

The 245th meeting of the Board of Trustees  
Mount Wachusett Community College  
Thursday, April 9, 2020  
Remote Zoom meeting  
Meeting Minutes

Members present on Zoom meeting: Present from the College: President Vander Hooven, Vice Presidents Paul Hernandez, Dan Horlander, Robert LaBonte, Lea Ann Scales, Peter Sennett, Joe Stiso, Associate VP Michelle Paranto and Sr. Dean of Student Affairs, Jason Zelesky and Senior Staff Associate Jo-Ann Meagher. There were also faculty and staff viewing the live stream.

From the Department of Higher Ed: Matt Noyes

Members not in attendance: Irene Hernandez

**A. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Antonioni called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

**B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Chairman Antonioni called for a motion to approve the minutes of February 20, 2020. A motion to approve was made by Ms. Freda and seconded by Ms. Gosselin Mr. Tomasetti. All approved. Motion carried.

**C. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Chairman Antonioni**

- Chairman Antonioni spoke about the challenging circumstance we are all faced with in these uncertain times. He thanked everyone for their commitment.

**D. PRESIDENT'S REPORT – President Vander Hooven**

- President Vander Hooven thanked everyone for making the time to attend this meeting and welcomed the Leadership Team as well as Matt Noyes from the Board of Higher Education.
- Expressed gratitude to the faculty and staff at MWCC for all their efforts for making the most out of incredibly challenging circumstances
- Held an All-College Forum on Monday, April 6, 2020.
- This situation of all-remote learning goes against all that we about. We are very face-to-face and that has been taken away from us.
- We have, within a matter of a couple days, through the Foundation established the “Covid-19 Emergency Student Fund” We have raised over \$10,000. The faculty, staff and community members and business leaders have all contributed to this fund. The students are limited to \$150 which is not a great deal and we have already allocated most of that. The need is still great. Please continue to forward the appeal to as many people as possible.
- We have had to make some difficult decisions over last month and a half:
  - We had to ask faculty to move to a remote teaching environment in less than one week. They were able to accomplish this and were able to connect to many of their students and work through that transition.
  - We have had to make tough decisions concerning Year-End ceremonies. Among the most difficult was to move our commencement to a virtual ceremony understanding how symbolic this is to our students. We feel confident that with our Media Services and Student Affairs, Student Services Departments that we will have a very meaningful ceremony with their names scrolled and read aloud but it could never rival having the actual ceremony experience. Students will have the option to walk across the stage at next years commencement.
  - CARES Act-Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund. We have been monitoring and have close communication with the offices of Secretary Peyer, Commissioner Santiago and Governor Bake. There are also daily meetings with the 15 college presidents.
  - We still have a lot of decisions that will have to be made. Such as how we execute our summer term and when we can resume our face to face classes. The biggest decision will be how to execute our summer camps for children. Parents rely on the camps for childcare. We are hoping to play a role in relieving those needs of the community, but we are nowhere near a decision on that situation.

- We closed the building about six weeks ago for a couple of days to do a “deeper cleaning” before spring break also allowing extra time for faculty and staff to move classes online. Decided that the learning would continue through the semester.
- Continue with the remote working environment for staff. We have 99% working remotely
- The president asked LT to submit our greatest accomplishments; the greatest challenges; and what they are most proud of during the last month and a half:
  1. Accomplishments - Faculty and staff’s ability to transition so quickly; overcoming the lack of set up for this type of delivery for most of their classes
  2. Challenges – financial needs and stress on students; working remotely while juggling family needs; managing paper file and postal needs; moving from face to face to remote learning will present challenges and we will need substantial professional development for faculty and staff to achieve this for the long term
  3. Most Proud – generosity of spirit and commitment to our student success! All our decisions have been with this in mind
- The president thanked Joyce Cormier & Nancy Regan (AFSCME representatives) and Ellen Pratt & Candace Shivers (MCCC representatives). They worked together and shared ideas to work rapidly in moving forward to a result. The president also thanked Jason Zelesky and his staff in working with our students. Also thanked our IT Dept. for their contribution in getting the staff and faculty laptops with VPN for each one. The president also thanked the Media Services Dept., and the faculty and staff for rising to the occasion
- We will need a special meeting of the Board of Trustees later this month for Administrative Actions that we are not prepared for today. We will be sending out meeting request soon.

**E. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE LEADERSHIP TEAM – VICE PRESIDENT LABONTE-(SEE PRESENTATION)**

- We have experienced a decline in the steady stream of income with the indefinite closing of the Green Street Café, The Fitness Center and the Theatre at the Mount. Meanwhile, we still have the expense of refunding ticket money, etc. impacting FY 20
- Summer semester starts in a month and we can’t project enrollments. They could be reduced by as much as 50%
- Stimulus money– CARES Act – we should be getting 2.5 Million mid-to late April. With 50% going directly to students. The other 50% would cover cost to the college directly related to COVID-19.
- Vice president LaBonte has been monitoring our cash flow and is fairly confident that we will have a strong cash position for end of FY 2020.
- Concerning the wild fluctuation of stock market-the money we have in CD’s is secure, the money invested in Congress is fluid and at last look we are only down 53K which is mirroring what we were down this time last year.

**F. ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS OF THE DAY - TABLED**

- **AD – 1247**–Authority to Confer Degrees
- **AD – 1248**-Approval of Emeritus Awards

**G. OLD BUSINESS-CHAIRMAN ANTONIONI-NONE**

**H. NEW BUSINESS –NONE**

**I. ADJOURNMENT** - Chairman Antonioni asked if there was any other business before the board. Hearing none, the Chair asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Ms. Freda and seconded by Mr. Tomasetti. The meeting adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo-Ann Meagher