

Minutes of the MassBay Community College Board of Trustees Meeting – 8:00 am to 10:00 am Tuesday, April 1, 2025, by Webex and YouTube

Trustees Present: Ilissa Povich (Chair), Tobey Choate, Teddy Choi, Alfonso Hidalgo, Matt Kahn, Rebecca Negreli, Gary Prado, Diane Schmalensee, Wendy Vincent

Trustees Not Present: Sandy Lish, Lili Silva

Trustee Hidalgo departed at 9:20 am, and Trustee Kahn departed at 9:24 am.

Guests Present: Melanie Cerin Aldana, Student; Tony Loftis, MassBay Foundation Board member

Staff Present: Steve Baccari, Comptroller; Michelle Biscotti, Associate Director of Development; Liz Borg, Capital Campaign Director; Liz Blumberg, Vice President for Student Development; Karen Britton, Executive Director, Office of the President; Lauren Curley, Director of Procurement and Business Operations; Lynne Davis, Dean of Health Sciences; 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; Henry Lopez, Director of End User Services; Lisa MacDonald, Associate Dean for Equity Assurance; Sue Maggioni, Assistant Provost; Alison McCarty, Associate Dean of Admissions; Lynn Moore, Chief Diversity Officer; David Podell, President; David Protano, Dean of Automotive Technology; Hannah Seavian, Dean of STEM; Lisa Slavin, Vice President for Enrollment Management; Jeremy Solomon, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Marketing, and Communications; Halye Sugarman, Dean of Business and Professional Studies; Richard Williams, Associate Dean for Student Success and Strategic Initiatives

CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

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

MARCH 4, 2025, MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Trustee Schmalensee moved to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2025, meeting, and Trustee Hidalgo seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Choi – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Negreli – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Prado – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Vincent - YES

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

Board Chair

Chair Povich reported the following:

*The Presidential Evaluation Committee’s work will begin soon. Members of this committee are Trustees Hidalgo, Lish (Chair), Povich (ex-officio), and Schmalensee.

*Chair Povich thanked former Chair Schmalensee for her service to the Board and MassBay as Chair. Trustee Schmalensee runs an excellent meeting, ensuring that Trustees have the opportunity to voice their views and ask questions, also keeping the meetings moving in order to get to all of the votes required when there is a quorum. She has set a respectful tone for all discussions. Trustee Schmalensee has done so much more than run the Full Board meetings. She serves on every Board committee and shares valuable insights on each. This is true for the Finance

and Administration and Nominations and Bylaws Committees, and especially the Presidential Evaluation Committee, for which she is one who crunches the data that go into the comprehensive and thoughtful evaluations of President Podell. She and her husband, Dick, have also been incredibly supportive of MassBay on the philanthropic front through their own support and encouraging friends and colleagues to support the College. Most importantly, in all of the work that Diane has done on behalf of MassBay, she has centered on students and their experience. The Board and the College have benefitted tremendously from her many contributions.

President

President Podell reported that former Chair Schmalensee was always available and looking out for MassBay and its students. She is an effective, clear thinker, always looking at everyone's point of view and seeing the big picture. It has been a pleasure working with her.

Preparing for Upcoming NECHE Team Visit

The NECHE team visit will begin this Sunday, April 6, with a dinner at 6:00 pm in the Library Atrium. The team includes a variety of administrators at New England community colleges with different experience. The visit is scheduled to continue April 7-9, and the team will meet with Board members on Monday, April 7, at 9:30 am, in person as well as remotely. Two Board of Higher Education members, Bill Walczak, Segmental Representative and Board Chair at Bunker Hill Community College, and Christina Royale, a former community college president, will also be in attendance. The team wants to verify that MassBay meets the nine NECHE standards. Chapters 1-3 of the report are those most relevant to the Trustees. President Podell has asked his team to avoid using acronyms, and has reminded the team that everyone should be honest, even about flaws.

Mass Higher Ed Consortium (MHEC) Purchasing Breakdown

The Legislature tasked the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges (MACC) to commence administrative efficiency initiatives at community colleges. A thirteen-page report resulted that detailed past, present, and future cost savings from joint procurement. The key takeaway is that MassBay ranks second in purchasing volume from the Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium (MHEC), despite being the eighth largest community college by FTE. This is a significant achievement, especially considering Bunker Hill, the largest community college, is first. Thanks to the purchasing team, MassBay purchased \$3.8 million and saved \$1.7 million, or 46%, from discounted prices and avoided the effort of running local bids, as MHEC provides publicly bid and state-compliant contracts for public schools and municipalities.

Vice President Solomon reported that the Marketing Department recently received the College's first Gold Paragon Award at the recent National Consortium of Public Relations and Marketing Professionals (NCMPR) conference. The product submitted was in the "logo wear" category, a t-shirt in American sign language designed by Lisa Dunn, a MassBay Admissions staff member who is deaf. The judges were impressed not only by the product but also the inclusive community concept. All proceeds from the sales of the t-shirt will go to the Nathan Persampieri Scholarship Fund, created by a former student with physical disabilities for students with similar conditions.

Student Trustee

Student Trustee Choi reported the following regarding MassBay club events:

- *MassBay Idol Competition – Students active in the performing arts will be participating. This is a great opportunity to showcase their talents.
- *Club Bingo tournament – Each club picked its own prize to market to attendees.
- *Sustainability Club – An event focusing on building momentum will be taking place tomorrow.

Student Trustee Choi also reported that students seem to be fairly calm after mid-terms, and transfer applications are winding down. Students are happy at MassBay.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

***Finance and Administration Committee**

Finance Items

Committee Chair Kahn reported that all is going well with MassBay's finances. This month's meeting will begin the shorter reporting on finance items.

Vice President Edward reported the following:

Investments, Cash, & Student Receivables Summary Reports

The binder includes a one-page report showing investments, cash information, and student receivables. At the end of February, the College's investment balance was \$29.7 million.

Cash & Investment Position by Month

At the end of February, the cash balance was \$8 million. The receivable balance was \$3.8 million, which declined from \$9.7 million the previous month, a decrease of \$5.9 million, mainly due to the processing of financial aid.

Kitchen Renovation Updates

Director of Facilities DeLisle reported that the kitchen renovation project is running approximately two weeks behind. One reason is the addition of an exterior grease interceptor to the project needing approval from the Wellesley Department of Public Works. MassBay has received clearance to proceed.

Single Audit Report

President Podell reported that the Single Audit Report showed no findings.

Vice President Edward reported that it is difficult to achieve an audit with no findings, given that in the audit of federal spending there is no room for error. For example, if a dollar more of aid is disbursed than what was justified, it is a finding. Vice President Edward acknowledged MassBay's strong Financial Aid team headed by the two Directors, Alex Jean-Jacques and Stephanie Jean Pierre. The audit was filed by the March 31 deadline. The audit concentrates on the spending of federal dollars. Most of the College's federal spending is on financial aid. For the 2024 fiscal year, MassBay's total spending of federal funds was \$10.8 million, with 66% spent on student financial aid. The College received \$5.1 million in Pell grants, which accounts for 71% of student financial aid and 47% of total federal funding. Last year, the College's federal funding was \$7.1 million. This year's federal funding increased by \$3.7 million dollars, mainly due to the increase in student financial aid. With the two free community college programs, students must fill out a FAFSA to qualify, and many students who do this are eligible for federal financial aid. In addition, there are also expenses associated with the Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant included in the report.

MOTION: Trustee Schmalensee moved to approve the Single Audit Report related to Federal Funds, and Trustee Hidalgo seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Choi – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Negreli – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Prado – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Vincent – YES

Personnel Items

Vice President Edward reported the following:

Personnel Actions Report

There are two new employees, one new and one returning, and two employees in new roles.

Recruitment Report

There are 24 open positions on the Recruitment Report. The search for the Cybersecurity faculty member is being relaunched. It is possible that a search firm may be engaged for the Cyber Manager position.

***Nominations and Bylaws**

Chair Povich reported that Trustee Schmalensee is now serving as Chair of the Nominations and Bylaws Committee. Committee Chair Schmalensee reported that the committee has four members, Chair Povich (ex-officio) and Trustees Lish, Prado, and Schmalensee. She described the process for nominating new Trustees, where colleges are asked by the state to propose new candidates to the Public Education Nominating Council (PENC) and the Governor. The committee is also working on revising the Bylaws. Chair Povich has contacted MassBay's attorney with comments and questions. The committee will eventually bring the revised document to the Board for approval.

NEW CERTIFICATE IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Vice President Jackson reported that the Human Services faculty is working on a new certificate in Behavioral Health, designed to meet the needs of individuals looking to enter the behavioral health field, upgrade current skills, and further their studies in behavioral health. Upon graduation, students are awarded a Certificate in Liberal Arts with a concentration in Behavioral Health and are prepared to work in a variety of state or local government agencies, residential care, rehabilitation, personal care facilities, or clinics.

Dean Sugarman presented a PowerPoint on the new Behavioral Health Certificate (attached) which notes the following:

*MassBay's commitment to Human Services through the Office of Corporate Partnerships and Workforce Development (CPWD) and existing Associate's Degrees and Certificates

*The new program is community focused, addresses a demand for personnel in Health and Human Services, and provides an opportunity for advancement. It will require one new faculty hire and it is aligned with the development of an apprenticeship program supported by funding from the Smith Family Foundation and Accelerate the Future

*It is a certificate pathway that folds into an Associate degree

*We are currently engaging employer partners

Trustee Negreli indicated that this program is related to her work, and she will share it with her colleagues. Dean Sugarman reported that MassBay is connecting with other colleges such as Framingham State University (FSU) and

William James College.

MOTION: Trustee Choate moved to approve the Certificate in Behavioral Health, and Trustee Negreli seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Choi – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Negreli – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Prado – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Vincent – YES

SPECIAL REPORT

Early College and Biotechnology

President Podell introduced Melanie Cerin Aldana, a student in MassBay's Biotechnology program who was previously enrolled in our Early College program. Ms. Cerin Aldana recently presented on her experience at the State House, and President Podell was so moved that he asked her to present to the Board at today's meeting. Ms. Cerin Aldana's presentation on her college experience included the following:

- *Why did I join Early College?
- *What happened during Early College
- *Aftermath of Early College

The Trustees thanked Ms. Cerin Aldana for her presentation and commended her for all she is doing currently and will do into the future. Ms. Cerin Aldana indicated she wants to receive the highest degree in her field, a doctorate, and complete lab research in order to create a vaccine.

ENROLLMENT REPORT

Vice President Slavin reported that Admissions is in middle of registering students for summer semester, which begins on May 19. The College is up 63% in FTE and 42% in headcount. There has been close to a 61% increase in summer applications, helped by free community college. Fall registration opens on April 7. A significant marketing campaign took place, and advisors are working regularly with their advisees. An event with high school guidance counselors was held in Ashland to showcase the automotive technology space. Spring Open House will be on May 3 and there are over 300 registrations so far. Last year's Open House had 500 registrants. Fall applications are also ahead of last year at this time by 10%.

President Podell pointed out the growing Hispanic population, for which MassBay's priority is creating and providing services.

FOUNDATION AND CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REPORTS

Foundation Board member Loftis reported the following:

*The Boston Marathon is three weeks away. The Foundation is looking forward to supporting Trustee Hidalgo at the MarathonFest, taking place at Jack's Abbey in Framingham. Donations can be made on Trustee Hidalgo's [web page](#).

*Scholarship celebration lunches are being held in both Wellesley and Framingham this month.

*Several events are coming up at which MassBay will be represented, including the Charles River Chamber Taste of Our Town and Wellesley Rotary Taste of Wellesley.

Capital Campaign Director Borg reported that MassBay is in the early stages of cultivating new donors and

connecting with existing donors for the new Cyber Education and Health and Wellness Center campaign. Materials, including a brochure, PowerPoint, and video are being created, and awareness events and tours are being scheduled. The campaign team is working with Trustees and employees on opening more doors.

President Podell reported on developments with the housing project. Governor Healey is looking to use state land to increase housing in eastern Massachusetts. MassBay has the opportunity to leverage its land by selling or leasing it for housing to fund the new Center for Cyber Education and Health and Wellness. To use this land for this purpose, the law requires Board members to *not object* (rather than approve). He is told that each Trustee eventually will be sent a letter indicating the plan to move forward with the project. For the next few months, meetings will be held with different groups in the town of Wellesley to persuade them of the value of Center and solicit support for the housing project. The town's approval is not needed, but MassBay's relationship with Wellesley is very important. In addition, Governor Healey has put forth the Bright Act bill, a \$25 billion bond bill for public Higher Education construction to address much deferred maintenance for the state universities and community colleges. It is possible some funds for the new Center would come from this. The housing would be constructed on what is now the student parking lot on the other side of Oakland St. DCAMM would put out bids for the construction of the new building and housing, also recognizing that there would then be a need for parking. The process to find developers and complete the project could take up to four years. The new Center would hold classrooms and labs for the Cybersecurity programs, which would open up space in Wellesley for other programs that need space. The Center would also house a new much needed fitness center and mental health services. Having 21st century facilities will allow the College to serve students much better, especially with increased enrollment. One key component to the potential success of this initiative is that pickleball courts will be offered inside the new building for townspeople as well as the MassBay community.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Further details were provided on following upcoming events:

- *NECHE Team Visit (Wellesley campus) – April 6-9 (dinner on April 6 and meeting with Board on April 7)
- *Boston Marathon Watch (Jack's Abbey in Framingham) – April 21
- *STEM Expo (Wellesley) – May 7 at 1:00 pm –Students presenting projects
- *Evening of Excellence – May 20 at 5:00 pm (Wellesley) – Celebration of students' academic accomplishments
- *Reception for Diane Schmalensee (Wellesley) – May 29 at 3:30 pm
- *Commencement – May 29 at 6:00 pm (4:30 pm arrivals for robing and refreshments)

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Choi – YES; Trustee Negreli – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Prado – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Vincent – YES

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.



5/27/25



5/27/25

David Podell, President
MassBay Community College

Date

Ilissa Povich, Chair
MassBay Board of Trustees

Date

DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THE BINDER

March 4, 2025, meeting minutes

Investments, Cash, & Student Receivables Summary reports

Single Audit report

Personnel Actions report

Recruitment report

Certificate in Behavioral Health materials