



# Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

## May 28, 2024

Holyoke Community College

May 28, 2024 at 8:00 AM EST

Remote and In Person, Frost 309 Conference Room

### Attendance

#### Trustees Present:

Charles Epstein (remote), Barney Garcia (remote), Ted Hebert, Yolanda Johnson (remote), Nayroby Rosa, Ivonne VidalEleanor Williams (remote), Interim Chair Vanessa Smith

#### Trustees Absent:

Members: Evan Plotkin

#### Guests:

Karen Desjeans, Sharale Mathis, Olivia Kynard, Narayan Sampath, Amanda Sbriscia, George Timmons, Rebecca Townsend

#### Remote Guests:

Alan Bloomgarden, Beth Breton, Vanny Chen, Mary Dixey, Kim Hicks, Mark Hudgik, Jane Johnson Vottero, Jennifer Kerr, Johanna Lebron, Lauren LeClair, Jane Lerner, Doug Scanlon, Michelle Robak, Renee Tastad, Gina Yarbrough, and Chris Yurko

I. Call to Order: Interim Chair Smith called the 428<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Holyoke Community College Board of Trustees to order at 8:05 am.

II. Roll Call

#### Roll Call Vote:

YES: Charles Epstein, Barney Garcia, Ted Hebert, Nayroby Rosa, Vanessa L. Smith, and Eleanor P. Williams

Yolanda Johnson – entered at 8:14 am

III. Consent Agenda

- A. Consideration of the Minutes for the Board of Trustees Meeting of March 26, 2024
- B. Report of Personnel Actions dated April 23, 2024 (*see attached*)
- C. To empower the President of the College to approve all personnel actions prior to the next meeting.

#### Roll Call Vote for Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Trustee Epstein and seconded by Trustee Hebert to accept the Consent Agenda as presented.

YES: Charles Epstein, Barney Garcia, Ted Hebert, Nayroby Rosa, Vanessa L. Smith, and Eleanor P. Williams

Yolanda Johnson – entered at 8:14 am

#### IV. Committee Reports

- A. Equity Committee – Trustee Johnson provided an update on the Committee’s work since the last meeting. The Committee is assessing the training series provided over the past academic year, and will be looking for feedback from fellow trustees. The Committee is also working on securing a speaker for the Fall semester; and continuing their work with the EDI Council to work collaboratively.
- B. Audit and Finance Committee – Trustee Epstein provided an update of the work of the Committee to review the investment portfolio; especially with Eaton Vance taking on a larger portion of the College’s investments.
- C. Nomination and Presidential Evaluation Committee – Interim Chair Smith updated the Board on the work of Elizabeth Denny, who is an outside consultant, that has helped with the Presidential Evaluation process for the last several years. From the Nominating Committee, the work is ongoing and hope to hear about some vacancies soon. The Committee continues to generate a list of interested people for future vacancies.
- D. HCC Foundation Board – Vice President Sbriscia will be presenting later in the meeting, that includes some of the work the Foundation had done over the past year. The Foundation just concluded their final strategic alignment session, which confirms the mission, vision, strategic values and purpose. More information will be provided in the coming months.
- E. By Laws and Governance – Trustee Vidal will connect with the Chair of each Committee to gather information regarding brief descriptions of purpose to include in the handbook. The work of the Handbook is ongoing. The Committee would like the website updated with Trustee pictures and a short biography. And finally, the Committee will work on a Trustees’ competencies sheet to gather the strengths of each Board member.

#### V. Report of the Interim Chair

Interim Chair Smith reminded Trustees of celebrating our students at Commencement on Saturday, June 1, 2024 at 10 am at the MassMutual Center. She congratulated our Student Trustee, Barney Garcia, who will be graduating on Saturday.

#### VI. Executive Session

Interim Chair Smith explained that the the Board of Trustees would entertain a motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to Mass. General Law chapter 30A, section 21(a)(3) to discuss litigation strategy in Vargas Arriaga v. Holyoke Community College et al, Hampden Superior Court No. 2079CV004400. Interim Chair Smith indicated her determination that deliberation over this matter in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation posture of the College and asked if there was a motion to enter executive session.

Trustee Hebert made the motion, and Trustee Epstein seconded the motion above. Interim Chair Smith asked if there was any discussion on the motion, and there was none.

Roll Call Vote to enter into Executive Session at 8:27 am

YES: Charles Epstein, Barney Garcia, Ted Hebert, Yolanda Johnson, Nayroby Rosa, Vanessa L. Smith, and Eleanor P. Williams

Interim Chair Smith stated that the Board shall return to open session at the conclusion of the Executive Session.

The Board entered into Executive Session: the following individuals are invited to attend: Karen Desjeans, Board Liaison, George Timmons, President, and Gina Yarbrough, General Counsel.

The Board meeting was called back to order at 9:12 am A motion was made by Trustee Vidal, and seconded by Trustee Hebert to call back to order the Board Meeting.

**Trustees Present:**

Charles Epstein (remote), Barney Garcia (remote), Ted Hebert, Yolanda Johnson (remote), Nayrobby Rosa , Ivonne Vidal Eleanor Williams (remote), Interim Chair Vanessa Smith

**Trustees Absent:**

Members: Evan Plotkin

**Guests:**

Karen Desjeans, Sharale Mathis, Olivia Kynard, Narayan Sampath, Amanda Sbriscia, George Timmons, Rebecca Townsend

**Remote Guests:**

Beth Breton, Mary Dixey, Kim Hicks, Vanny Chen

**Roll Call Vote to enter back into Open Session**

YES: Charles Epstein, Barney Garcia, Ted Hebert, Yolanda Johnson, Nayrobby Rosa, Vanessa L. Smith, and Eleanor P. Williams

**VII. President's Report**

President Timmons updated the board on the recent HCC Foundation's Annual Scholarship Reception awarding \$335,000 in scholarships to our students. This amount represents 388 scholarships to 323 incoming, current and transferring HCC students. He thanked the Foundation for their partnership in removing barriers to our students' success.

The College received an award notification from the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund for approximately \$1.5 million in grant funds for continuing and enhancing our training and placement program.

The Student Records Office launched a pilot review of active records for the completion of stackable certificates, also known as Operation Completion Review Initiative. The initiative targets students who have either completed or are currently enrolled in the requirements of a certificate. The purpose of the project is to streamline the credentialing process, demonstrate our commitment to supporting student success, and enable students to earn additional qualifications to improve competitiveness in the job market or possible career advancement. This year, we have 90 students who were eligible to add an additional credential to their record.

President Timmons was honored to moderate the Tech Foundry's Visionary Workforce Development Discussion Panel as part of celebrating ten years of workforce development, innovation and impact. The panel included, CEO, Jay Ash, Mass Competitive Partnership; Meghan Martinez, Director of Cyber Range Programs, Cybertrust MA; and Jason Pacheco, Director of Workforce Planning, Analytics and Compensation, Baystate Health.

President Timmons highlighted our student, Joseph Black, an environmental science major and HCC STEM Scholar, who has been selected for the Newman Civic Fellowship for the 2024-25 academic year. This is a national award that recognizes leadership potential and a commitment to positive change in the community. He is one of three community college students selected in Massachusetts.

President Timmons thanked the the Stop and Shop leadership team for selecting Holyoke Community College's Food Pantry as the June 2024 Nonprofit Partner for the Bloomin' 4 Good Program. HCC will receive a \$1 donation for every specially marked \$10,99 Bloomin' 4 Good bouquet sold through June 2024.

- A. Presentation: Points of Pride – 2023-24 Academic Year in Review (*see attached*)

VIII. Board Engagement Opportunities (see attached)

IX. Adjournment

**Roll Call Vote for Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Rosa and seconded by Trustee Hebert to adjourn the 428th meeting of the Holyoke Community College Board of Trustees at 9:39 am.

YES: Charles Epstein, Barney Garcia, Ted Hebert, Yolanda Johnson, Nayroby Rosa, Vanessa L. Smith, and Eleanor P. Williams

**HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Board of Trustees  
**FROM:** Dr. George Timmons, President  
**DATE:** May 28, 2024  
**SUBJECT:** Personnel Updates

**Non-Unit Professional Appointments**

Name	Title/Area/Funding	Date of Hire
Jeremy Favreau	System Analyst/Programmer / IT / State Funded	May 19, 2024
Sheila Gould	Western Professional Development Center Community Coach / Early Childhood Education Program / Grant Funded	May 5, 2024
Jennifer Kerr	Human Resources Generalist / Human Resources / State Funded	May 12, 2024
William Reyes-Cubides	Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs / Academic and Student Affairs / State Funded	July 2024
Marlowe Washington	Vice President for People, Culture, and Equity / President’s Office / State Funded	July 7, 2024

**MCCC Unit Professional Appointment**

Name	Title/Area/Funding	Date of Hire
Dionne Walker (DW) - McCraven	Special Program Coordinator / Gateway to College / Grant Funded	April 28, 2024

**MCCC Faculty Appointments – Academic Year 2024-2025**

Name	Title/Area/Funding
Edgar Fisher	Instructor of Mathematics / BSTEM / State Funded
Loel Tronsky	Assistant Professor of Psychology / BSTEM / State Funded

**SUGGESTED MOTION:** To approve the personnel actions listed above for the Non-Unit Professional Staff, MCCC Unit Professional Staff, and Faculty.

# Points of Pride

## 2023-24 Academic Year in Review



Report of the President's Cabinet  
May 28, 2024 Meeting of the Board of Trustees



## Administration and Finance

- Launch of Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for all students, faculty and staff to bolster security measures and safeguard accounts
- Launch of online bookstore: a convenient and affordable option for books and supplies
- College Credits:
  - FY24 budgeted: 65,000
  - Expected at close of FY24: 69,000

Holyoke Community College  
303 Homestead Avenue  
Holyoke, MA 01040



## Administration and Finance



- Culinary Arts Truck in action this summer with help from current students

## Institutional Advancement

- 5<sup>th</sup> annual TogetherHCC: 446 donors in one day
- Foundation Strategic Alignment:
  - ***Support. Invest. Make possible.***
- Naming opportunities for Marieb Building
- Grants Strategic Alignment
- Media Metrics: continuing to outpace peers

## Institutional Advancement



- Scholarship Resource Center opens – the first resource of its kind among Massachusetts community colleges

## Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- Successful search for a new Vice President of People, Culture, and Equity – an inaugural position
- Creation of a land acknowledgment statement in memory and honor of our indigenous people, first shared at the President's Inauguration
- Creation of first college-wide HCC Equity Plan
- Launch of Board Leadership retreat focus on EDI (Trustees and Foundation Directors)



# Our People and Programs

Inspiring stories of impact  
from the 2023-24 academic year



View more at [hcc.edu/news](https://hcc.edu/news)



## Inaugural Recipient of the Dr. Christina Royal Equity in Action Award: Vanessa Martinez, Ph.D.



- Recognizes a member of the faculty or staff who, "through their efforts on and off campus, supports a culture of transformational justice, works to remove barriers for historically marginalized groups, improves cultural competency through dialogue and education, exhibits leadership and best practices for social equity, or makes the larger community a more just and equitable place to live."
- Dr. Martínez is chair of the college's Community Based Learning Program and former chair of the HCC Honors Program.
- *"This award is not mine alone. I work in community, and collaboration is how we thrive. Receiving this award motivates me even more to continue my transformative justice and equity work."*

## Catalyst for Change: Joseph Black, environmental science major



- Newman Civic Fellowship recipient: national award that recognizes **leadership potential** and a **commitment to positive change in the community**
- Joseph, 21, is a first-generation college student, was born in southern California, is one of seven siblings (and himself a triplet), son of a Colombian mother and Italian-American father who moved to Massachusetts when he was young.
- *"I'm surprised and excited. In high school, I wasn't the worst student, but I certainly wasn't the best student or anything like that. So, being able to take up a fellowship like this feels really good."*

## A Nursing Journey: Afrike Phakos



- Afrike Phakos journey to becoming a nurse began nearly 7,000 miles away in Wolaita Sodo, a small village in Ethiopia. The first car Afrike had ever seen was when she landed at Boston Logan International Airport, after a 16-hour flight from Africa.
- Caring for her grandmother helped forge her interest in becoming a nurse. After she graduated from Hampshire Regional High School in Westhampton, she earned her certified nursing assistant degree at HCC.
- *"If you have passion and go into nursing for the right reasons, no matter what obstacles are thrown at you, you're going to overcome them."*





## Resilience and Determination: Kandace E. Jones '14



- “I started here in what they call remedial (developmental) classes, like 075 and 095, so, I absolutely did not see a doctoral degree in the picture. **But HCC has molded my education and allowed me to want more.**”
- Kandace, a mental health counselor at the Center for Human Development in Springfield, studied human services at HCC and Westfield State University before heading on to Cambridge College, where she earned her master’s degree in education with a concentration in mental health counseling. She recently completed her dissertation defense at American International College, where she was pursuing her doctorate in education with a focus on mental health counseling.



## STEM Fellow: Professor Laurel Carpenter



- Awarded **national fellowship** from the Community College Presidents Initiative in STEM (CCPI-STEM), intended for community college faculty and administrators pursuing graduate degrees and conducting research related to STEM education and workforce development
- For more than 10 years, Prof. Carpenter has worked as a wildlife technician, wildlife biologist, lead educator and environmental interpreter for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. While she was working, she returned to HCC to complete her associate degree in environmental science
- A 2012 **graduate of HCC**, Laurel is a wildlife biologist, chair of the HCC Environmental Studies Dept., co-coordinator of the HCC STEM Scholars program, and a graduate student at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where she is pursuing a doctorate in education



## Coming Home: Ashley Lessard, human services major



- *"I was here for one semester back in 2013. I was part of the Student Senate then, and I just really liked the sense of community that HCC offered."*
- Now in her second semester as a returning student thanks to MassReconnect, Lessard, 34, is once again a member of Student Senate, as well as publicity chair for the National Society of Leadership and Success. She gets support through TRIO and also belongs to the colleges Student Ambassador Mentorship Program (SAMP).
- *"The fact that I ended up getting a 3.6 GPA last semester was amazing. I'm very happy. I love feeling a sense of welcome. It's really homey here."*

Thank you for your leadership  
and support.



Questions and Discussion

## BOARD ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

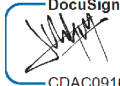
### MAY 2024

- May 21, 2024      Student Cap and Gown Pick-Up Celebration 10 am - 6 pm, Campus Center

### JUNE 2024

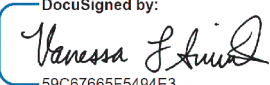
- June 1, 2024      HCC Commencement at MassMutual Center 10-12 pm

Respectfully submitted,

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7/17/2024

Ivonne Vidal  
Secretary, Board of Trustees

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Approved: Vanessa L. Smith  
Interim Chair, Board of Trustees