BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2026 | 8:00 AM - 9:16 AM | BY WEBEX

Trustees Present	Ilissa Povich (Chair), Tobey Choate, Alfonso Hidalgo, Chris Horblit, Matt Kahn, Sandy Lish, Gary Prado, Reyad Shah, and Karen Williams
Trustees Not Present	Rebecca Negreli
Guests Present	Diane Schmalensee, Trustee Emerita
Staff Present	Francine Alger, Assistant Dean of Admissions; Yvonne Anthony, Senior Director of Grants Development; Liz Blumberg, Vice President of Student Development; Liz Borg, Special Assistant to the President and Capital Campaign Director; Karen Britton, Executive Director and Liaison to the Board, Office of the President; Lynne Davis, Dean of Health Sciences; Joe Delisle, Director of Facilities; Marcus Edward, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Dustin Gerstenfield, Director of Administrative Computing; Catherine Gildae, Associate Dean for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Initiatives; Rebecca Heimel, Dean of Teaching and Learning; Courtney Jackson, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost; Nina Keery, Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences; Henry Lopez, Director of End User Services; Mike Lyons, Chief Information Officer; Lisa MacDonald, Associate Dean for Equity Assurance; Lynn Moore, Chief Unity Officer; Adam Nelson, Assistant Dean of Athletics and Special Assistant to the President for Community Relations; Dan Pace, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources and Payroll; David Podell, President; David Protano, Dean of Automotive Technology and Dean of STEM; Lisa Slavin, Vice President for Enrollment Management; Jeremy Solomon, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Marketing, and Communications; Robert Stephanian, Chief of Police; Halye Sugarman, Dean of Business and Professional Studies; and Richard Williams, Dean for Student Success and Strategic Initiatives

Trustee Hidalgo arrived at 8:05 am. Trustee Shah departed at 8:50 am, and Trustee Prado departed at 9:05 am.

CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

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

Welcoming New Trustee Chris Horblit

Chair Povich welcomed new Trustee Chris Horblit, Senior Vice President for Workplace Services at TJX. Trustee Horblit brings to MassBay a strong background in law, business, and real estate. He is joining the Finance and Administration Committee. Trustee Horblit is happy to be part of MassBay and help however he can. He thanked President Podell for introducing him to the Wellesley campus.

Honoring Student Trustee Pranshu Shah

Pranshu Shah, MassBay's former Student Trustee, indicated in July that he would be transferring to Worcester Polytechnic Institute in the fall. While this is a loss for MassBay, Chair Povich is happy he is continuing on his academic path and working on earning a bachelor's degree.

Chair Povich read a citation honoring former Student Trustee Pranshu Shah, who served on the Board during the spring 2026 semester.

MOTION: Trustee Choate moved to approve the citation for Student Trustee Shah, and Trustee Williams seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Horblit – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish - YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Prado – YES; Trustee Shah – YES; Trustee Williams – YES.

Designation Of Diane Schmalensee as Chair Emerita

Last year, the Board voted to designate former Board Chair, Diane Schmalensee, as Chair Emerita. In that role, she can attend meetings and share her wisdom about MassBay but cannot vote. Under the Bylaws, each year the Board needs to reconsider whether a Chair Emerita will continue in the role for another year. Chair Emerita Schmalensee is interested in continuing and was extremely helpful to the Presidential Evaluation Committee in its work this past spring.

MOTION: Trustee Lish moved to approve the designation of Diane Schmalensee as Chair Emerita on the MassBay Board without voting rights on matters considered for the remainder of the 2026-2027 academic year, and Trustee Hidalgo seconded.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Horblit – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish - YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Prado – YES; Trustee Shah – YES; Trustee Williams - YES

JUNE 16, 2026, MEETING MINUTES

Trustee Choate moved to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2026, Full Board meeting, and Trustee Hidalgo seconded.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Horblit – ABSTAINED; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish - YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Prado – YES; Trustee Shah – YES; Trustee Williams - YES

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

Board Chair

Chair Povich reported that the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges (MACC) is again hosting a conference for community college presidents and board members on good governance. It is a one-day conference that will be held at the College of the Holy Cross on Friday, November 20, called the Massachusetts Governance Leadership Institute. She has attended the last couple of years and found it quite worthwhile, and a great opportunity to meet community college trustees and presidents from across the state and discuss the role of the Board in ensuring good governance. She encouraged anyone who is interested to attend and is happy to answer questions about the conference.

The October 27 Board meeting will be a hybrid meeting. All Trustees are encouraged to attend the meeting in person on the Wellesley campus.

President

President Podell reported the following:

- The new academic year began last week. The total number of enrolled students is 5683, beyond the College's all-time high of 5650 in 2010, during the Great Recession. This total is over 400 more students than we enrolled at this time, last year. There are 203 new students more than there were last year at this time. Enrollment growth due to the Free Community College program will likely reach a plateau by next year. He thanked the many offices

involved in processing these additional students, including Admissions, Advising, Registrar, Deans, HR, IT, Facilities, Procurement, and Public Safety.

- The new kitchen has opened. A ribbon cutting ceremony took place last week.
- A commemoration for the twenty-fifth anniversary of 9/11 took place in Wellesley last week and was streamed to the Ashland and Framingham campuses.
- MassBay was named the #1 community college in Massachusetts by WalletHub based on cost and educational and career outcomes. The College was also named 15th out of 600 in the nation for career outcomes.
- Professional Development Day will take place on September 22. Many topics will be covered, including AI.
- A Call to Action from Secretary of Education Linda McMahom is included in the binder for today's meeting. Secretary McMahon asks college presidents and governing boards to place on their websites the answers to a series of questions. Some questions are intended for four-year, research-oriented institutions and thus are not totally applicable to community colleges. However, most are appropriate to our segment. President Podell proposes consulting with faculty and staff and bringing their recommendations to the Board at its November meeting.
- Students will conduct an election for a new Student Trustee prior to the Board's October meeting.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Finance and Administration

Committee Chair Kahn reported that the Finance Committee met last week, and today's report will be short.

President Podell reported that he included a memo regarding MassBay's cash in today's meeting binder. It explains why the college administration had to draw $5 million from the funds invested with Prime Buchholz. The transfer was needed to pay for renovations to the kitchen which had been approved by the Board. Cash was further diminished due to an unanticipated increase in non-unit members' salaries that we received from the State, increases in staffing due to enrollment increases, and delays in state reimbursements for the Free Community College program.

Vice President Edward reported the following:

*Finance Items

Fiscal Year 2026 Final Budget vs. Actual Comparison Report

Fiscal Year 2026 closed with a surplus of $385,000. Revenue exceeded budget by $1.4 million, driven by favorable variances in tuition and fees, non-credit course fees, tuition remission and waivers, state appropriations and contracts, commissions, and other revenue. On the expense side, the budget was fully spent. To spend this down, expenses were prepaid in the amount of $1.3 million. These prepayments will be reflected in the revised budget. The capital budget had $583,000 in unspent funds, which will be included as a revenue line in the FY2027 revised budget.

MOTION: Trustee Williams moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2026 final Budget vs. Actual report, and Trustee Choate seconded.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Horblit – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish - YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Prado – YES; Trustee Shah – YES; Trustee Williams – YES.

Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Update and Discussion

The revised Fiscal Year 2027 budget is being prepared and will be presented to the Board at the October meeting. The revised budget will include a $309,000 increase in the state appropriation, as well as growth in tuition and fees. Overall, the revised budget is expected to be slightly higher than the provisional budget.

Investments, Cash, & Student Accounts Receivable Comparison

The investment balance as of the end of July was $31.1 million. Investments decreased by .7% in July. The investment balance as of the end of August was $31.4 million. Investments increased by 1.2% in August. The current investment balance is $31.1 million, a decrease of $300,000, or 1.1%, in September. The cash balance as of the end of July was $5.2 million, an increase of $525,000 compared to the prior month. The cash balance as of the end of August was $5.6 million, an increase of $400,000 compared to the prior month. The current cash balance is $9.2 million. The student receivable balance as of the end of July was $16.5 million, an increase of $11.7 million compared to the prior month. The receivable balance as of the end of August was $13.7 million. Receivables are increasing across the community college system as students rely on Free Community College funding to cover tuition and fees. However, this funding has eligibility requirements, and some students do not qualify.

Cash & Investment Position by Month Report

The chart shows the cash and investment balances over the last five years.

Contracts Report

There are four contracts. Two relate to the Admissions Office renovations, which are expected to be completed during this fiscal year. One is for three years of help desk services. The final contract is with Baker's Best for food services on the Wellesley campus. It was noted that the Board has approved the allocation of $3 million from reserves for the renovations of the Admissions Office. In the future, drawing from the reserve will be discussed by the Finance and Administration Committee before being presented to the Full Board. In addition, a cash flow projection will be shared.

Kitchen Renovation Updates

As of August 3, project spending totaled $3.9 million. An additional $183,000 was paid in September, bringing total spending to $4.1 million. Total project costs are expected to be approximately $4.2 million. The Finance office was congratulated for coming in under budget.

*Personnel Items

Assistant Vice President Pace reported the following:

Personnel Actions Report

Eight new employees have been hired. MassBay is pleased that Professor Niemi has returned to the College. In addition, one new faculty member has moved from part-time to full-time.

Recruitment Report

A total of nine positions are open, including four faculty and five staff positions. The search for a Financial Aid Assistant has been re-opened.

2025/2026 Presidential Evaluation

Committee Chair Lish reported that Trustee Emerita Schmalensee has provided expertise for the Presidential evaluation that other colleges are adopting in their processes. She also thanked Trustee Hidalgo for his work on the letter. The Committee is recommending President Podell receive the full increase based on his accomplishments, in particular the College being recognized in the state and nationally. She encouraged Trustees to read President Podell's thorough and thoughtful self-evaluation. Chair Povich thanked Trustees Hidalgo and Lish for all of their work on this year's evaluation. She called for a motion to approve David's evaluation to be submitted to Commissioner Ortega, and pointed out the following language in the evaluation:

(at the beginning of the evaluation) "The Board unanimously requests that he receive all allowable increases for presidents as determined by the Board of Higher Education, including the maximum merit, cost of living, and equity increases;" and (at the end of the evaluation) "By unanimous Board of Trustees vote, we give President Podell our full support, thank him for his stewardship, commitment and results, his simultaneous dedication to MassBay Community College today, and vision for its future, and recommend that he receive the maximum merit, cost of living, and equity increases."

Chair Povich explained the idea of equity increases. Newer presidents have been hired with higher salaries than current presidents. It will be recommended that President Podell's salary be adjusted to -at least the level of newly hired Presidents, which would be fairer and well-deserved. Trustee Hidalgo thanked the staff for their work on the evaluation, in particular Associate Dean Gildae. Trustee Horblit praised MassBay's impressive evaluation and process.

MOTION: Trustee Williams moved to approve President Podell's 2025-2026 evaluation and increase, and Trustee Hidalgo seconded.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Horblit – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish - YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Prado – YES; Trustee Shah – YES; Trustee Williams – YES.

Nominations and Bylaws

Committee Chair Prado reported that the Nominations and Bylaws Committee has updated the Trustees demographics grid. He encouraged Trustees to recommend possible candidates for upcoming openings. The committee will meet later this month.

Student Success and Academic Affairs

Committee Member Choate reported the Student Success and Academic Affairs Committee met in June. Two subjects focusing on students saving time and money were presented. The first presentation was on Open Educational Resources (OERs) by Professor Heidi Getchell-Bastien. The OERS are saving students over $7000. They are expanding educational resources, and MassBay is a heavy user of such materials. The second presentation was on online courses by Dean Williams. A total of 33% of courses are online, and the total in the summer is 66%. The yearly total since COVID is 40%. Robust support has been a big part of this success, and course completion rates are approaching those of in-person classes.

ENROLLMENT REPORT

Vice President Slavin reported that as of today, enrollment is up 8.7% in FTE and 8% in overall headcount, with 5,683 students enrolled compared to 5,172 at this time last year, an increase of 511 students. New student enrollment is up 14% (203 students) compared to this time last year. Admissions applications for Fall 2026 were relatively flat compared to last year, but the College improved in converting applications to registrations (commonly referred to as "yield"). This reflects the hard work and collaboration of teams across the College. Several of the other Massachusetts community colleges shared their enrollment numbers at the end of last week. MassBay had the second-highest enrollment growth. Only Bunker Hill Community College reported a higher increase, at 10%. Most of the other colleges were either down slightly compared to this time last year or experiencing enrollment growth in the 3% to 7% range. Several factors have contributed to this enrollment success, as follows:

- The continued impact of Free Community College in Massachusetts, in its 4th year,
- Several strategic enhancements in admissions leadership and admissions practices,
- Increased staff expertise and utilization of technology,
- Targeted outreach to stop-out students who previously attended MassBay once and have now decided to return,
- Continuation of Strong cross-department collaboration, and
- Enhanced marketing and communication efforts.

Vice President Slavin recognized the continued success of our noncredit and workforce development programs. This summer, nearly 500 students enrolled across 13 programs, and fall enrollment is projected to reach nearly 600 students across 17 programs. Overall, these enrollment results of credit-bearing and non-credit programs reflect not only strong student demand, but also the dedication and commitment of faculty and staff across the College who work to support student success and advance MassBay's mission.

President Podell reported that MassBay is hosting a Prostate Cancer Awareness event this weekend at the Framingham campus. The event was recently highlighted in the television news.

Vice President Solomon gave a presentation on marketing initiatives, including the following:

- Overall advertising performance statistics,

- Omnipresent marketing through Facebook, Google, Instagram, Meta, Reddit, Snapshot, TikTok and YouTube *Social (Amazon, Apple, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube) and earned media (newspapers and television) data, and
- Future initiatives, such as hyperlocal sponsorship and branding efforts, digital marketing strategies, and on-deck marketing.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REPORT

Capital Campaign Director Borg reported the following:

- Over the past four months, new volunteer Joel Sirkin and his wife Karen generated $12,280, and matched it one to one, for the Essential Needs Fund and General Scholarship Fund from his colleagues at Wilmer-Hale. Mr. Sirkin contributed much to MassBay and sadly passed away in late August.
- The Campaign Steering Committee will have a "meet and greet" in mid-October, with Diane and Dick Schmalensee. Trustees Choate, Hidalgo, and Shah are participating, along with special friends of the College.
- The campaign team is producing a President's Update video to send to major donors and prospects before Thanksgiving. It will focus primarily on the areas to be located in the new building (Cybersecurity, Health/ Wellness/Athletics, and Institute for Trauma, Adversity, and Resilience).
- The campaign team is working on an industry panel and second display for campaign donors and employee donors to be installed at the back entry to the Wellesley campus in November.
- The campaign team is engaging with existing and new prospects, including major global banks, which will provide financial literacy workshops to the Veterans Club and meet regarding opportunities for grants and sponsorships.
- The campaign team is creating a non-fundraising Advisory Committee for the new building, as well as the Steering Committee and Employee Committee for the campaign.

REPORTS FROM PUBLIC SAFETY

Chief of Police Stephanian reported that the June, July, and August 2026, Clery and National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) reports show all zeros. He noted the new format of the reports.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Povich reported that legal counsel Gina Yarbrough is not feeling well, so the Board will not be going into Executive Session. She will provide her guidance and expertise at the next meeting, unless a special meeting is needed before.

MOTION: Trustee Horblit moved to adjourn the meeting, and Trustee Hidalgo seconded.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Horblit – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish - YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Williams – YES.

The meeting adjourned at 9:16 am.

10/27/26			10/27/26
David Podell, President MassBay Community College	Date	Ilissa Povich, Chair MassBay Board of Trustees	Date