student success team, Amanda Althouse, Sheila Myers, Kris Gerlach, and Amy Ockerman. A grand reopening of the pantry is Scheduled for February 20, 2025, in the Student Success Center. There is also a lot of donor support for this initiative. Chuck Knabusch's family own Heck's Market downtown. Mr. Knabusch would like to carry on the family legacy and he plans to be part of the program.

Dr. Myers third item regards reconnecting the achievement scholarships free community colleges. The program has had an enormous impact on MCCC's private donor scholarships because the last thing that we want is to abort private donorships to the state because we are reducing state awards by the number of scholarships we are providing. The Foundation has worked hard to change our rules so that we comply with the new state regulations and is making some pretty tectonic changes to traditional foundational rules to our scholarships. Dr. Myers stated that his board just recently authorized refunds to students for private donor scholarships, which they previously would not do. So, if a student received a \$2,000 scholarship and only used \$1,000 for books, the other \$1,000 would be returned to The Foundation's endowment, or where ever the money came from. Now the board has authorized Dr. Myers to do this if the student has outstanding student needs, whether it be an additional tuition expense or books or some other academic expense, the student can use their scholarship toward that. If they do no not, after a certain period of time, the Business Office and the

Financial Aid Office will be authorized to then issue that student a refund with their scholarship and the student will be able to use that money to allow them to pay for their living expenses, which oftentimes is the largest expense a student is facing. This was a big philosophical shift for the Foundation. The new process t makes it is a more effective program not only from donor stewardship standpoint, but also to the students. So far, the donors seem to be onboard once they hear the rationale behind the decision.

Dr. Myers also expressed his gratitude to Stephanie Kasprzak and the MCOP. This is one of the hallmarks of community colleges; they are embedded in the community. They make community connections and work as a team member in this community. It is much easier to have somebody who knows what they are doing help you with it than it is to create it from scratch. So, we turned to MCOP and they are MCCC's number one producer of food. MCCC ended up sending them fresh produce and they helped MCCC with their food pantry stocking. Dr. Myers gave a quick example. People often ask what kind of canned goods do we need, and can they donate them. Dr. Myers always discourages people from donating canned goods because we can get it through MCOP for a fraction of the price. For a dollar, I can get 12 cans of green beans. I usually tell people if they are going to spend five dollars on canned goods, just give me the five dollars and I can buy five dozen cans.

Dr. Myers moved on to Group I Directors of The Foundation. Each term the Board of trustees, according to my bylaws and The Foundation send no less than two and not more than three Trustees to serve as Group I Directors on our governing board. There are many other controls that you serve as is the board, but this is kind of the communication element that goes back and forth between the boards.

It is the Board Chair's prerogative to nominate those two to three individuals. With the advice and consent of the Board. So, when Trustee Lambrix completed her term and did not run, that left a vacancy. Now we are down to two Trustees. Trustee Goodman and Trustee Edwards are on the board as Trustees, so we are fine, but it is the Chair's prerogative to appoint somebody.

4. Board Member and Committee Reports

- C. 4. b. (1) 20. Chair Aaron Mason appointed the following Trustees to the Alumnus of the Year Selection Committee for a two-year term:

Alumnus of the Year Selection Committee

Kristy Svatek-Whitson
Julie M. Edwards

- C. 4. b. (2) 21. Chair Aaron Mason appointed the following Trustees to the College Supporter of the Year Selection Committee for a two-year term:

College Supporter of the Year Selection Committee

Lynette M. Dowler
Mary Kay Thayer
Nicole R. Goodman

- C. 4. b. (4) 22. The Nomination Committee Discussion met at the end of last year. The Trustees on that committee were Lynette M. Dowler, Nicole R. Goodman and Krista K. Lambrix. Ms. Lambrix finished her six-year term and is no longer on the Board, as we heard earlier in the meeting. Officers are elected every two years which is a long way away, but it goes by quickly. Board officers are elected for a two-year term and can hold any given position for no longer than three consecutive terms. We will likely revisit this topic next January in preparation for the following year.

- C. 4. b. (2) 23. Chair Mason explained to the Board that they have a Board Code of Conduct Signing the Code of Conduct is considered a Board best practice. The Higher Learning Commission will look for them when they visit and the auditors also require them. Please review and sign the document and return to the President or Ms. Dorsey at the Board retreat on January 29th through the 30th. As it will probably be discussed there.

- C. 4. b. (5) 24. Chair Mason noted the upcoming events.

35. *It was moved by Ms. Edwards and supported by Ms. Goodman that the meeting be adjourned.*

The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Aaron N. Mason
Chair

Nicole R. Goodman
Secretary

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These minutes were approved at the February 24, 2025 regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.