

**HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of March 9th, 2021**

**Via Zoom Meeting w/Roll Call Voting**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Robert Gilbert, Charles Epstein, Ted Hebert, Eleanor Williams,

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:** Evan Plotkin

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Narayan Sampath, Vice President for Administration and Finance, Christina Royal, President, Curt Foster, Interim Comptroller; Jeff Hayden, Vice President Business & Community Services, Amanda Sbriscia, Vice President Institutional Advancement, Maria Brunelle, Assistant Comptroller, Judy Gregoire, Budget Analyst, and Arvard Lingham, Coordinator Non-Credit.

The meeting was called to order by Trustee Epstein at 9.33am

Vice President Sampath presented information that he hopes may help shape the discussions around the budget discussions currently underway on campus including a tuition comparison with other Community Colleges in the state. Trustee Williams asked if we are trying to incentivize students to take more credits and would we discourage that if we increase the costs per credit? President Royal mentioned full time enrollment is always preferred keeping in line with us being a 2 year institution. The reality is that enrollment across the nation skews heavily part time. Trustee Hebert said he felt that the costs are very reasonable even with the increases and it would be great if there was a motivator to encourage students to take more credits. Comptroller Foster said they are exploring ways to reduce the financial burden to students in financial need. President Royal mentioned that she has been working with the foundation and marketing to develop a way to show and communicate to all the available options available to students that may help remove financial and other non-financial barriers. Vice President Sbriscia mentioned there has been a significant increase in student emergency fund applications, especially around housing, child care and food.

Chair Gilbert asked what happens in High Schools to educate students to help them understand the types of financial aid available to them after high school. President Royal said there is certainly room for improvement in the messaging to high school students. There are also incorrect perceptions about FAFSA that are also at play and that is another area that we should work on. Chair Gilbert asked if we can contact students directly or do we have to go through career counselors. President Royal said we primarily use Career Counselors. Vice President Sbriscia said we can definitely contact the parents directly with information and do so through “geofencing” a method of identifying a specific geographic area, then targeting households in that particular area to make sure that specific information is delivered to those residences.

With no other business to discuss, at 10.27am, Chair Gilbert made a motion to end the meeting which was seconded by Trustee Herbert and passed unanimously by way of a roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Narayan Sampath  
Vice President for Administration and Finance