

Minutes of the MassBay Community College Board of Trustees Meeting – 8:00 am to 10:00 am Tuesday, April 2, 2024, by Webex and YouTube

Board Members Present: Tobey Choate, Alfonso Hidalgo, Matt Kahn, Ilissa Povich, Mikael Pyrtel, Derin Saunders, Diane Schmalensee, Lili Silva, Dune Thorne, Wendy Vincent

Trustee Thorne departed the meeting at 9:00 am, and Trustee Vincent departed the meeting at 9:10 am.

Staff Present: Yvonne Anthony, Director of Grants Development; Liz Blumberg, Vice President for Student Development and Dean of Students; Liz Borg, Capital Campaign Director; Karen Britton, Executive Director, Office of the President; Lauren Curley, Director of Business and Procurement Operations; Diane Daniels, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources and Payroll; Lynne Davis, Dean of Health Sciences; Mishawn Davis-Eyene, Executive Director of Development; Joe DeLisle, Director of Facilities; Phil DiBlasi, Director of Public Safety; Marcus Edward, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Catherine Gildae, Assistant Dean for Institutional Effectiveness; Courtney Jackson, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost; Nina Keery, Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences; Mike Lyons, Chief Information Officer; Lisa MacDonald, Director of Equity Compliance; Sue Maggioni, Assistant Provost; Alison McCarty, Associate Dean for Admissions and Community Learning; Lynn Moore, Chief Diversity Officer; David Podell, President; David Protano, Dean of Automotive Technology & Interim Dean of STEM; Lisa Slavin, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management; Jeremy Solomon, Associate Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Marketing and Communications; Halye Sugarman, Dean of Business and Professional Studies; Richard Williams, Associate Dean for Student Success

CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Schmalensee called the meeting to order and declared that a quorum was present.

WELCOMING NEW ELECTED ALUMNI TRUSTEE HIDALGO

Chair Schmalensee welcomed new Elected Trustee Hidalgo to the Board. Trustee Hidalgo graduated from MassBay with an Associate's degree in Liberal Arts and transferred to University of Massachusetts Amherst, where he received a Bachelor's degree in Sociology and a Master's degree in Public Policy. Trustee Hidalgo is currently a Senior Account Supervisor at Edelman Smithfield. He is grateful for this opportunity to come full circle with MassBay and is interested in joining any committee.

MARCH 5, 2024, MINUTES

MOTION: Trustee Povich moved to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2024, meeting, and Trustee Choate seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – ABSTAINED; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Pyrtel – YES; Trustee Saunders – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Silva – YES; Trustee Thorne – YES; Trustee Vincent – YES

BOARD ORGANIZATION

Chair Schmalensee reported the Board of Trustees has several roles. The Board's main role is to monitor the finances of the College, and it is doing so under the Finance and Administration Committee chaired by Trustee Kahn. In addition, Trustee Lish chairs the Presidential Evaluation Committee and Trustee Silva the Student Success Committee. Because the Board acts as a unit, Trustees are asked not reach out to staff individually and instead go through the Chair or ask that an item be included on a monthly meeting agenda. Chair Schmalensee also noted the order of the meeting agenda is changing to have the Executive Reports at the beginning.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

Board Chair

Chair Schmalensee reported that the Department of Higher Education held a meeting with the Board Chairs and Presidential Evaluation Committee Chairs. They are impressed with MassBay's format for their evaluations and would like the other colleges to use it. She reminded Trustees to fill out this year's evaluation of President Podell.

President

President Podell reported the following:

*The College had hoped to have the new option for food services set up by the end of the summer, but the process of construction and state funding will take longer, so it will begin later in the fall. The plan is to use an Amazon product called Just Walk Out in both Wellesley and Framingham, with the possibility of hot food in Wellesley.

*This year's Commencement Speaker will be Representative Priscilla Sousa, who represented the state legislators by speaking at the ribbon cutting. Representative Sousa was born in Brazil and grew up in Framingham. She has great affection for MassBay.

*The MCCC faculty and staff waited a long time for their retroactive FY2021 and FY2022 raises. They are now waiting for FY2024 retroactive increases, and it is hoped this issue will not get lost in a political battle at the State House.

*The College is in the second half of the semester, a busy time for faculty and staff.

*Spring enrollment is up 24.4% compared to last year, an increase second only to Roxbury Community College, which places us just above pre-pandemic numbers. Much of this growth is due to MassReconnect. While the total number of 18-year-olds is dropping, older students are taking advantage of this program. The largest number of MassReconnect students are in their 30s. We anticipate that free community college for all will be in the Senate's budget for FY2025. In the present year, some community colleges received too much MassReconnect funding from the state and others too little (including MassBay), and MassBay is waiting for this imbalance to be corrected.

Student Trustee

Student Trustee Saunders noted that not a large number of students responded to the survey or attended the Town Halls regarding arming of the police. He wants students to feel they are being heard.

SPECIAL REPORT - The question of arming the campus police

Chair Schmalensee reported that she hopes everyone has received the survey comments and report included in the meeting binder. President Podell explained that the process of looking at the question of arming the campus police began in 2017. In 2018, a series of Town Halls were held with the community. At that time, a plurality favored arming, with fewer saying no and some undecided. The Board of Trustees voted to arm the campus police. Right afterwards, there were issues with the police union, including training, and construction of the Public Safety office so that it could accommodate arms. Then the pandemic delayed implementation and the murder of George Floyd occurred, causing the Board to reassess its position. This year, the College followed the process requested by the Board, hosting a new set of Town Halls (the employee Town Halls were well attended, although the student Town Halls were not). In addition, the College distributed an online survey. This time, a greater proportion (60%) expressed being in favor of arming. The responses do break down differentially by race, but in each campus and grouping, the majority say yes to arming.

Trustee Pyrtel made an initial motion that the Board of Trustees approves the motion to approve arming the campus police if the officers have concealed weapons, training, and maintain human capital, also acknowledging the Board has fiduciary responsibility. The motion did not move forward.

Student Trustee Saunders requested that the Board meet with students in person, given there was low representation of students in the Town Halls and on the survey. He has talked with students individually and two clubs, and many students are opposed to arming the police. Chair Schmalensee stated that 61% of students support arming, and that Chief DiBlasi has taken great care to develop a positive relationship with the community through communication and training.

Trustee Povich stated that it was helpful to see the survey results, especially the comments. The Board is responsible for keeping the campus and people safe. The survey does show that some people would feel less safe if the officers were armed and others would feel less safe if officers were not armed. She noted that most other community colleges whose police are armed have not had incidents. The concerns expressed about officers being armed are difficult to quantify.

Trustee Silva questioned if officers having concealed weapons is the best practice, which Chief DiBlasi indicated was not a good idea when they are wearing uniforms. Two trainings are required and governed by state laws. It was noted that the motion can include a caveat about training.

Trustee Vincent asked about the relationship of the officers to students on campus. Chief DiBlasi explained that there are seven officers assigned to specific shifts. Officers are mingling with the community a fair amount, and typically the community sees the same faces each day. Over the past four years, no incidents have occurred (although the first year of those four years was the pandemic). Trustee Vincent asked if the College is being overly cautious if the campus is not a threatening environment, and asked if stun guns would be a better alternative.

Trustee Thorne stated that she hears all views. Although she does not have expertise, she keeps coming back to thinking if there were an incident and officers were not armed, we would regret it. She leans towards arming with significant training but will defer to others.

Trustee Choate noted that the majority of responses in the Race and Ethnicity categories are similar. He sees arming the police as preventing, not solving, a problem and also leans towards doing so.

Trustee Kahn agrees with Trustee Thorne's comments, recognizing we all bring our own perspective. Supporting arming seems in line with report and survey, but he acknowledged he is not on campus every day or regularly.

Trustee Pyrtel pointed out that the decision being made today is about the response, not about the armament (the tool).

Chair Schmalensee noted that this is a challenging decision, and she can see both sides. She asked if the vote should take place in May instead, and Trustees preferred that it take place today, followed by a more detailed policy to be presented at the May meeting.

MOTION: Trustee Pyrtel moved that the Board of Trustees affirms its vote of March 2019 to arm the MassBay Campus Police and requests a plan in its next meeting for initiating the arming and for training. Trustee Kahn seconded the vote.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Pyrtel – YES; Trustee Saunders – NO; Trustee Schmalensee - YES; Trustee Silva – YES; Trustee Vincent – NO

The vote was 7 in favor and 2 opposed. A plan for implementing this decision will be presented at the May meeting.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

***Finance and Administration Committee**

Finance Items

Committee Chair Kahn reported that the Finance Office has done an excellent job overseeing the College's finances. The stock market has also performed well. President Podell reported that a student fee increase will likely be recommended for next year. It will be a small increase not felt much by students, given MassReconnect, and also the upcoming increase in Pell. Vice President Edward then reported the following:

FY2024 Budget vs. Actual Comparison Report

As of the end of February, our performance exceeded the projected budget by around \$1.4 million, attributed to better performance on revenues and expenses when compared to the projected budget.

Revenue

Overall, there is a positive variance on the revenue side, amounting to \$756,000. Tuition and fees revenue outperformed the projected budget by about \$676,000, driven by favorable enrollment trends. Fall enrollment increased by 17.4%, and spring enrollment increased by 24.4%, exceeding the budgeted 14% year-over-year increase. The State Maintenance Appropriation stands at \$19.4 million received thus far out of the allocated \$22.3 million. Contracts, Commission, and Other Revenue exceed the budget by \$102,000, mainly due to the superior performance in MMDT interest earnings, reaching a 5.56% rate of return. MassBay is ahead on interest earnings by \$86,000. In terms of investment spending, the College has taken half of the annual draw.

Expenses

On the expense side, MassBay is performing better than the budget by around \$670,000. Several expense categories align with the projected budget. A positive variance of \$94,000 on the permanent staff line is due to unpaid MCCC increases for FY24. The increases will be paid when the funds have been approved and appropriated by the state. A positive variance of \$560,000 on the administrative expenses line is attributed to unspent contingency funds and underspending in the catering, traveling, and printing expenses. An unfavorable variance of \$113,000 on the consultants line is due to the website refresh project expenses. Capital expenses amount to \$521,000, or 43% of the budget.

Student Accounts Receivable

There has been a year-over-year increase of \$1.6 million, or 93%, in Student Account Receivables as of February 29. The negative variance is the result of an increase in enrollment of approximately 25% for the spring semester, and the timing of financial aid disbursements.

Cash Comparison Report

MassBay has \$40 million in cash and investments, reflecting an \$8.3 million increase year over year. The increase is due to an increase in returns from MMDT, the timing of student financial aid drawdown, and an increase in the value of investments

Cash Position by Month

The chart illustrates monthly cash balances over the last five years.

Investment Update

As of February 29, the investment balance was \$23 million, reflecting a 3.3% increase in value for the month of February. As of March 29, the investment balance was \$23.6 million, earning a 2.4% return for the month of March thus far. The overall return since inception is 18.7%.

Contracts Report

There is one three-year contract to report to be paid out of local funds. The contract is with Automated Building Systems, Inc., which will aid MassBay with the computer operated controls for the HVAC system at the new Framingham campus. They offer training for facilities staff and conduct system tuning to uphold our net zero emission status.

Personnel Items

Assistant Vice President Daniels reported the following:

Personnel Actions Report

Maria Matinez Balanzar was recently hired as Administrative Assistant for the Academic Advising, Coaching, and Transfer Center and reports to the Director of Advising.

Lori Edmands was recently hired as Research Assistant for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Initiatives, and reports to Catherine Gildae, Assistant Dean of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Initiatives.

Recruitment Report

There are 13 open positions, including Assistant Director of Math and Sciences in the Academic Achievement Center, Director of Advising, and Dean of Teaching and Learning, and ten faculty positions.

Sabbatical

Vice President Jackson presented the Sabbatical Leave recommendation endorsing Professor Dolores Goyette's pursuit of a Master of Education degree at Merrimack College, allowing her to maintain half workload and receive full salary during the Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 semesters. The request was approved by the faculty committee and is supported by President David Podell and Vice President Jackson. Professor Goyette has been with MassBay since 2017. Professor Goyette's pursuit of this additional degree will augment her clinical training.

MOTION: Trustee Silva moved to approve the sabbatical request, and Trustee Choate seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Pyrtel – YES; Trustee Saunders – YES; Trustee Schmalensee - YES; Trustee Silva – YES

ENROLLMENT REPORT

Associate Vice President Slavin reported that enrollment is up 11.4% in FTE for summer. Fall applications are up 44% compared to this time last year, and registration opened yesterday. Admissions staff has gone out on over 200 visits so far this semester. She expressed thanks to Associate Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Marketing and Communications Solomon and his team. There will be an Open House in Wellesley on April 27.

DASHBOARD REPORT

Assistant Dean Gildae reported that there have been two changes to the Dashboard, as follows:

*Admissions – This data shows where applicants who were accepted into MassBay enrolled in Fall 2023. A total of

26% enrolled at MassBay, 14% at another institution, and 60% enrolled nowhere.

*Enrollment – This data shows that the percentage of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students who received any financial aid decreased in the 2023 academic year to 56%, Pell Grants increased to 42%, and Federal Student Loan awards to students decreased to 17% relative to the 2022 academic year. It was noted that the February 2024 dashboard incorrectly reported 15% for federal student loans awarded in the 2022 academic year instead of 18%. The 15% reflected federal student loans to all degree/certificate students, instead of limiting it to students who were first-time, full-time.

FOUNDATION AND CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REPORTS

Executive Director Davis-Eyene reported the following:

*Boston Marathon – Alumnus Dan O’Neil is running in support of MassBay’s General Scholarship fund. Members of the MassBay community will be gathering at Jack’s Abbey in Framingham to watch on April 15.

*Celebration of Scholars is on April 18 on the Framingham campus, and tours will be provided.

*The first MassBay and Wellesley Symphony Orchestra benefit concert will be on May 29. Funds will go towards scholarships and operating funds for the orchestra.

Capital Campaign Director Borg reported the following:

*On May 3 at the new Framingham campus, there will be a celebration for all employees and unveiling of the employee donor plaque. It is estimated that a total of 125 employees will have donated.

*Tours of the new campus with President Podell and Dean Davis as well as re-engagement with major individual and corporate prospects are ongoing. Patriot Ambulance was provided a tour yesterday. Chair Schmalensee noted that her son, who is a paramedic, had high praise for the simulated ambulance.

*Conversations and next steps with several major foundations are in process.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Chair Schmalensee reminded everyone about the following events coming up:

*Mobile Market – April 10 and May 8 – 11:30 am to 12:30 pm in Wellesley and at noon in Framingham

*Celebration of Scholars – April 18 at 6:00 pm

*Evening of Excellence – May 20 at 5:00 pm

*Commencement – May 23 at 6:00 pm (4:30 pm arrivals for robing and refreshments)

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Trustee Choate moved to adjourn the meeting, and Trustee Silva seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Pyrtel – YES; Trustee Schmalensee - YES; Trustee Silva – YES; Trustee Saunders – YES

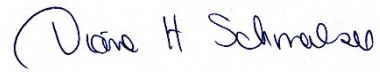
The meeting adjourned at 9:41 am.



5/21/24

David Podell, President
MassBay Community College

Date



5/21/24

Diane Schmalensee, Chair
MassBay Board of Trustees

Date