

The 272nd meeting of the Board of Trustees
Mount Wachusett Community College
Thursday, April 18, 2024
Murphy Conference Room
Meeting Minutes

- A. **CALL TO ORDER:** President Vander Hooven asked for a motion to call the meeting to order. A motion was made by Ms. Pistone and seconded by Mr. Walton to call the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. All approved. Motion passed.
- a. **AD – 1311 – Board Vote to Identify Chair** - Ms. Bergstrom made a motion to nominate Ms. Claire Freda as Vice Chair. Ms. Gosselin seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed.
 - b. **AD – 1312 – Board Vote to Identify Secretary** – Tabled until next meeting.
- B. **ROLL CALL:**
Present: Claire Freda, Patti Bergstrom, Rick Walton, Tricia Pistone, Sheila Murphy, and Justina Johnson

Present via zoom: Irene Hernandez and Denise Gosselin

Unable to attend: Doug Petersen

Also, present from the College: President Vander Hooven, many members of the Leadership Team and Executive Assistant Laurie Snoonian

Many others joined via live stream on Vimeo
- C. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Acting Chairperson Freda Asked for a motion to approve the minutes December 14, 2023, as amended. Ms. Gosselin made a motion to approve and Mr. Walton seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed.
- D. **CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT** – Claire stated we will all continue to work for what is in the best interest of the college. She also mentioned that trustee Pistone was named as the new chair of the finance and audit committee last week.
- E. **PRESIDENT’S REPORT** – President Vander Hooven
- a. Jim has been working closely with Gina Yarbough to move the board forward. We do not have the authority to approve a new chair without the approval from the governor.
 - b. Jim stated enrollment continues to increase. Although MassReconnect is part of this increase, efforts in our retention department, our college programs and engaged student body all play a part.
 - c. Jim attended the media arts and technology advisory committee last night and was amazed at the level of engagement.
 - d. A new media arts lab is being constructed. Will be named in honor of Art Collins, our Director of Media Services who is regionally known for his expertise.
 - e. One challenge we continue to face is meeting the needs of our students. The house was unkind to community colleges in their budget with reductions in the success fund. Servicing our students in areas of housing, food insecurity, childcare, etc. continues to be a challenge.
 - f. Jim stated he is very much in favor of free community college for all and MassReconnect, but only if the legislature supports funding to the colleges so we have what we need to make these students successful.

- g. The rollout of the better FAFSA has not gone well. The deadline for scholarships and funding has been pushed back even further to July. This could be good for community colleges as students may be hesitant to attend a higher cost institution not knowing what kind of aid they will receive.
- h. Jim mentioned he has made no secret about his struggles with depression and that he is constantly encouraging everyone to practice self-care. It has been a very challenging year and he wants everyone to know he is going to be seeking some help.

F. **LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORTS** – None

G. **MISSION/STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE** –

- a. The leadership team created a spreadsheet to capture the top priority in each area. Other areas of the operational plan will not be ignored, just that the ones directly related to the strategic plan are more likely to be funded. Racial equity outcomes and equity across the board will remain part of this plan.
- b. Jim introduced the new dean of the School of Business, Science, Technology and Math – Kristin Sweeney. She stated she is very glad to be here and back at this school after working for Keene State for many years.

H. **ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS OF THE DAY**

- a. **AD – 1305 – Approval of 1st Quarter Trust Fund** as presented by Vice President, Sandra Quaye (see attachment). Acting Chair Freda asked for a motion to approve the 1st Quarter Trust Fund. A motion was made by Ms. Gosselin and seconded by Ms. Pistone. All approved. Motion passed.
- b. **AD – 1306 – Approval of 2nd Quarter Trust Fund** as presented by Vice President, Sandra Quaye (see attachment). Acting Chair Freda asked for a motion to approve the 2nd Quarter Trust Fund. A motion was made by Ms. Pistone and seconded by Ms. Bergstrom. All approved. Motion passed.
- c. **AD – 1307 – Approval of Emeritus Awards** – Dean Occhipinti and Dean Shea spoke about their recipients. Acting Chair Freda asked for a motion to approve the Emeritus awards. A motion was made by Ms. Pistone and seconded by Ms. Gosselin. All approved. Motion passed.
- d. **AD – 1308 – Approval of Rank Change Recommendations** – Acting Chair Freda asked for a motion to approve the rank change recommendations. A motion was made by Ms. Pistone and seconded by Mr. Walton. All approved. Motion passed.
- e. **AD – 1309 – Approval of Incentive Program Guidelines** as presented by President Vander Hooven. Acting Chair Freda asked for a motion to approve the incentive program guidelines. A motion was made by Ms. Gosselin and seconded by Mr. Walton. All approved. Motion passed.
- f. **AD – 1310 – Approval of Endowment Match** as presented by President Vander Hooven. Acting Chair Freda asked for a motion to approve the endowment match numbers. A motion was made by Ms. Johnson and seconded by Ms. Pistone. All approved. Motion passed.
- g. **AD – 1313 – Approval of Tenure Recommendations** – Acting Chair Freda asked for a motion to approve the tenure recommendations. A motion was made by Ms. Pistone and seconded by Ms. Johnson. All approved. Motion passed.

I. **OLD BUSINESS** – BOT Assessment Plan – Complete Survey

- a. Amanda thanked Claire, Patti and Rick who helped create the survey questions.
- b. This project is so the board can discuss the board itself and goals.
- c. She asked the BOT members to fill out the survey before they leave if they have not done so.
- d. After all the surveys are collected, Amanda will create a report and then discuss it with them.

J. **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Acting Chair Freda stated she is in favor of more information from the staff at these meetings. She would like in the near future, one member of LT to provide a brief overview at each meeting. This will give the board an opportunity to help the staff in any way they can. Jim mentioned that Dan Horlander will be the first as he has a big presentation for the board in June.

K. **ADJOURNMENT** – Acting Chair Freda asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Pistone and seconded by Ms. Johnson. All approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:43 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Snoonian