

MINUTES OF THE SIX HUNDRED THIRTY-THIRD  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF THE MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Conference Rooms S-173bcd  
Warrick Student Center  
5:30 p.m., October 27, 2025

Present: Lynette M. Dowler, Julie M. Edwards, Nicole R. Goodman, Aaron N. Mason,  
Kristy Svatek-Whitson

Not Present: Linda M. Roberts, Mary Kay Thayer

Also Present: Amanda Althouse, Jenna Bazzell, Scott Behrens, Brian Bertram, Phillip Borawski,  
Parmeshwar Coomar, Paula Cooney, Kevin Cooper, Troy Cox, Angela Elliot, Melissa Grey, Nickie  
Hampsher, Tom Heck, Rick Hubbert, Jason King, Bill LaVoy, Sarah Mason, Shawn McBride, Richard  
Morrin, Gerald McCarty, Joshua Myers, Tina Pillarelli, Cyrena Salomonson, Helen Stripling, Frank  
Thomas, Beverly Tomek, Linda Torbet, Joe Verkennes, Carl Whitson, Caden Wilt, William Wilt, Quri  
Wygonik, John Wyrabkiewicz, Grace Yackee, Penny Dorcey

1. Chair Aaron Mason called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. He noted that all of the Trustees were present with the exception of Trust Nicole Goodman and Trustee Mary Kay Thayer.
2. There was one delegation present.
- B. 2. 3. *It was moved by Trustee Edwards and supported by Trustee Goodman that the Board approves the Consent Agenda with the following correction: change the position title of Trustee Goodman at the end of the minutes from Vice Chair to Secretary.*
  - B. 2. a. (1) 1. Approval of the of the September 19, 2025, special meeting minutes as written, and to approve the September 22, 2025, regular meeting minutes, with a correction to the title of Trustee Goodman.
  - B. 2. a. (2) 2. *It was moved by Trustee Edwards and supported by Trustee Goodman that the Board Authorize the President to execute a contract for the following professional staff:*

*Alana Garant, Educational Advocate*  
*One-Year Professional Staff Contract*  
*Effective October 20, 2025 to October 19, 2026.*

The motion carried unanimously.

3. Old Business  
None

4. New Business

- B. 4. a. (1) 5. *It was moved by Trustee Dowler and Supported by Trustee Svatek-Whitson that the Five-Year Capital Outlay Plan be approved as revised.*

Frank Thomas, Vice President of Finance and Administration, explained that he and his team had reduces the Five-Year Capital Outlay plan from 300 to 25 pages. Each department went through the document and updated their respective information. Much of the former document contained outdated reports. Mr. Thomas and Brian Bertram, Director of Planning and Facilities, reviewed the document cleaned it up. He gave a shout out to Cyrena Salomonson, Assistant to the Vice President of Finance and Administration, for reformatting the document. This document is an annual report that the Board is asked to approve each year. If approved, Mr. Thomas will submit it to the state tomorrow.

President Quartey added that Cabinet also reviewed and applied best practices to compile the report. Trustee Svatek-Whitson commended Mr. Thomas and his team for reducing this report to a more manageable size.

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (2) 6. *It was moved by Trustee Edwards and supported by Trustee Goodman that the Board adopt Policy 9.02, Artificial Intelligence, as written.*

John Wyrabkiewicz, Chief Information Officer, proposed new policy 9.02, Artificial Intelligence for approval. Mr. Wyrabkiewicz explained that he wanted to ahead of the game because of potential privacy issues involved when using certain AI agents. Information entered or recorded by the software is stored in the cloud and could be accessed by others. Employees should know that private information should never be put into an AI agent (student names with identifying information, etc.). Also, information retrieved for AI agents are not always accurate, so employees should always check for accuracy. No student names with identifying information.

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (3) 7. *It was moved by Trustee Edwards and supported by Trustee Goodman that Frank Rewold & Sons be selected as the Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) to assist the College in the performance of all construction management services for the addition and renovation to the Gerald Welch Center for Health and Public Safety.*

Joshua Myers, Executive Director of the Foundation and Director of Government and Alumni Affairs, brought forth a recommendation for Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) for Welch Health Education Building project. Dr. Myers explained that this recommendation ius the result of the work of a full committee of staff. They open and conducted an assessment. He commended Kelly Heinzerling, Director of Auxiliary Services and Purchasing, for her hard work.

Dr. Myers stated that the committee unanimously selected Frank Rewold & Sons in the first round. The feedback from other institutions was positive. He gave a shoutout to the committee members who worked throughout the process. The simulation lab should begin in the winter semester and he is very confident in the renovation project. The bigger construction project will begin in the spring.

Dr. Myers explained that the budget manager and the College have each agreed to a price so both sides know ahead of time Both sides know ahead of time their responsibilities. The College has to spend \$16 million of its own funds before spending the state money. This project will put \$11 million back into the community that it would not have if the College did not complete the project. It will also create jobs for the community, which will benefit everyone.

Dr. Myers added that the smaller local companies did not have the capacity to do this project. Chair Mason suggested a future workshop for the Board on public service.

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (4) 8. *It was moved by Trustee Dowler and Supported by Trustee Edwards that the following resolution of commendation be adopted:*

*WHEREAS, Marjorie (Marji) McIntyre has served with distinction as an inaugural member of The Foundation at Monroe County Community College Board of Directors since its inception, and continues to serve as a dedicated and valued member of the board; and*

*WHEREAS, Marji has exemplified the spirit of service through her unwavering commitment of time, talent, and treasure—enthusiastically fulfilling each of these pillars with grace, humility, and generosity; and*

*WHEREAS, Marji has served for many years as an officer of The Foundation Board of Directors, including her tenure serving as Board Secretary, and has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership, integrity, and pride in her role; and*

*WHEREAS, Marji's steadfast presence at board meetings, committee meetings, donor events, and college celebrations reflects a rare and admirable level of engagement, setting the standard of dedication that inspires her fellow board members and the broader MCCC community; and*

*WHEREAS, Marji has been a generous and consistent philanthropic supporter of the College for nearly five decades, beginning with her first gift in 1977, and continuing through her establishment of the Irma A. (McLaughlin) McIntyre Memorial Scholarship in 2018, which honors her beloved mother's legacy and supports MCCC students pursuing a degree in Agriculture; and*

*WHEREAS, Marji's enduring commitment to the mission of Monroe County Community College has had a profound and lasting impact on students, faculty, and the future of the institution;*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Monroe County Community College Board of Trustees hereby recognizes and commends Marjorie A. McIntyre as the 2025 Supporter of the Year, with deep appreciation for her extraordinary service, generosity, and devotion to the College and its students.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be presented to Marji as a token of the Board's gratitude and admiration, and that it be permanently recorded in the official minutes of the Board of Trustees on this Monday, October 27, 2025.*

The motion carried unanimously.

4. It was agreed by unanimous consent to move Item C. 4. b. (4), College Millage information forward in the agenda.
- C. 4. b. (4) 5. Joe Verkennes, Director of Marketing and Communication, reviewed the College's informational communications plan for the upcoming millage, developed by the Office of Marketing and Communications in compliance with Section 57 of the Michigan Campaign Finance Act. The plan provides factual information about the election, proposal, and potential impacts of passage or defeat, without advocating for or against the measure. The campaign, similar in scope and cost (\$40,000) to other major informational initiatives, has been implemented since early fall and is nearly complete. The office emphasized strict adherence to legal requirements and clear separation from any advocacy activities.

Dr. Quartey explained that the PAC portion of the campaign is separate from the informational campaign. the amendment to the PAC, which was filed some time back. The initial filing has been amended and recorded with the county clerk, and all reports being filed thus far have a P.O. Box address as well as his personal address. In addition, there is a separate a separate bank account for funds raised. All expenses paid come out of the PAC as well.

Chair Mason explained that he suggested Dr Quartey pass that information along to legal counsel to make sure that there are not any other issues that the board needs to resolve. He explained that they are taking whatever steps are needed to make sure there is a potential violation. With the address and email in the original document corrected, it was clean. He just wanted to make sure the Board knows that that is what he has asked.

## C. Information and Proposals

### 1. Delegations

- C. 1. b. (1) 6. Michael Orr, citizen, announced that he was speaking on his own behalf as a Monroe County citizen. He expressed concerns about the millage campaign.
- C. 1. b. (2) 7. Chair Mason addressed Mr. Orr's comments on the January Board millage language ballot vote, referring Mr. Orr to the February 2025 Board minutes and the February 2025 Board vote in support of not placing it on the May 2025 ballot. Chair Mason addressed the "one employee" comment by explaining board governance and delegation of duties. He elaborated that even though duties and authority are delegated to the President, the Board remains duty bound to follow the law. This includes the Elliot Larsen Civil Rights Law as

amended effective 2024. Chair Mason then explained as a follow up to his update to the Board in the prior meeting where he explained that he was ceasing inquiries with legal counsel without further direction from the Board the following—as an individual, he has filed a request with the State Attorney General to investigate.

1. Non-staff Communications and Reports

None

3. President and Staff

- C. 3. a. (1) 13. President Quartey announced the following staff appointment/promotion and, professional staff contract/promotion:

Staff Appointment/Promotion:

Derek Jacobs, Power Systems Operator, effective October 3, 2025  
(promoted from Power Systems Trainee)

Promotion Professional Staff Contract (10/20/2025-10/19/2026):

Alana Garant, Educational Advocate, effective October, 20, 2025  
(promoted from Admissions Assistant)

- C. 3. a. (2) 14. Frank Thomas, Director of Financial Services and Interim Vice President of Financial Services and Administration/Treasurer, gave the board an update on the General Fund Revenues and Expenses, and Other Changes for the periods ending September 30, 2025.

Frank Thomas reported the year-to-date summary showing the college is about 25% through the fiscal year; state appropriations have not yet been received for the current cycle. As of the end of September, expenses exceeded revenues by approximately \$1.0 million, and the college will draw on fund balance to cover the shortfall.

The detailed report noted several line items exceeding the 25% benchmark primarily because of timing differences, including the full annual general liability insurance premium paid up front and several prepaid subscriptions and supply purchases. No other unusual variances were reported.

15. Chair Mason reported reviewing the Bedford Township master plan draft and related school district data, noting historical enrollment declines (31 to 24.18 over 18 years), demographic information on age populations, and sections describing how Bedford characterizes South County for economic development; the speaker presented these findings as context for recent criticisms from South County.

- C. 3. b. (1) 17. Amanda Althouse, Director of Student Success, gave the Board an update on her area. Student Success update Amanda Althouse, Director of Student Success.

Ms. Althouse reviewed the Student Success Center's team mission: committed to empowering students to reach academic and life goals by providing necessary support and resources. She highlighted expanded services and increased utilization since 2023 across Disability Services, Tutoring & Academic Coaching, Mental Health Services, Testing, Special Applications, and Student Technology Support.

Ms. Althouse emphasized the role of student assistants and recent workflow improvements in protecting academic integrity and improving service delivery. She also reported measurable gains and outcomes: notable percentage increases in service utilization and grant-funded supports, a 11-completer Momentum adult-learner cohort this summer, and evidence that intervention prevented some students from dropping or failing. Staff shared student testimonials underscoring improved retention, a sense of belonging, and the impact of coordinated case management for barriers such as childcare, transportation, mental health, and technology access.

Ms. Althouse reported that challenges include that the center currently operates two days per week while demand continues to grow, requiring additional staffing, hours, and continued partnership with campus units, The Foundation, and community

organizations, such as MCOP. She said that she and her team will continue to monitor utilization trends, pursue resources to expand hours and supports, and continue targeted outreach and grant efforts to support successful programs.

Dr. Myers made the following statement: Over the past several months, our institution has faced significant challenges—challenges that have tested not only our resilience but also our commitment to the mission we hold dear. We have had to fight, and at times fight with members of our own community, to defend the integrity of this institution and the intent of the people who work here. Misinformation and distortions about what motivates us to show up every day have been deeply demoralizing.

The truth is simple: we care about every student who walks through our doors. We strive to ensure they have a brighter future and that the employers who hire them receive qualified, capable professionals. That is what drives us to work each day.

At the recent town hall, Dr. Quartey spoke powerfully about what is truly happening in our classrooms—contrary to the narratives circulating in the community. He reminded us of the importance of defending the work we have always done, because we have not changed who we are.

As we look toward November 4, my hope is that our community will begin to heal and remember the value of the work we do together. I love my job, and I am proud to work with donors who believe so deeply in our mission that they entrust us with their hard-earned dollars. It is my responsibility to ensure those funds are used wisely and in alignment with their intent.

In the past, launching new programs often fell solely to The Foundation. Today, thanks to the growth of our institution and the incredible talent of teams like Ms. Althouse's, we can raise funds collaboratively and hand off projects to experts who execute them with skill, passion, and enthusiasm.

This is what makes our institution extraordinary: not just The Foundation, not just student success, but the countless individuals who live and breathe this mission every day. That is why these recent challenges have been so troubling. We remain steadfast in our purpose, and we will continue to do the work that matters most—serving students, strengthening our community, and honoring the trust placed in us.

- C. 3. a. (2) 22. Joshua Myers, Executive Director of The Foundation and Director of Government and Alumni Affairs, gave a brief overview of The Foundation Annual Report.

Dr. Myers reported a strong year-over-year net position since its 1999 inception, growing from an initial transfer of under \$1M to a current net position exceeding \$12M; most funds are donor-restricted endowments invested in the market and are not available for discretionary transfer to the college. The director clarified that annual distributions support designated purposes and that recent portfolio recovery was market-driven, not from unrestricted reserves. In the last year the Foundation awarded approximately \$85,000 to 11 major projects and continues to depend on market performance and donor restrictions when responding to college funding requests.

Dr. Myers highlighted successful programmatic investments including upgrades to the atrium AV and archives, safety improvements in Meyer Theater, continued support for student-facing services (including the enhanced pantry, and the establishment and expansion of scholarship funds. Notable donor commitments include the Roof Family Scholarship providing \$2,000 to Dundee graduates (plus additional RT and other scholarship support), and the launch of a five-year commissioned-composer series for the College band tied to Michigan history. The Foundation also recognized the staff and Student Success Center innovations through the Excellence in Innovation award and ongoing community-engagement efforts such as the block party and Momentum adult-learner cohort.

Dr. Myers advised of an emerging student hardship risk tied to a potential lapse in federal SNAP benefits; the Foundation is preparing a short-term fundraising appeal to help bridge emergency student needs if SNAP assistance is interrupted. He emphasized that many student barriers are non-tuition expenses (housing, transportation, childcare, books) and requested continued campus, Foundation, and community support to sustain and scale successful programs. The Foundation will include detailed finances and

selected highlights in the upcoming annual report and is available to answer questions on allocations and restricted-fund policies.

- C. 3. b. (3) 21. Joshua Myers, Executive Director of The Foundation and Director of Government and Alumni Affairs, announced that the next item of the month for Heck's Market is toilet paper.
- C. 3. b. (4) 23. Grace Yackee, Vice President of Instruction, gave the Board some new program Highlights.

Dr. Yackee affirmed its dual mission of transfer and occupational education: students can complete associate degrees and transfer to four-year institutions (Eastern Michigan University and University of Toledo are top transfer destinations) and pursue applied degrees, certificates, apprenticeships, and customized training that lead directly to employment. The college maintains numerous course-to-course and program articulation agreements with colleges and universities in and outside Michigan to facilitate transfers.

Dr. Yackee explained that recent program development and strategic investments include over a dozen new programs and certificates launched in the past five–six years (examples include agriculture, entrepreneurship, virtual design and construction, data analytics, and digital media marketing), with additional programs under review or planned such as paramedic (stackable from EMT), paralegal, radiography, aviation/drone technology, and a skilled-trades/apprenticeship pathway in partnership with Monroe-Lenawee AFL-CIO. New program startup costs (facilities, equipment, faculty, and staff) are substantial and several upcoming programs are expected to require capital and operating investment exceeding a half-million dollars.

Dr. Yackee stated that in terms of facilities funding and labor-market alignment, the College has shifted from deferred maintenance toward dedicated program investments since 2016, enabling new offerings; however, budgeting still must balance maintenance needs with program growth. She discussed new labor-market tools (e.g., Lightcast) used to assess demand, wages, and job opening, and data cited for programs such as Data Analytics to inform program planning and marketing.

### 3. Board Member and Committee Reports

- C. 4. b. (1) 24. Frank Thomas proposed the Board Finance Committee meet with the auditors at 5:00 p.m. on November 24, prior to the Board meeting, to review the audit; Tracy Moon from AHP will present. Chair Aaron Mason and Vice Chair Lynette Dowler agreed to the proposed date and time. Since Trustee Thayer was unable to attend tonight's meeting, Trustee Svatek-Whitson Volunteered to attend as an alternate if Trustee Thayer is unable to attend the audit meeting. The audit deadline is November 15.
- C. 4. b. (2) 25. Trustee Thayer will present her update on the 2025 ACCT Leadership Conference, New Orleans, at the November 24<sup>th</sup> regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.
- C. 3. b. (5) 26. President Quartey summarized his reports to the Trustees, which he sends to the Board every other week.

Dr. Quartey reminded the Board that a past state policy change allowed Michigan students to enroll across the border in Ohio institutions, which diverted local tuition revenue and contributed to multi-year enrollment declines. Chair Mason noted that some local superintendents favored lower tuition options and that border-town dynamics amplified the impact. He referenced outreach from Senator Bellino during the millage campaign and noted divergent legislative positions on the bill, and he asked the board to consider regional demographic trends—using Bedford Township as an example—when evaluating local criticism about enrollment.

Dr. Quartey and Chair Mason reported that while the policy had a lasting negative effect, the college has begun to recover in recent years. College leadership described proactive recruitment and retention strategies, including program development and high-school partnerships, to counter broader demographic declines. The College is implementing automatic admission agreements with three local high schools for the

current term, simplifying the application process and onboarding (orientation and scheduling) to reduce barriers that historically discouraged recent graduates from enrolling.

Chair Mason acknowledged continued competitive pressures, a shrinking pool of high-school graduates for the next several years, and the need to align academic offerings with student and labor-market demand. Campus leaders committed to presenting enrollment trend data and outcomes from the high-school auto-admit initiative at a future meeting and to continuing work on recruitment, program alignment, and outreach to reverse enrollment declines.

Dr. Scott Behrens reported that the college's overall credit hours have increased over the past five years, outperforming many peer institutions, but emphasized that enrollment remains highly competitive and cannot be solved by passive outreach. He described a new initiative to reduce barriers for recent high-school graduates by implementing automatic-admit agreements with three local high schools for the current term, and noted staff are visiting schools and working with principals to streamline onboarding.

Behrens explained the approach responds to research showing the most common reason recent graduates do not enroll is not completing applications; the auto-admit process imports high-school data into the college system and notifies students that only orientation and scheduling remain. He added that the college will present outcome data later, and reiterated ongoing challenges from a projected decline in high-school graduates over the next six years, stressing the need to align academic programs with student demand to sustain enrollment gains.

Dr. Quartey noted that addressing enrollment is complex and ongoing, reaffirming that the county's adult population is declining but that the college is actively targeting adult learners; he offered to provide additional information on demographic trends and recruitment efforts upon request.

- C. 4, b, (3) 27. This item was addressed earlier in the meeting.
- C. 4. b. (5) 28. Chair Mason noted the upcoming events.
- C. 4. b. (6) 29. *It was moved by Trustee Goodman and supported by Trustee Edwards that the meeting be adjourned.*

The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Aaron N. Mason  
Chair

Nicole R. Goodman  
Secretary

pd/

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