

## **Minutes of the MassBay Community College Board of Trustees Meeting Tuesday, March 2, 2021, by Webex and Facebook livestream**

Board Members Present: Tim Clifford, Matt Kahn, Sandy Lish, Paulo Machado, Tom Peisch, Mikael Pyrtel, Rodolpho Sanz, Diane Schmalensee, Lili Silva, Dune Thorne

Trustee Wendy Vincent arrived for the meeting at 9:20 am.

Staff Present: Steve Baccari, Comptroller; Elizabeth Blumberg, Vice President for Student Development and Dean of Students; Elizabeth Borg, Special Assistant to the President/Capital Campaign Director; Karen Britton, Executive Director, Office of the President; Neil Buckley, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Lauren Curley, Director of Procurement and Business Operations; Lynne Davis, Dean of Health Sciences; Joe DeLisle, Director of Facilities; Marcus Edward, Assistant Vice President for Finance and Administration; Howie Ferris, Interim Dean of Automotive Technology; Lynn Hunter, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost; Courtney Jackson, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Initiatives; Chitra Javdekar, Dean of STEM; Nina Keery, Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences; Chris LaBarbera, Assistant Provost; Lisa MacDonald, Director for Equity Compliance; Sue Maggioni, Dean of Business and Professional Studies; Alison McCarty, Associate Dean of Admissions and Community Learning; Lynn Moore, Chief Diversity Officer; Vinny O'Connell, Director of Public Safety; David Podell, President; Lisa Slavin, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management; Jeremy Solomon, Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Marketing, and Communications; Samaria Stallings, Executive Director of Human Resources; Sunny Stich, Director of Grants Development; Richard Williams, Associate Dean for Student Success

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Tom Peisch called the meeting to order and established that a quorum was present.

### **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 2, 2021, MEETING MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Trustee Lish motioned to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2021, meeting, and Trustee Sanz seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Clifford – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish – YES; Trustee Machado – YES; Chair Peisch – YES; Trustee Pyrtel – YES; Trustee Sanz – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Silva – YES; Trustee Thorne – YES

### **FINANCE ITEMS**

Finance, Compliance, Personnel, and Audit (FCP&A) Committee Chair Schmalensee reported that the committee has thoroughly reviewed and approved all items from the February 23, 2021, FCP&A meeting agenda, and Vice President Buckley will report on the most significant items.

President Podell reported that MassBay is in a very good financial position for FY2021. An updated FY2021 budget is being presented today because the College now has final information regarding enrollment and state appropriation.

### **FY2021 Budget vs. Actual Comparison Report – January 2021**

Vice President Buckley reported that MassBay is doing \$1.1 million better than expected for the FY2021 budget. Enrollment has declined less than the 15% projected. Enrollment numbers were down 9.8% in the Fall and 15.1% in the Spring, leaving a favorable variance of nearly \$510,000 in tuition and fees revenue. On the expense side,

department budgets have been managed well, resulting in the College being an additional \$560,000 under budget.

**MOTION:** Trustee Schmalensee moved to approve the FY2021 Budget vs. Actual Comparison Report as of January 2021, and Trustee Pyrtel seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Clifford – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish – YES; Trustee Machado – YES; Chair Peisch – YES; Trustee Pyrtel – YES; Trustee Sanz – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Silva – YES; Trustee Thorne – YES

Vice President Buckley reported the following:

### **Revisions to FY2021 Provisional Budget**

On the revenue side, the projected enrollment decline was lowered from 15% to 12.5%. CARES Acts I and II federal funds have come in to assist the College and students. CARES Act I funds have been fully spent. The distribution of CARES Act II funds are waiting on guidance from the new federal administration, and those funds will need to be spent by December 31, 2021. The College is still waiting for details on CARES Act III funds.

On the expense side, there is also good news. The College's unionized employees (MCCC) received a 2% increase, and the College's administration would like to give 2% increases to all Non-Unit Professional (NUP) employees and pay down vacation time for NUPs, given the inability to take off time and vacation caps. The College can afford to do both a 2% increase and pay down excess vacation time. Various technology upgrades to the network, Cyber Security, and laptops will also occur. All of these expenses add up to \$550,000 and are sustainable. The revised budget projects a \$2.1 million surplus.

**MOTION:** Trustee Schmalensee moved to approve the Revisions to the FY2021 Provisional Budget (including the 2% raise for NUP employees), and Trustee Lish seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Clifford – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish – YES; Trustee Machado – YES; Chair Peisch – YES; Trustee Pyrtel – YES; Trustee Sanz – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Silva – YES; Trustee Thorne – YES

### **Student Accounts Receivable and Cash Comparison Report**

Student Accounts Receivables are down 3% over last year, and the Student Accounts Office is effectively working on payment plans with students during this difficult time.

### **Cash Position by Month**

MassBay's current cash position is also positive, with the College having in excess \$3 million more than last year at this time. The College now has close to \$23.4 million in cash, versus \$19.8 million at the same time last year. There has been an upward trend in the College's cash over the past few years, which is now a cushion. In addition, the \$500,000 million from last year's surplus included in the original budget approved by the Board will not be needed for this year.

### **Contracts Report**

The first contract, with Wissen, Inc. for grant writing, will be extended to 2022, and will be paid for by funds allocated to the President by the Foundation. The second is with Tower Construction for renovation and relocation of the Campus Safety and Admissions offices. The College will use local funds for this project, but is hoping to receive funds from DCAMM. The renovations will provide better space to store equipment and for the staff in both

areas.

## **Investment Policy**

Chair Peisch reported that, because MassBay's cash position is improving significantly, an ad-hoc Investment Committee to advise the Board on strategy for investing these funds. He has appointed Trustee Kahn to chair the committee and Trustees Silva and Thorne to serve as members.

## **Further Discussion on Ratio Analysis**

O'Conner and Drew completed a ratio analysis of the 15 Massachusetts community colleges. MassBay was rated favorably in the five ratios used in the analysis. In fact, MassBay is rated #1 in the Composite Ratio with the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 68 and 75. Ratio definitions are included on the attachment provided in advance of today's meeting.

## **COMPLIANCE ITEMS**

Comptroller Baccari stated that there were five items on the Compliance Calendar reported last week. He and Vice President Jackson will continue to meet with various offices and departments, and remain in touch with the Executive Team about any budget issues. Chair Peisch reminded the Board that the College is heavily regulated on a variety of fronts, and he commended Comptroller Baccari and Vice President Jackson for tracking these issues.

## **PERSONNEL ITEMS**

Executive Director Stallings reported the following:

### **Personnel Actions Report**

Jeremy Solomon is in a new role as Assistant Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Marketing, and Communications. Robyn Butterfield is also in a new role as Director of Financial Aid.

### **Recruitment Report**

Two searches have been posted. There are ten applicants and one finalist for the Dean of Automotive position. Interim Dean Ferris will meet with the final candidate. There are 64 applications for the Assistant Professor of Biology position and 48 for the Associate Professor of English position.

## **ENROLLMENT REPORT**

Assistant Vice President Slavin reported that summer semester registration opened yesterday, and summer classes begin on May 24 and July 6 (Eight Week I and Eight Week II, respectively). New opportunities for high school students are being developed. Registration for the fall semester opens on April 5, and an Open House is scheduled for May 1. Fall applications are down, but likely will pick up with increased outreach. President Podell indicated that there is a concern statewide that a smaller number of students are completing FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) applications, given the pandemic. A 5% decline in enrollment is already expected due to demographics, and although the College will aggressively work to bring in students the enrollment decline will likely be higher.

## DASHBOARD

Vice President Jackson reported that the Dashboard has been updated with Student Success metrics. She reported that the fall to spring retention rate was 73% for full-time students (down from 80% last year) and 68% for part-time students (up from 67% last year). Lack of money and some students' discomfort with remote learning may explain these patterns. The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) report showing the College's graduation and retention rates was sent to the U.S. Department of Education/National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in February. Compared to the 2016 cohort, the graduation rate for first time, full-time degree and certificate seeking students held steady at 24%, and the retention rate for the same group held steady at 20%.

## FOUNDATION AND CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REPORTS

Assistant Vice President Solomon reported the following on behalf of the Foundation:

### Advancement

- January 2021 income was \$55,170, not including gifts to the Capital Campaign, including gifts from the following sources:
  - The Rotary Club of Wellesley gave \$14,650.
  - One major donor gave \$10,000 to food insecurity.
  - One alumnus/ae gave \$5,000.
  - A staff member gave \$5,000 to create a scholarship.
  - January 2020 income was \$14,400.
- The Office is in the process of planning spring events, including Alumni Reunion and the Spring Scholarship celebration.

### MassBay Foundation Board

- Alumna Stacy Okada has joined the Board.
- There are two more potential members in the pipeline, and then the Board will curtail cultivation of new members.
- The size of the Board has doubled in the past four months.
- The next meeting is March 24.

### Scholarship – Spring 2021 semester

- There were 1,103 scholarship applications.
- 214 awards were given (67% of student applicants received an award).
- More than \$180,000 in tuition support has been awarded.
- Five new scholarships were added to the portfolio.

Special Assistant to the President Borg reported that the Campaign has raised \$825,000, which is 17% of goal. Former Ambassador to Portugal Robert Sherman has agreed to be an Honorary Member of the Framingham Steering Committee. The Framingham Advisory Committee will meet later this month. Major donors are being identified, and there has been grant development in both public and private sectors, including Skills Capital and Economic Development Administration (EDA). The Alumni and Employee campaigns are beginning to move forward. The second *Achieving Equity and Prosperity through Career Pathways* event for the Campaign will take place on May 11. Special Assistant Borg thanked the Trustees for sharing their connections and ideas.

## **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Bylaws Committee**

Committee Chair Clifford reported on the Committee's work and directed the Trustees' attention to the proposed revised version of the Bylaws included in the Board binder. The revisions reflect several rounds of drafting and four meetings of the Committee, all assisted by General Counsel Tashjy. Board members were encouraged to review the revised version and to be prepared to vote on them at the April meeting. This is the protocol established in the current Bylaws. Most of the changes are non-substantive, but there are some substantive changes dealing with the role of the Chair, conflict of interest, and the newly enacted Trustee training requirements. Executive Director Britton will circulate the version of the Bylaws showing the proposed changes for ease of reference. Chair Peisch thanked Trustees Clifford and Schmalensee for their hard work on this important feature of governance, and also acknowledged Executive Director Britton's hard work in tracking changes from various sources.

### **Student Success Committee**

Committee Chair Pyrtel reported on the February 9, 2021, Committee meeting. The focus was on English and Math co-requisite models. President Podell indicated that there is a strong correlation between the level of developmental education students need and their success. The College has been supported in developing an accelerated co-requisite model in place of developmental courses from multiple grants, including a Higher Education Innovation Fund grant from the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education and a Title III grant from the federal government. Dean Keery and Vice President Jackson shared data related to English and Math. For English, data show improvements across all student racial and gender groups participating in the accelerated pathways. Of note is that Hispanic and Latina women were less likely to finish English 102. For Math, African American students are less likely to complete college-level Math. The data suggest that this innovative co-requisite model works, and students involved are trending in the right direction, although patterns by race, ethnicity, and gender remain evident. MassBay seeks to improve upon the model and grow it. Trustee Pyrtel shared the Fall 2014 Developmental Math cohort completion rate from the Department of Higher Education, where MassBay was ranked 15<sup>th</sup> of the 15 Community Colleges. The College has dramatically improved its performance, and is now in the middle of the 15. The focus of the April meeting will be on Workforce Development.

## **EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

### **Student Trustee**

Student Trustee Machado asked all in attendance for a moment of silence for all who have struggled and lost friends and family in the pandemic, which is marking a one-year anniversary this month. Even as MassBay students are facing many academic, financial, emotional, physical, and social challenges, there have been positives. He thanked the staff, faculty, and Trustees for their constant support. The entire MassBay community has been in this together, and has not given up. A number of resources have been offered, including the Student Nutrition and Care Committee (SNACC) program, in which 134 students are enrolled. SGA is engaging more students through activities, including a virtual trip to the Aquarium and Paint Night. Suggestions are always welcome via a newly created form.

### **Board Chair**

Chair Peisch reported on several matters. Yesterday, a Zoom meeting of various community college Board of Trustees Chairs was held, primarily to review the upcoming election of a community college "segmental representative" to the 11-member Board of Higher Education (BHE). BHE Chair Chris Gabrieli attended the first part of the meeting, thanked the attendees for their work, and expressed regret at not having attended a community

college Board of Trustees meeting recently. Chair Gabrieli briefed the attendees on the role of the segmental representative, currently J.D. LaRock of North Shore Community College's Board. Mr. LaRock's five-year term is about to expire, and a new segmental representative must be chosen by a vote of the 15 Board Chairs. Chair Peisch also noted that the other Board Chairs report the same enrollment challenge that MassBay faces, and expressed the same frustration with the new training protocols. Finally, Chair Peisch noted that President Podell and the administration are working on a plan for some additional in-person classes for the fall, provided this can be done safely and within all appropriate guidelines. Chair Peisch then indicated that his plan to appoint an ad-hoc Investment Committee required Board approval.

**MOTION:** Trustee Schmalensee moved to create a three-member ad hoc investment committee, and Trustee Pyrtel seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Clifford – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish – YES; Trustee Machado – YES; Chair Peisch – YES; Trustee Pyrtel – YES; Trustee Sanz – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Silva – YES; Trustee Thorne – YES; Trustee Vincent - YES

## **President**

President Podell reported the following:

\*The College continues to function mostly remotely, with classes both asynchronous and synchronous. Three academic programs are being taught in-person: Automotive Technology in Ashland, Health Sciences in Framingham, and Biotechnology in Wellesley.

\*All those coming to campus regularly are required to participate in mandatory COVID testing. MassBay was the first community college to put this program in place, having engaged in impact bargaining with the unions. Of 500 tests administered, eight have been positive. A Team of Seven oversees the implementation of this challenging initiative.

\*The money from the CARES Act II is not included in extra the \$3.1 million cash MassBay currently has on hand.

\*MassBay is moving forward cautiously with plans for the Fall 2021 semester. Additional Biology labs and some Liberal Arts classes with smaller maximum class sizes will be offered in person. With more students on campus, more resources such as food and tutoring will be needed. The safety of students who are commuting on public transportation also has to be considered. The College has successfully taught remotely and will largely continue to do so, knowing little at present (as we make the Fall schedule) about safety in September. It has contingency plans to offer more in-person classes in the fall if it is deemed safe and if enrollment is sufficient, both in the regular semester and during the Eight Week II mini-semester (late October into late December). President Podell will ask staff to explore an idea proposed by Trustee Kahn that MassBay students helping others get vaccination appointments. The Health Sciences faculty and students are currently administering vaccines in certain cities/towns.

\*The State Legislature has allocated funds to the fifteen community colleges for a Student Success Program to support and retain a cohort of first generation, low income, and African American and Hispanic students. The allocation to MassBay is \$750,000. Dean Maggioni is leading the initiative with a committee. The committee is exploring having this particular cohort enroll in in-person classes as a strategy to increase retention.

\*The College held a Professional Development Day recently in which the keynote speaker was Estela Bensimon, Dean's Professor in Educational Equity at the University of Southern California, one of the nation's leading experts on equity in higher education. During her talk given via Webex, there was a fairly heated discussion in the chat room by some who disagreed with Dr. Bensimon and others who supported her conclusions. Some of the remarks made in the chat room offended some employees of color. President Podell noted that these discussions are

inevitably challenging and complex, but they also move our discussion forward. Dr. Bensimom’s presentation focused on how MassBay can be more equity-minded institution and during the present semester she is working with a Faculty Learning Committee on analyzing both syllabi and grading.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

**Reports from the Office of Public Safety**

Director O’Connell presented the January 2021 Clery and State Police reports, both of which showed all zeros. He stated that the pandemic has brought together a more cohesive group of Public Safety Officers. Chair Peisch commended Director O’Connell and his officers for their response to the pandemic.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Clifford – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish – YES; Trustee Machado – YES; Chair Peisch – YES; Trustee Pyrtel – YES; Trustee Sanz – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Silva – YES; Trustee Thorne – YES; Trustee Vincent - YES

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 am.



4/7/21



4/7/21

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Thomas E. Peisch  
Chairman  
Board of Trustees

Date

David Podell  
President  
MassBay Community College

Date