



# Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

## November 26, 2024

Holyoke Community College

November 26, 2024 at 8:00 AM EST

Remote and In Person, Frost 309 Conference Room

### Attendance

#### Trustees Present:

Julius Dixon, Ted Hebert, Ivonne Vidal and Interim Chair Vanessa Smith

#### Trustees Remote:

Sonia Dinnall, Charles Epstein, Yolanda Johnson, Todd McGee, and Eleanor Williams

#### Trustees Absent:

Evan Plotkin and Nayroby Rosa

#### In Person Guests:

Karen Desjeans, Kim Hicks, Olivia Kynard, Sharale Mathis, Rejoice Owusu, William Reyes-Cubides, Narayan Sampath, Amanda Sbriscia, Rebecca Townsend, George Timmons, Marlowe Washington, and Chris Yurko

#### Remote Guests:

Teresa Beaudry, Beth Breton, Maria Brunelle, Adam Cabral (Withum), Vanny Chen, Veena Dhankher, Mayra Diaz, Mary Dixey, Kermit Dunkelberg, Curt Foster, Judy Gregoire, Jennifer Kerr, Jeff Hayden, Mark Hudgik, Jane Johnson Vottero, , Lauren LeClair, Jane Lerner, Irma Medina, Chris Pelland (Withum), Michelle Robak, and Kim Straceski,

### MEETING

I. Call to Order: Interim Chair Vanessa Smith called the the 433<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Holyoke Community College Board of Trustees to order at 8:08 am.

II. Roll Call

#### Roll Call Vote:

YES: Sonia Dinnall, Charles Epstein, Ted Hebert, Yolanda Johnson, Todd McGee. Eleanor Williams, and Interim Chair Vanessa Smith

Julius Dixon entered at 8:14 am

Ivonne Vidal entered at 8:15 am

Interim Chair Smith introduced the newest Trustee, Todd McGee and then asked each Trustee to introduce themselves and welcome Trustee McGee.

III. Consent Agenda

A. Consideration of the Minutes for the Board of Trustees Meeting of October 22, 2024

B. Report of Personnel Actions dated November 26, 2024 (*see attached*)

C. To empower the President of the College to approve all personnel actions prior to the next meeting.

D. Cancellation of the Board of Trustees Meeting on December 24, 2024.

**Roll Call Vote** for Consent Agenda

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

YES: Sonia Dinnall, Julius Dixon, Charles Epstein, Ted Hebert, Yolanda Johnson, Todd McGee, Ivonne Vidal, Eleanor Williams, and Interim Chair Vanessa Smith

IV. Audit and Finance Committee

Vice President Sampath introduced guests, Chris Pelland, Partner; and Adam Cabral, Supervisor; from Withum (formerly O'Connor and Drew) to present the required communications and a summary of the financial statements. The Audit and Finance Committee have formally approved the financial statements at their meeting in November. Chris Pelland presented the following:



## Required Communications

### **AUDITOR'S RESPONSIBILITY UNDER GAAS**

We have a responsibility to conduct our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

In carrying out this responsibility, we planned and performed the audit to obtain reasonable – not absolute – assurance about whether the basic financial statements are free of material misstatement, whether caused by error or fraud.

- We issued an unmodified opinion on the College's financial statements.

An audit includes consideration of internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we express no such opinion.

- No material weaknesses/significant deficiencies were noted within the Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters

## Required Communications - Continued

### **AUDITORS' RESPONSIBILITY UNDER GAAS - continued**

We are responsible for communicating significant matters related to the financial statement audit that are, in our professional judgement, relevant to the responsibilities of those charged with governance.

We applied certain limited procedures (such as inquiry of management and comparing for consistency) to the Required Supplementary Information that supplements the financial statements.

## Required Communications - Continued

### **INDEPENDENCE**

We are not aware of any relationships between Withum and the College that in our professional judgement may reasonably impact our independence.

We are independent with respect to the College within the meaning of the pronouncements of the Independence Standards Board, Government Auditing Standards, and under Rule 101 of the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct.

No management advisory services were performed by Withum.

## Required Communications - Continued

### **INDEPENDENCE – continued**

Withum assisted in the non-attest services noted below, however, these activities do not impact our independence. These non-attest services were supervised and approved by Curt Foster, Comptroller, and Maria Brunelle, Assistant Comptroller.

- Assistance with the preparation of the financial statements
- Assistance with the maintenance and calculation of GASB 87, *Leases*, right of use assets and liabilities
- Assistance with the maintenance and calculation of GASB 96, *SBITA*, right of use assets and liabilities
- Perform the Single Audit under the guidelines of Subpart F of the OMB Uniform Guidance for Federal Awards; however, these activities do not impact our independence

## Required Communications - Continued

### **MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY**

Selection and use of appropriate accounting policies – Significant policies are found in Note 1

- GASB 100, *Accounting Changes and Error Corrections, an amendment of GASB 62*, was adopted
  - The impact of this adoption was not material to the financial statements
- Application of existing policies were not changed during the current year

Selection and use of appropriate accounting estimates – Based on management's knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events

- Allowance for doubtful accounts
- Estimating depreciation and depreciable lives of capital assets
- Incremental borrowing rate for GASB 87 (leases) and GASB 96 (SBITA)
- Accrued expenses including compensated absences and workers' compensation
- Determining net pension and OPEB liabilities

## Required Communications - Continued

### **MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY – continued**

Accounting for significant and unusual transactions – unusual or significant transactions reported in the current year include:

- As of June 30, 2024 the College expended all of the remaining Higher Education Relief Funds (HEERF) funds, except \$128 which went unused. The last date to use the funds was through June 2024.

No transactions entered into during the year for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus

All significant transactions have been recognized in the financial statements in the proper period

## Required Communications - Continued

### *SIGNIFICANT COMMUNICATIONS, FINDINGS OR ISSUES*

There were **NO**:

- Disagreements with management
- Major issues discussed with management prior to retention
- Difficulties encountered in performing the audit
- Material proposed and accepted audit adjustments, or uncorrected misstatements
- Other findings or issues that are significant or relevant to be communicated to those charged with governance

Consultations with other accountants/auditors:

- Consulted with the auditors for the Massachusetts State Employee's Retirement Plan and State Retiree's Benefit Trust

Significant written communications between the auditor and management include:

- Engagement letter
- Management representation letter – to be signed following Board approval

## Required Communications - Continued

### *FINANCIAL STATEMENT FRAUD RISKS*

No pervasive financial statement fraud risks were identified

Specific Risks Presumed by Auditing Standards

- Risk of misstatement relating to revenue recognition
- Risk of management override of controls

## Other Matters

1. *Status of Single Audit and MOSFA Audit*
2. *Discussion of Financial Statements*

Questions?

Chris Pelland then presented highlights of the financial statements. The audited financial statements can be found on the HCC Website under Consumer Information.

Vice President Sampath led a short discussion on the capital improvements the College has participated in this fiscal year that come from three different funding buckets – college funds, deferred maintenance allocation from the State that is available for a five year period (currently under \$7 million and goes to 2028), and then capital projects (which is projects \$30 million and above).

A motion was made by Trustee Dixon and seconded by Trustee Vidal to accept audited financial statements for fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

YES: Sonia Dinnall, Julius Dixon, Charles Epstein, Ted Hebert, Yolanda Johnson, Todd McGee, Ivonne Vidal, Eleanor Williams, and Interim Chair Vanessa Smith

V. Committee Reports

- **By-Laws and Governance Committee** – Trustee Vidal reported that the half-day Trustees’ Retreat at the beginning of November was incredibly fruitful and thanked everyone who was able to attend; especially Dr. Sharale Mathis, Dr. Amanda Sbriscia and President Timmons, who provided guidance. The focus was the NECHE Re-accreditation and what the Board has been doing for assessment. She mentioned that the Committee is planning a two-day Summer Retreat and added that this should be an annual event.
- **Equity Committee** – Trustee Johnson reported that the Committee is planning to meet in December. The Committee continues to work with Olivia Kynard and Dr. Marlowe Washington to improve student outcomes.
- **Foundation Board Update** – Trustee Hebert reported that the next meeting of the Foundation will take place on Tuesday, December 3, 2024 at 4 pm. Vice President Sbriscia provided additional updates from the Foundation as follows:
  - a) The College’s audited financial report includes the Foundation’s audited statements. The Foundation completed their audit in September in order to provide this information to the College. The Foundation also received an unmodified opinion on their audit. A note of pride is that the Foundation’s expenses have increased, which is a good thing because that means they are providing more support to the College. The Foundation spends about 90 cents of every dollar on program support.
  - b) As Trustee Hebert mentioned, the annual meeting of the Foundation Board will take place on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. This meeting is important because we vote on new members and the slate of officers and directors. We hope to bring on four additional members to the current count of 29 members.
  - c) We have a creative campaign that we launched last year called micro philanthropy, with very specific initiatives across the College. A short list includes: cameras for visual arts students, MacBooks for the graphic design department, calculators for the Math center, high chairs for the Adult Learner Success Center and conference travel funds for students to attend conferences.
- **Nominating and Presidential Evaluation Committee** – No Report
- **Strategic Planning** – No Report

VI. Report of the Interim Chair – Interim Chair Smith

Interim Chair Smith provided a message of gratitude to thank everyone who participated in one way or another. in the life of the College, and especially to the Board members who choose to spend their time in support of the mission.

VII. President's Report

President Timmons reported:

- The College is grateful to be receiving an additional \$383,000 from the Department of Early Education and Care for our Pathways Program to enhance the impact that our Business and Community Services division is having on our community in Western Massachusetts.
- The College was honored with the top two Medallion Awards from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR). Chris Yurko won the award in the category of excellence in writing short form for stories up to 800 words; and won the gold medallion for the profile on Tom Dulick, a 2023 graduate and math major from HCC, who is now at Westfield



State University. The student won a national award for his music composition. Chris Yurko also took a silver medal for his commencement profile on student Tatian McKnight, who transferred to Mount Holyoke College.

- The Academic and Student Affairs have four presentations that have been accepted at the annual meeting of the American Association of Community Colleges in Nashville, TN in April 2025. These presentations include Dr. Veena Dhankher, Renee Tastad, Dr. Sharale Mathis and Jane Lerner.
- He invited Trustees to the Second Annual Fall Graduation Celebration on Monday, December 2, 2024 at 5:30 pm in the Leslie Phillips Theater. According to Allison Wrobel, Registrar, we have 197 students that will be graduating in the fall semester.

VIII. Board Engagement Opportunities (see attached)

IX. Adjournment

**Roll Call Vote for Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Dixon and seconded by Trustee Vidal to adjourn the 433<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Holyoke Community College Board of Trustees at 9:02 am.

YES: Sonia Dinnall, Julius Dixon, Charles Epstein, Ted Hebert, Yolanda Johnson, Todd McGee, Ivonne Vidal, Eleanor Williams, and Interim Chair Vanessa Smith

**HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Dr. George Timmons, President

**DATE:** November 26, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Personnel Updates

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**Non-Unit Professional Appointments**

Name	Title/Area/Funding	Date of Hire
Rejoyce Owusu	Assistant Vice President/Office of People and Talent/State Funded	11/12/2024
Mary Wagner	Training Manager of Clean Energy/Green Jobs Training Grant Funded	10/27/2024
Brittany Walas	Staff Assistant/ People, Culture and Equity/State Funded	12/01/2024

**MCCC Unit Professional Appointment**

Name	Title/Area/Funding	Date of Hire
Danielle Clough	Academic Counselor/Marieb Adult Learner Success Center State Funded	12/01/2024

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

# BOARD OF TRUSTEES BOARD ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES - FY 2024/2025

## NOVEMBER 2024

- November 5, 2024      **Board Half-Day Retreat** - NECHE Accreditation (in person)  
Frost 265 - The Learning Collaborative 8 am to 12 pm  
Breakfast and Boxed Lunches will be provided.

## DECEMBER 2024

- December 2, 2024      Fall Grad Reception at 5:30 pm, Leslie Phillips Theater
  - December 12, 2024      **Governance Leadership Institute** (GLI) 9 am - 4 pm. ACCT will facilitate the one-day professional development program, which is designed for Presidents and their trustees to come together and learn how to best align your goals and develop a cohesive strategy for the future. College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA
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## JANUARY 2025

- January 15, 2025      HCC Professional Day/President's Welcome
- January 21, 2025      Spring Semester Begins

## FEBRUARY 2025

- February 9-12, 2025 ACCT Community College Legislative Summit, Washington, DC
  - Early Bird Registration 12/18/24

## MARCH 2025

- March 4, 2025      TogetherHCC Day of Giving
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## APRIL 2025

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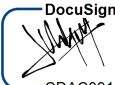
## MAY 2025

- May 21, 2025      Celebration of Faculty & Staff (am) and Honors & Awards Night (pm)
- **May 31, 2025      HCC Commencement at MassMutual Center 10-12 pm**

## JUNE 2025

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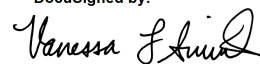
Respectfully submitted,

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1/30/2025

Ivonne Vidal  
Secretary, Board of Trustees

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1/30/2025

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