

APPROVED MINUTES OF INFORMATION SESSION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE COMMUNITY
COLLEGE DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF MACOMB

An open information session of the Board of Trustees of the Community College District of the County of Macomb was held Wednesday, July 19, 2017 at 6:00 p.m., in Room K307 of the John Lewis Community Center, South Campus, 14500 Twelve Mile Road, Warren, Michigan.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Haase at 6:02 p.m.

2.0 ROLL CALL

Present: Jennifer Haase, Chairperson
Frank Cusumano, Vice Chairperson
Katherine Lorenzo, Secretary
Kristi Dean, Trustee
Joseph DeSantis, Trustee

Absent: Roseanne DiMaria, Treasurer
Vincent Viviano, Trustee

Also present: James Sawyer, President
Elizabeth Argiri, Vice President, Business
Sharon Kowal, Executive Administrative Assistant to the President
Jill Thomas-Little, Vice President, Student Services
Gerri Lynn Pavone, Executive Director, Research and Planning
Casandra Ulbrich, Vice President, College Advancement & Community Relations
Hunter L. Wendt, General Counsel/Executive Director, College Police
Denise Williams, Vice President, Human Resources

3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Cusumano, supported by Dean, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried.

4.0 AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

5.0 REVIEW OF AGENDA ITEMS AND MATERIAL

Trustee Cusumano asked if we are holding any full-time faculty positions vacant or are they being filled as they become available. Dr. Sawyer said a small amount of faculty positions are unfilled (six).

Trustee Haase said that Item 8.2 will need to be removed from the Regular Agenda because the Tentative Agreement is not ready to be voted on.

6.0 ISSUE AND UPDATES

Dr. Sawyer said the College has received a \$1.1 million grant from the Ralph Wilson Foundation. The grant will be used to provide workforce training for 100 people and IT career academies for 100 high school students. The grant is focused on southern Macomb County so the high school students are going to come from the four districts in the south end. We are going to try to recruit the 100 participants from the south end as well. The training itself will build upon the training we have done for the Department of Labor grants that were around Mechatronics, welding, and advanced manufacturing, etc.

Dr. Sawyer stated the College is hosting the North American Council of Automotive Teachers (NACAT) this week. There are close to 200 automotive instructors from throughout the U.S. and Canada in attendance.

Dr. Sawyer said the Governor has signed the budget. The College's allocation is a ½ percent increase.

Dr. Sawyer stated that open enrollment started this week. As of today our enrollment is down four percent. The good news is our Student Services areas are very busy with students. We have over 30 days before classes actually start so there is time for enrollment numbers to change.

Upcoming events:

The Selfridge Open House and Air Show (100th anniversary of Selfridge) is on Saturday, August 19, 2017 – static displays open at 9 a.m. while the air show begins at 11 a.m. and concludes at 4:30 p.m.

Macomb Community College Alumni and Donor Day at Jimmy John's Field, August 4, 2017 – gates open at 6 p.m. and game starts at 7:05 p.m.

Macomb Community College Faculty/Staff Appreciation Day at Jimmy John's Field, August 25, 2017 – gates open at 6 p.m. and game starts at 7:05 p.m.

The annual employee picnic will be held at the University Center on August 26, 2017 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

6.1 Millage Discussion

Dr. Sawyer said we talked last month about our millage renewal. It expires in 2020 and we want to solicit thoughts from the Board members on how to move forward – here are a couple of reminders:

- The millage expires in 2020.
- The current millage rate is 1.4072 - it has been lowered by about .0568 as a result of reductions due to the Headlee rollbacks. It could be reduced again based on the dynamic of the improvement of the economy versus housing values.
- Previous polls have indicated community support for renewal but less support for restoration.

- We talked about a restoration and the value of that enables us to go back to the original millage rate that was approved by voters in 2000. We would look at that at providing approximately \$1.47 million on an annual basis which equates roughly to \$3.69 in tuition rate looking at projected credit hours for 2017/2018.
- If we were to do a special election in May a rough estimate of the cost is around \$400,000.
- The deadline for getting on the May ballot is February 13, 2018.

Dr. Sawyer said the question is should the College pursue a millage restoration in 2018 and when would be the timing? Or would we rather pursue a millage in 2020? In which case, that question would be a millage renewal and not a restoration. So we would be getting a renewal at a lower rate, that ultimately would be our locked-in rate going forward, and we would lose the opportunity to go back and achieve that additional \$1.47 million.

Some thoughts to keep in mind:

- We don't know what else is going to be on the millage –if we do a special millage there is a higher likelihood that we would be the only item on the ballot. However once we announce our intent, other communities could put things on the ballot.
- Just this past week there was legislation introduced that talks about limiting millage ballot questions only to November elections. This is not approved and may not go anywhere. But it would impact us whether we decide on the restoration in 2018 or the renewal in 2020. The fact that we would be limited to just the November election would be an issue, because if we were to go in 2020 our plan would be to go in August and, if necessary, November.

Trustee Cusumano asked if the polling data from November 2012 has been broken down by municipality or township. Dr. Ulbrich said it was broken down by region, not necessarily, to the municipality level but they had four different regions across Macomb County. (Corrected number of regions to six; southeast; southwest, mid-southeast, mid-southwest, mid-north, north.)

Trustee Cusumano asked if it is possible to extract that data out. He noticed in Shelby Township there was significant opposition to the technology bond. But Macomb Township passed it. He would like to test the waters in the municipalities who performed poorly on the bond to see whether or not there has been any change.

Dr. Ulbrich said the next step, if we want to look at 2018, we could go out for another survey and focus on that level of detail. Again, for the cost, we are looking at 400 likely voters across Macomb County. It is not going to be a huge number so you might be making decisions based on a limited number of responses.

Trustee Cusumano asked what percentage of this millage revenue comes from commercial properties. Ms. Argiri said she would find out and get the information to him.

Trustee Cusumano said if you have the support you might as well try for a restoration and get that \$1.4 million revenue stream as a constant then you don't have to fight over in Lansing, and squeeze it out of students and their parents. Dr. Sawyer said that is our position too. Trustee Cusumano said it spreads the expense over the entire community, but if you have that kind of support you might as well take advantage of it. The mission is subsidized by commercial properties as well. The College has so much goodwill we should avail ourselves of it.

Trustee Haase commented that if we have the support then why wouldn't we go to our community and ask for their help for our students. But she thinks we need a bit more specific data.

Trustee Cusumano said his notes show that voter turnout was over estimated at 71 percent – it turned out to be 66 percent and that there was a 13 percent drop-off from the presidential election to the ballot questions – is there some purpose on estimating the turnout and also the drop-off and do we do better when there is more participation down the ballot.

Dr. Ulbrich said it is not unusual, especially in a presidential election, to have a drop-off the farther you go down the ballot. If there is a long ballot it doesn't bode particularly well for us.

Trustee Haase asked how much it would cost to get more specific data. Dr. Ulbrich said roughly \$20,000. What she needs to know today is if they are interested in a May/August versus a November survey because they would poll different people. If we are looking at May then we want to poll people who are mostly like to turnout for the May election. Which will skew the results if you want to look at November. If you are looking at a November election you are looking at general voters and that is a different section of the vote.

Trustee Dean asked about the August primary turnout. Dr. Ulbrich said the August turnout is relatively similar to a May. The August turnout is roughly 25 percent while May could be 10 to 25 percent. So it could be very similar or there could be a huge drop-off in May. Trustee Dean said but we wouldn't have to pay \$400,000 to be on the ballot. Dr. Ulbrich responded that is true but you could also be on the ballot with a number of other proposals as well which we wouldn't know until we get closer to the election.

Trustee Dean asked if we could take the \$400,000 we would pay to the county and use that to pay for advertising. Trustee Haase said we have to do messaging because we can't actually advocate passage. Trustee Dean said then we could use that \$400,000 to message.

Trustee Haase said her only concern about August is that because it is a primary and voters have to declare their party and may just vote that part of it. They would have to turn the ballot over and that would dissuade some people. Dr. Ulbrich said it could affect turnout depending on if there is a primary or not in a certain area. We know from the data that Democrats and ticket-splitters tend to be more supportive than Republicans would be, so if you are in an area like Shelby Township where there might be a large Republican primary but not necessarily Democratic primary, depending what happens with the Gubernatorial election, that could affect greatly the turnout, and thus your support or non-support of the ballot question.

Trustee Haase asked if the polling data could be helpful for either May or August. Dr. Ulbrich said she believes so and that we could identify likely voters. If you are a likely voter for a May election you are most likely also turning out for an August election. Trustee Haase said if we are going to spend \$20,000 and get more data to know, do we want to spend \$400,000 and do it at all, or do we still want to do it but not spend the \$400,000. Dr. Ulbrich said she would leave the caveat out there that if you do it and we do a population that is a May or August voter and let's say the results come back and they are not necessarily positive that doesn't mean we wouldn't be successful in a November election, because it is a different voter. So we might want to consider doing a second poll with likely November voters and see if that makes a difference.

Trustee Haase said that November would not cost us \$400,000 – we would want to do more messaging. Would the messaging have a larger audience? Dr. Ulbrich said yes and if we went with May or August we could be much more targeted. We could do a lot of digital. But we would still want to spend \$400,000-\$500,000. She overestimated those numbers and said they could be scaled back, however if we go in November we definitely want to increase that because now we have a much larger voting pool.

Trustee Haase asked if a November ballot could potentially cost the same as a May ballot even though we don't have to pay the election costs. Dr. Ulbrich responded she didn't think it would be quite the same but it would still be significant.

Trustee Cusumano asked is they would ultimately vote on which ballot to put it on? Trustee Haase said yes, but first we would need a consensus on whether to get more data for a restoration.

Dr. Sawyer said sounds like there is support for going to the next step of doing an additional survey. We could try to target people we think will be in those elections and it is still going to be a difficult call. We are looking to see if the response will be 90 percent yes or 90 percent no. It's good to know that because it will guide the decision. But if it is the 60 to 50 percent range it will be a much tougher call. He still thinks there is value in having that information because it is going to be a different pool and it has been a year and a half since the previous poll. And \$20,000 is a lot of money but it is not when compared to spending \$400,000-\$600,000. It is worth making that investment to vet that out.

Trustee Dean asked if 400 responses is statistically the number for the whole county for the sample. Dr. Ulbrich said a sample of 400 gets you a sample error of roughly 3 points, which is a good error rate to have. Trustee Dean asked if we would want to go over 400. Dr. Ulbrich said it won't skew your results that much but the results will probably be relatively similar.

Trustee Dean asked about how many questions would be on the poll. Dr. Ulbrich responded the shorter the better. But we would want to have a few message questions just to reconfirm what we had done before to see if the same messages are still resonating with voters. We would want to keep it roughly 10-12 minutes maximum. Trustee Haase asked if they would be filtering in cell phone numbers as well. Dr. Ulbrich said they would be.

Trustee Lorenzo asked if we could do the survey using simplified language. Dr. Ulbrich said we want the language to be as close as it is on the ballot since that is what they will be voting on. If the language on the poll is simplified and the ballot language is not, then we really haven't measured the same thing.

Trustee Haase asked if there was consensus to go ahead with the additional data collection. Trustee Dean asked how long would it take. Dr. Ulbrich responded it would more likely be ready for the September meeting.

Trustee Cusumano asked if the polling question would ask "do you vote in primary elections?" Dr. Ulbrich said that is how we would segment it. First of all we would purchase a voter list that would tell us that information and we can confirm it in the polls and ask them if they plan to vote in the primary election in 2018. They self-identify and if they say no then they are not part of our poll.

Trustee Dean, so do you only take 400 into the polling or do you give the vendor 600 to get to the 400. Dr. Ulbrich said we take as many as they need to get to the 400. Trustee Dean said so all 400 would have answered the entire survey. Dr. Ulbrich confirmed.

Trustee Haase said it sounds like we have consensus to move ahead with the additional data collection.

6.2 Recommendation – Provost and Vice President of the Learning Unit

Dr. Sawyer said he is very excited to have William Tammone before them as the provost candidate. William comes from the Colorado system where he is currently the Provost and Chief Academic Officer. He has a rich history in community colleges. He worked at Montcalm Community College for 12 years and worked his way up and ultimately was the Provost and Chief Academic Officer. After he left Montcalm he went to Illinois Central and then to Colorado.

His goal was to find someone who was grounded and had sound chief academic officer experience. He feels that William fits that role well. The thing he liked about him is he brings some things and projects that he has worked on that we have not done and might be beneficial for the College. Bringing in an external candidate at a senior level like this will really help give us a broader perspective on things that he has done. He has also been involved with Guided Pathways work and that is good because we have placed high stakes in that and think it will make a big difference with our students. I think he is going to be an outstanding fit for us.

Dr. Sawyer continued as far as the process, after a national search we ended up with two final candidates. We arrived at those finalist after he had phone conversations with a number of people and several people were brought back for interviews with him, Mr. Wendt, and Ms. Williams. We then brought back the two finalists to meet with President's Council and a volunteer group of 16 faculty and staff to participate in a group conversation. He wanted to see how during a free forming conversation they fit, how they responded to the group, how the group responded to them. Both candidates performed well in that capacity and they both would have been a fit. But William is bringing specific community college experience, significant chief academic officer experience as well as some additional things that he has been involved with and will be a nice addition to the College.

Trustee Dean added that he has a tremendous amount of speaking engagements and publications. Trustee Haase said he has been faculty before, which she thinks is very important.

7.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Lorenzo supported by Dean to move into Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining and a legal matter.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Ayes: Lorenzo, Dean, Cusumano, DeSantis, Haase

Nays: None.

Absent: DiMaria, Viviano

RECESS

The meeting recessed at 6:44 p.m.

RECONVENE

The meeting reconvened at 7:35 p.m.

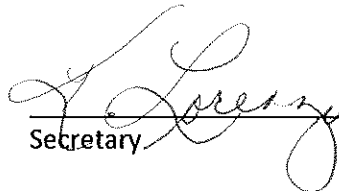
8.0 ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Dean, supported by Lorenzo, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF MACOMB BOARD OF TRUSTEES


Secretary