

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

The La-Z-Boy Center
Board of Trustees Room, Z-203
1555 N. Raisinville Rd, Monroe MI 48161
5:30 p.m., June 22, 2026

Present: Aaron N. Mason, Julie M. Edwards, Nicole R. Goodman, Linda M. Roberts (left at 7:30 p.m.), Kristy Svatek-Whitson, Mary Kay Thayer

Not Present: Lynette M. Dowler

Also Present: Amanda Althouse, Jenna Bazzell, Scott Behrens, Phillip Borawski, Sandra Cichewicz, Parmeshwar Coomar, Paula Cooney, Kevin Cooper, Anne Crimmins, Kristine Gerlach, Chris Gossett, Nickie Hampsher, Rick Hubbert, Denise Lindemann, Gerald McCarty, Joshua Myers, Sheila Myers, Carrie Nartker, Michael Neaves, Omaira Ortiz, Christina Payne, Keith Rossi, Helen Stripling, Frank Thomas, Beverly Tomek, Carl Whitson, Stephanie Wozniak, Quri Wygonik, John Wyrabkiewicz, Grace Yackee, and Kristin Hoffman (recording secretary).

Chair Mason suspended the regular order of business to conduct the public hearing on the 2026-27 budget. The Chair will entertain questions from the audience with regard to the 2026-27 budget material. The millage rate to be levied for operating purposes for 2026-27 fiscal year will be reaffirmed as 2.1753 mills of ad valorem property taxes. A question was asked by the audience regarding how the failed millage has affected the development of this budget. Frank Thomas, Vice President of Finance and Administration, indicated the millage loss will have a significant impact on our general fund. Mr. Thomas noted that while millage funds have historically supported campus maintenance and improvements effectively, future challenges are anticipated. Remaining millage reserves are currently being utilized; however, as these funds diminish over the next several years, increased pressure will be placed on the general fund to cover necessary repairs and capital needs. The college is facing an estimated annual shortfall of approximately \$6.7 million due to the millage not being renewed. This ongoing loss will compound in future years, significantly impacting the institution’s financial capacity to address facilities projects. Additionally, a previously shared list of potential capital projects and associated costs was referenced. Some projects—such as the addition of single-use restrooms, estimated at approximately \$250,000 per installation—may no longer be financially feasible under current constraints. This example highlights the broader implications of reduced funding on the college’s ability to address both routine and emerging campus needs. With no further questions, Chair Mason declared the public hearing adjourned.

1. Chair Mason called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.
2. Chair Mason asked everyone to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. There were no delegations present.
- B. 2. a. (1) 4. Chair Mason asked if any Trustee would like to pull an item from the consent agenda. Trustee Roberts, by singular request, asked that B. 2. a. (3) be pulled from the consent agenda and be voted on separately. Chair Mason indicated the consent agenda will now be: B. 2. a. (1) through B. 2. a. (5), omitting B. 2. a. (3).
5. *It was moved by Trustee Thayer and supported by Trustee Edwards that the following items on the Consent Agenda be approved as presented:*
 - B. 2. a. (1) Approval of the May 18, 2026 Minutes of the Regular Meeting and June 8, 2026 Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees
 - B. 2. a. (2) Authorization for the President to Execute an Administrative One-year Non-continuing Contract – A. Quinn
 - B. 2. a. (4) Authorization for the President to Execute a First-Year Probationary Faculty Contract – Denise Williams
 - B. 2. a. (5) Authorization for the President to Execute a First-Year Probationary Faculty Contract – Jonathan Farrell

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 2. a. (3) 6. *It was moved by Trustee Goodman and supported by Trustee Roberts that the Board authorizes the President to execute a probationary administrator contract for Sarah Mason, Registrar.*

Yes [4] Julie Edwards, Nicole Goodman, Aaron Mason, Mary Kay Thayer

No [2] Linda Roberts, Kristy Svatek-Whitson

The motion carried.

4. New Business

- B. 4. a. (1) 7. *It was moved by Trustee and supported by Trustee Thayer that the Board approve the following resolution of commendation for Christina Payne:*

WHEREAS, Christina Payne will retire from her position as administrative assistant to the dean of student services at Monroe County Community College, effective June 30, 2026, and

WHEREAS, she has diligently served students and the community since she was hired as the administrative assistant to the director of the library March 2017, and

WHEREAS, she graduated from Monroe County Community College with an Associate of Science degree in 2005, twice making the Dean's List, and continued her education at Eastern Michigan University, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications in 2015, and

WHEREAS, she was instrumental in the library's successful transition to its newly renovated space in the Campbell Academic Center in the summer of 2022, and

WHEREAS, she engaged in continual professional development during her employment at Monroe County Community College, including the participating in the College Call Back program in 2018, earning the Mental Health First Aid Certification in 2023, participating in Cultural Awareness/Diversity training in 2024 and earning the Community Respect Certificate in 2025, and

WHEREAS, she was awarded the MCCC Enriching Lives Award in 2020, and

WHEREAS, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, she worked diligently behind the scenes and was instrumental in maintaining excellent student service at MCCC by assisting the Office of Disability Services, contacting students and reminding them to register, directly registering students for classes and maintaining the computer lab in Founders Hall, and

WHEREAS, she assisted in the planning of the Support Staff Professional Development Day in 2025 and 2026, and

WHEREAS, she is a true testament to the student and community focus of Monroe County Community College, and her dedication to serving students, employees and the community for so many years has made her a true ambassador for MCCC's mission of enriching lives in Monroe County through student-focused higher education.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees recognizes Christina Payne for her many years of dedicated service to Monroe County Community College, and

THEREFORE, BE IT RECORDED that the Board of Trustees expresses its very best wishes for her continued success, well-being, and happiness on this Monday, June 22, 2026.

The motion carried by unanimous consent.

- B. 2. a. (2) 8. *It was moved by Trustee Thayer and supported by Trustee Roberts that the 2026-2027 MCCC budget be approved as presented and that the millage to be levied for operating purposes for the 2026-27 fiscal year be reaffirmed as 2.1753 mills of ad valorem property tax, as detailed on Form L-4029.*

Frank Thomas, Vice President of Finance and Administration, noted that each trustee has a copy of the proposed budget book for FY 26/27. He explained that tonight's presentation is a summary of the presentation that was made a couple weeks ago at the June 8, 2026, Board study meeting. Since then, there has been a more conservative change to the State Appropriations from that presentation, no increase, which we be a reduction of \$266,000. We will still have a positive budget, a balanced budget of \$113,000.

Trustee Thayer commended Mr. Thomas for the quality and thoroughness of his documentation and presentations. Trustee Edwards concurred, noting that the Board is on a strong timeline and has received all necessary information, and therefore had no additional questions at this time.

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (3) 9. *It was moved by Trustee Roberts and supported by Trustee Svatek-Whitson that the 2026 L-4029 Tax Rate Request form be approved as presented.*

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (4) 10. *It was moved by Trustee Svatek-Whitson and supported by Trustee Edwards that the 2025-2026 general fund budget amount for Transfers In(Out) be amended **from** \$1,665,327 **to** \$3,096,348.*

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (5) 11. *It was moved by Trustee Thayer and supported by Trustee Edwards that the schedule of meetings of the Board of Trustees for the fiscal year 2026-27 be adopted as amended: Time: 5:30 p.m. Place: Board of Trustees Room, Z-203* La-Z-Boy Center.*

**The April 26, 2027, meeting will be held at the MCCC Whitman Center, 7777 Lewis Avenue, Temperance, Michigan.*

<i>Monday, September 28, 2026</i>	<i>Monday, March 22, 2027</i>
<i>Monday, October 26, 2026</i>	<i>*Monday, April 26, 2027 (Whitman)</i>
<i>Monday, November 23, 2026</i>	<i>Monday, May 24, 2027</i>
<i>Monday, January 25, 2027</i>	<i>Monday, June 28, 2027."</i>
<i>Monday, February 22, 2027</i>	

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (6) 12. *It was moved by Trustee Svatek-Whitson and supported by Trustee Edwards that the following individuals be designated to represent the Board before the Michigan Community College Association Board of Directors for the 2026-27 year:*

<i>Trustee Director</i>	<i><u>Mary Kay Thayer</u></i>
<i>Alternate Trustee Director</i>	<i><u>Nicole Goodman</u></i>
<i>President Director</i>	<i><u>Dr. Kojo A. Quartey</u></i>

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (7) 13. *It was moved by Trustee Edwards and supported by Trustee Roberts that Monroe County Community College, in accordance with MCCC Policy 6.21 and Procedure 6.21 (a), apply for a Special License from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) to serve alcohol in conjunction with the following special events which will be held as indicated:*

- 1. Straight On (Heart Tribute) — September 25, 2026*
- 2. Ted Petty & The Refugees (Tom Petty Tribute) — October 24, 2026*
- 3. Solitary Man (Neil Diamond Tribute) — November 21, 2026*
- 4. Sister Hazel — December 4, 2026*
- 5. TBD Country Tribute — January 30, 2027*
- 6. TBD Comedian — February 20, 2027*
- 7. Wakefire — March 6, 2027*

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (8) 14. *It was moved by Trustee Thayer and supported by Trustee Edwards that Policy 9.05, IT Infrastructure Policy, as proposed.*

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (9) 15. *It was moved by Trustee Edwards and supported by Trustee Svatek-Whitson that Policy 9.06, Digital Communications Policy, as proposed.*

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (10) 16. *It was moved by Trustee Edwards and supported by Trustee Thayer that Policy 11.01, Part-Time Support Staff Salary Schedule, be revised as presented.*

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (11) 17. *It was moved by Trustee Thayer and supported by Trustee Roberts that the following updated language to the 2025-2030 strategic plan outcome on retention (outcome 1): "Increase retention by a range of 4-5% over 5 years," be approved.*

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. 4. a. (12) 18. *It was moved by Trustee Edwards and supported by Trustee Goodman that Policy 3.35, Academic Dishonesty Policy, be approved as revised.*

The motion carried unanimously.

C. Information and Proposals

1. Delegations

None

2. Non-staff Communications and Reports

None

3. President and Staff

- C. 3. a. (1) 19. President Quartey announced the following contract renewals, first-year probationary contracts, and resignations.

Probationary Administrator Contract

Sarah Mason, Registrar, effective July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027

One-year Non-continuing Contract Renewal

Anthony Quinn, Director of Upward Bound, non-continuing contract, effective September 2, 2026 through September 1, 2027 (Title II Grant position)

First-Year Probationary Faculty Contract effective 8/24/26 – 5/13/27:

Denise Williams, Professor of Business

Jonathan Farrell, Assistant Professor of Business

End of Contract (Grant position ending):

Kristin Iacopelli, Grant Manager, effective June 30, 2026

Resignation:

Jennifer Estrada, ERP Systems Administrator, effective June 5, 2026

- C. 3. a. (2) 20. Frank Thomas, 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 May 31, 2026.

Mr. Thomas reported that three installments of State appropriations remain outstanding. He also noted that property tax revenue is expected to continue, with two months of interest collections remaining for May and June.

Expenditures were reported at 93 percent, reflecting costs associated with repairs and increased replacement salaries due to recent resignations. Despite these factors, Mr. Thomas indicated that the College is projected to close the fiscal year under budget.

- C. 3. a. (3) 21. This item was discussed earlier in the agenda.

- C. 3. a. (4) 22. Scott Behrens, Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Success informed the Board that we have two Title IX policies listed which require clean-up to only one policy following updated Federal guidelines. The Board discussed the status of the College's Title IX procedures and website content. It was suggested that current information remain posted online with a notation indicating that the policy and procedures are under review and will be updated. This approach would provide transparency while allowing the College to communicate ongoing revisions and invite questions from the public.
- Trustees expressed general agreement that maintaining accessible information is important, particularly given the sensitivity and evolving nature of Title IX compliance. Concerns were raised regarding potential legal and regulatory implications, and the importance of ensuring accuracy to mitigate institutional liability.

It was noted that external experts have already reviewed the procedures, and additional legal review could be pursued if necessary. The Board reached consensus that no formal action was required at this time, as procedural updates fall within administrative authority, while policy-level changes would continue to require Board approval.

- C. 3. a. (5) 23. John Wyrabkiewicz, Chief Information Office, informed the Board of the informational update to the remote work procedure. All the information from the form was converted into a digital format procedure, which reflects current practices and digital delivery methods.

- C. 3. a. (6) 24. John Wyrabkiewicz, Chief Information Office, informed the Board of the Procedure 9.06 Email Use Procedure. This procedure establishes college-supported platforms for emails, phone calls, and instant messaging. The procedure assists with consistent College communication management, security compliance, and institutional records retention along with mass email etiquette.

- C. 3. b. (1) 25. Amanda Althouse, Director of Student Success presented updates and recent activities within the Student Success Department. The Board received a presentation on the College's Student Success initiatives, including an overview of services, student demographics, and common barriers to success. Staff from various support areas were recognized for their contributions.

It was noted that students often face challenges such as financial hardship, health concerns, time management, and limited access to resources. Current retention rates were reported at 61.8 percent (fall-to-fall), with persistence at 80 percent (fall-to-winter), which is comparable to the state average of 62.6 percent.

The presentation highlighted examples of how the College supports students through academic coaching, tutoring, financial assistance, mental health services, and specialized programs. Emphasis was placed on a coordinated, campus-wide approach to student success involving multiple departments and community partners. The partnership between all departments, The Foundation, and the community help ensure student success.

Additionally, the Momentum Adult Success Program was recognized for its impact, including 11 recent graduates, and was selected to be featured in a University of South Carolina publication on best practices for adult learners. A video was shared highlighting the first graduation celebration for the Momentum program. The Trustees commented on how amazing this video is in emphasizing what an impact the College's Momentum Adult Success Program has on the students and community. Board members commented that the video should be shared with the broader community, noting it was one of the most effective promotional videos the College has produced. Dr. Behrens thanked Joe Verkennes, Director of Marketing and Communications, and his team for the production of the video.

- C. 3. b. (2) 26. Joshua Myers, Executive Director of The Foundation and Director of Government and Alumni Affairs, reiterated how the Student Success Center is changing lives, making generational impacts. The College didn't have a Student Success Center 6 years ago and the work they are doing is changing the complexion of our community every day. Kudos to Amanda Althouse and her entire team.

Dr. Myers shared that the "Strikes, Spares & Scholarships" event held on May 29th, raised almost \$7000 and gives our staff the opportunity to get together outside of work

for a great cause. This event is an all-around fun day with raffles, bowling, and comradery.

The Foundation has a few upcoming events which include The Foundation Scholarship Dinner on August 25th and the Alumni Association golf outing on September 11th.

Next, Dr. Myers provided an update on the master planning timeline. Good progress is being made, with ongoing meetings with the planning architects. The plan will continue to be refined over the summer, with a draft to be shared with the campus community in the fall for feedback. A draft is expected to be presented to the Board in September for review, with the goal of addressing any concerns prior to bringing the final master plan forward for Board adoption in October.

An update was provided on the State budget process, noting ongoing uncertainty due to conflicting information from state leadership regarding the timeline and potential use of a continuing resolution. It was indicated that a delay in finalizing the budget could negatively impact the College's appropriations and capital outlay funding. The administration continues to advocate for construction authorization for the Welch project, which includes \$11 million in funding. Progress on the project remains limited until legislative approval is received, as bidding and final cost estimates cannot proceed without authorization. In the meantime, preparatory work is underway to position the project for timely advancement once approval is granted. It was also noted that rising costs, driven in part by inflation and increased demand for skilled trades, may impact the overall project budget. Senator Bellino, Representative Brock, and Representative Miller have been very helpful in this process with the state.

An update was provided on recent fundraising efforts, noting several significant gifts. The College received a \$10,000 cultural enrichment gift, along with a \$10,000 matching gift to support a broader campaign goal of \$25,000.

It was also reported that a former registrar, Larry Wilson, left approximately \$30,000 to the College through his estate. In addition, a declaration of future intent was secured for an estimated \$750,000 planned gift. The College received \$150,000 from Don and Pat Roof to support various initiatives, including the Dundee Promise Program, workforce development, and student support resources. An update was also provided on the campaign's progress, including the launch of a new brochure and ongoing outreach to prospective lead donors during the silent phase of the campaign.

Lastly, Dr. Myers shared the new donor brochure, which includes a QR code to scan for additional information. Then, Dr. Myers dressed in a T-shirt saying he was stopped by the Josh Stompers for the Pack the Pantry Challenge, in which the audience laughed. Due to the grab-and-go type system, the usage of the pantry is up 600 percent, which shows the growing need.

- C. 3. b. (3) 27. President Quartey thanked the Board for attending the budget meeting and for approving the College's FY 2026–2027 budget, noting that the advance budget meeting allowed the Board to move efficiently through the regular meeting agenda. The President also reported that information requested regarding the Whitman Center is being gathered and will be provided to the Board members who requested this.

The President shared a positive enrollment update, reporting that overall headcount has increased by just over 1 percent, credit hours are up 7.26 percent, and billable contact hours have increased 5.69 percent, reflecting strong enrollment trends and positive revenue implications for the College.

President Quartey reported that he and Trustee Thayer attended the June Michigan Community College Association (MCCA) Board meeting in Muskegon. Discussion centered on the Association's four-year strategic planning process and legislative updates. The legislative outlook at both the state and federal levels was described as challenging due to ongoing political gridlock, with concerns expressed that the state budget may not be finalized by the anticipated July deadline. As a result of these developments, the College's state revenue projections have been revised from a projected increase to a flat funding expectation for the coming fiscal year.

The Board was informed that MCCA membership dues will increase by 1%, representing an approximate \$300 increase for the College. It was noted that MCCA continues to provide valuable support to Michigan community colleges through professional development opportunities, networking cohorts, and resources for functional areas including finance, registration, and other operational services.

The President concluded by highlighting the College's Husky Hype Up summer bridge program, reporting that 17 students are currently participating. The program was recognized as an important initiative to support incoming students as they transition to college and prepare for academic success.

Additional information was provided regarding the Husky Hype Up summer bridge program by Grace Yackee, Vice President of Instruction. Dr. Yackee explained that the program was established four years ago through a state grant to assist recent high school graduates who experienced learning gaps resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the expiration of the grant, the program was incorporated into the College's Momentum initiative, with additional support provided through D3C3, allowing the College to expand eligibility and continue serving a broader population of students.

Trustees were informed that the program has evolved from a daytime program serving primarily recent high school graduates to an evening program that accommodates a more diverse student population. Participants receive intensive academic support through reading, writing, math, and first-year experience courses, as well as meals, access to community resources, and laptop computers to support their academic success.

Recognition was given to the faculty and staff who contribute to the program, including Jenna Bazzell, who has taught the reading and writing boot camp since the program's inception; Anne Gospodarek, who teaches the First-Year Experience course; and adjunct mathematics instructor Sandra Cichewicz. The Board acknowledged their continued commitment to student success.

Chair Mason discussed reports that Bedford Public Schools may be expanding educational partnerships with the University of Toledo to offer bachelor's-level coursework to students. College administration indicated that additional information is being gathered to better understand the scope of the arrangement and any potential impact on the College's dual enrollment programs. Administration noted that increased competition from four-year institutions offering dual enrollment opportunities has become a growing trend throughout the state. Trustees discussed the potential implications for community colleges, including the need to remain competitive, adapt recruitment and partnership strategies, and continue monitoring legislative issues affecting cross-border educational agreements and funding.

The administration confirmed that the College continues to maintain a strong partnership with Bedford Public Schools, currently serving more than 250 dual enrollment students. Recent outreach and enrollment efforts at Bedford were reported as successful, and College leadership emphasized its commitment to maintaining and strengthening the relationship while remaining responsive to an increasingly competitive dual enrollment environment.

C. 4. b. (2) 28. Board Self-evaluations Discussion – moved up in agenda before going to closed session.

The Board reviewed the results of its annual self-evaluation. Chair Mason noted that while average scores generally fell between "3" and "4," the responses revealed differing perspectives among trustees that warranted discussion. Areas identified for continued attention included board organization, meeting efficiency, board education, community engagement, board leadership, and standards for college operations.

The Board discussed the importance of understanding and maintaining its role as a policy-making body rather than an administrative body. Trustees reaffirmed that operational authority is delegated to the President, who serves as the Board's sole employee, and that effective governance requires maintaining appropriate distinctions between policy oversight and administrative responsibilities. Chair Mason noted that this remains a recurring topic in trustee education and governance training.

Trustees also discussed Board-President relations, community and student engagement, and trustee participation in college events. It was acknowledged that trustees have varying levels of availability to attend campus activities due to personal and professional commitments. The discussion emphasized the value of continued visibility and engagement with the College community whenever possible.

Chair Mason observed that the evaluation responses reflected differing opinions regarding meeting length, agenda management, and Board operations. Trustees were encouraged to provide constructive feedback to the Chair regarding meeting organization and efficiency to support continuous improvement. The Chair emphasized a commitment to conducting meetings that are both transparent and efficient while using the self-evaluation results to identify future governance training opportunities.

Trustees discussed the value of supplementing the Board's self-evaluation process with broader stakeholder feedback. Trustee Edwards inquired whether governance best practices include obtaining input from community members or other stakeholders through a "360-degree" evaluation or similar survey process to better understand public perceptions of the Board's effectiveness. The Board discussed the potential benefits and challenges of gathering community feedback, including the distinction between anecdotal input and representative data. Trustees noted the importance of remaining forward-looking in their governance role while continuing to respond to current issues affecting the College.

Chair Mason indicated that the Board would explore whether recognized governance organizations, including the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), offer models or best practices for obtaining stakeholder feedback as part of board governance and self-assessment. Trustees also discussed the value of incorporating long-term strategic discussions into future Board retreats and acknowledged the challenges associated with coordinating schedules for additional planning sessions.

- C. 4. b. (1) 29. *It was moved by Trustee Edwards and supported by Trustee Goodman that the Board of Trustees go into Closed Session to discuss a matter exempt from disclosure under Section 15.268(d) of the Open Meetings Act.*

A roll call vote was taken as follows and the Board went into closed session at 7:26 p.m.

30. The Board resumed open session at 8:21 p.m.

- C. 4. b. (4) 31. Chair Mason noted the upcoming events.

- C. 4. b. (5) 33. *It was moved by Trustee and supported by Trustee that the meeting be adjourned.*

The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Aaron N. Mason
Chair

Nicole R. Goodman
Secretary

kr/

“These minutes were approved at the September 28, 2026 regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.”