

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, April 21, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., in Assembly Hall, University Center, Professional Development Center, Center Campus, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township, Michigan.

1.0 [CALL TO ORDER](#)

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lorenzo at 6:05 p.m.

2.0 [ROLL CALL](#)

Present:

Katherine Lorenzo, Chairperson
Frank Cusumano, Vice Chairperson
Kristi Dean, Secretary
Shelley Vitale, Trustee
Vincent Viviano, Trustee

Appearing Remotely:

Joan Flynn, Warren, Michigan, Trustee

Absent:

Roseanne DiMaria, Treasurer

Also present:

James Sawyer, President
Elizabeth Argiri, Vice President, Business
Kevin Chandler, Vice President, College Advancement & Community Relations
Sharon Kowal, Assistant to the President
James Matheney, Chief of Police
Donald Ritzenhein, Provost/Vice President, Learning Unit
Jeffrey Steele, General Counsel, Office of General Counsel
Jill Thomas-Little, Vice President, Student Services
Denise Williams, Vice President, Human Resources

3.0 [Approval of Agenda](#)

MOTION by Cusumano, supported by Viviano, to approve the agenda as amended: Moving the Closed Session from the Information Session agenda to the end of the Regular Meeting agenda.

ROLE CALL VOTE:

AYES: Cusumano, Viviano, Dean, Vitale, Lorenzo

NAYS:

ABSENT: DiMaria

MOTION CARRIED.

4.0 [Audience Participation](#)

None.

5.0 [Review of Agenda Items and Materials](#)

Trustee Cusumano said he inquired with Dr. Sawyer earlier today about use of force training at the police academy and he understands there will be a brief presentation on that issue. Dr. Sawyer said that presentation will be given by Michael Ciaramitaro from our Police Academy as part of Issues and Updates.

6.0 [Issues and Updates](#)

Dr. Sawyer's Updates:

Revision to the 2021 meeting calendar – Dr. Sawyer said our plan is to hold the board meetings in this facility through September. This room set up is special so rather than setting it up in South, K301, it makes more sense to stay here. Then in October, we will reevaluate the situation, and hopefully return to South Campus as the current calendar indicates.

Enrollment – Dr. Sawyer said the winter term is nearing the end. Enrollment was much better than we had anticipated. In terms of credit hours, we were down about 7 percent, while we had forecast a 22 percent decline. The multiple semester registration process was launched and seems to be going well. Open registration started March 22. The downside to the process is we do not have comparable data because registration started much earlier than in the past and it is very misleading when we try to compare data at this point in time.

Future for Frontliners (F4F) – Dr. Sawyer said there are 1,667 F4F students currently taking classes this term. We have additional students who will start in the summer and fall terms. We received a \$50,000 grant from the Kresge Foundation to help support our F4F students. We were one of two community colleges in Michigan invited to submit a proposal. We are pleased that Kresge is providing that support.

Michigan Reconnect (MIReconnect) – Dr. Sawyer said as of April 7 we have 937 students who have been offered awards. This opportunity only became available in February, so students have not had a chance to register for a term. Some of those students are registering for the summer term and additional students will register for the fall term.

Legislative News – Dr. Sawyer reported that yesterday we did receive some potentially troubling news, the House Appropriations Subcommittee failed to include funding for the F4F and MIReconnect in their proposed budget. The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee didn't include the increases for MIReconnect or the funding for F4F. This is very early in the budget process, but those are the things we are going to have to pay attention to. He contacted our legislators and advised them that we currently have 3,000 students who are taking advantage of these programs, and it would be very detrimental to them if funding failed.

Agenda Item 10.1 – Dr. Sawyer said the Information Item on the agenda tonight is the Macomb Community College Foundation Case for Support. We have been working on this for quite some time in preparation of our future campaign. The Foundation's Board of Directors has approved the Case for Support and it comes before the college's Board of Trustees as a receive and file item.

Future Items (May/June) – Dr. Sawyer said there are a couple of items that will be on the agenda in May and June that he wants to make the board aware of. In May we will be presenting our balanced budget for fiscal year 2022. Potentially we could bring the food service contract to the May meeting, but it will likely be June. Our internal team is working through the process and interviewing the vendors who submitted bids. We did engage a consultant to help guide us through this process.

HEERF II and III Funding – Dr. Sawyer stated that we continue to review the federal funding, HEERF II and III, that is being provided to the college to support our students and the institution. We are evaluating the guidance and will come to the board with those expenditures going forward.

James Jacobs Civic Engagement Project: Shoshana Zuboff Event – Dr. Sawyer shared that through the James Jacobs Civic Engagement Project, we hosted a great event with Dr. Shoshana Zuboff, a world-renown expert in data privacy. The discussion was very informative and hopefully you had a chance to participate. This is the first time we have hosted this type of event. The staff at the Lorenzo Cultural Center staff did a good job running it and we were pleased it went so well. Our own Dr. Ritzenhein did a great job serving as the moderator. There were 505 registrations for the event and at least 330 of them logged in through the evening. We thought having over 300 people participate was pretty good. Dr. Zuboff also held a session with approximately 50 students earlier in the day. Overall, we consider it a success. We had intended to offer this event at the Performing Arts Center last March but had to cancel it due to the pandemic.

Virtual Commencement Ceremony – Dr. Sawyer said that at the end of March we conducted our second virtual commencement ceremony. The Student Life and Leadership staff did a fantastic job making it even better than the first one. We followed all the health and safety protocols. This time the graduates were able to invite four family members to attend. That went well and the students appreciated the opportunity to participate. Our videographers, Jake Kennedy and Steve Berry, are producing a commemorative video for the students to have as a remembrance of the ceremony. It was great. For the upcoming winter commencements, we are planning for both types of events, but it is more likely we will have to hold another virtual ceremony. We are anxious to return to in-person commencements.

Early College of Macomb Commencement Ceremony – Dr. Sawyer said the Early College commencement ceremony will be held on Friday, May 7 at Jimmy John's Field. This event has typically been held at the Macomb Intermediate School District, but due to Covid protocols they had to find a different location. The Early College graduation is always a great event. The graduate's families are there, and they talk about where the students are going to go to college. Several of the graduates participated in our ceremony, they can be identified by the special Early College medallion they wear when they walk across the stage.

Retiree and 25- and 50- Year Service Awards – Dr. Sawyer said last week we hosted a recognition event of our retirees and 25- and 50- year service award recipients. We normally hold this event in person during our Institutional Development Day (IDD). Because of Covid, it didn't happen last year, so we recognized staff from the last two years. Being cognizant of safety protocols we had people walk across the stage at the Performing Arts Center in small groups. The event was recorded and will be shared during our IDD program that occurs on May 11. The participants were very appreciative the college hosted this event.

Women's Basketball Season – Dr. Sawyer said under the leadership of Jay Ritchie, our women's basketball team has been on a phenomenal run. Their record over the past three years is 43-0. This year they were 11-0. We made an exception to our no travel policy to allow them to go to nationals this week. Sadly, over the weekend one of the players contracted Covid and unfortunately the team had to withdraw from the tournament. We certainly feel bad for the students, but it doesn't take away from the great accomplishment and the great run they have been on.

Michael Ciaramitaro, Manager, Advanced Police Training, gave an update on the "choke hold" and what Use of Force training is taught at the Police Academy.

6.1 [Update on Higher Learning Commission \(HLC\) – D. Ritzenhein \(for Jillian Huot\)](#)

In J. Huot's absence, Dr. Ritzenhein presented the update on the Higher Learning Commission Accreditation.

Dr. Ritzenhein said there are two methods a college can choose for accreditation, the traditional way or the Open Pathway. Macomb has chosen the Open Pathway. The reason it is called Open Pathway is because the intent is to keep the institutions going and growing and maintaining their accreditation on an ongoing basis. Halfway through the Open Pathway we file a report called the Assurance Review. Its goal is to assure the HLC that we, in fact, continue to comply with the regulations and criteria. But, more importantly that we continue to grow and expand as an institution.

Dr. Ritzenhein said there are two parts to the report:

- 1) The assurance argument, which is a multi-page text, we collect from the college and the supporting evidence. We need to demonstrate that we meet the criteria. Much of this report is linked to specific evidence to demonstrate the claims that we make in it.
- 2) We also highlight our continuous improvement and at this midway point, the big continuous improvement that we are very proud of and highlight in the report is Strategic Plan 2025. That has been a remarkable college-wide undertaking that President Sawyer initiated when he became president and which almost everyone in this room is involved with in some way or another.

We are able, in the assurance argument, to do two things:

- 1) demonstrate, assure the commission that we still comply
- 2) highlight some of our continuous improvements

Dr. Ritzenhein said we are now in the finalization phase of the report. This phase includes initial reviews and suggested edits. After that, the assurance argument and the evidence are loaded onto the HLC site and there is a final review. There are two levels of final review, President's Council, as the chairing committee, and the board of trustees. In early May, we will post the entire report, give access to the trustees and invite you to visit it. You can read the entire document or just those areas that may be of interest to you.

During the assurance review process, there will be no onsite visits. The HLC will read our report, they might give us call or two for further explanation or to follow-up on something. After their review, in about 4-6 weeks, they will send us a final report. We will communicate that report to the board and the entire college community.

APPROVED Minutes, Information Session, April 21, 2021

Dr. Ritzenhein said he and J. Huot thank all the people here at the college that worked so diligently on this assurance review document. As you can see from the timeline, it has been a multi-month process. Please let him know of any questions or concerns. The report is due to HLC on June 14, 2021.

7.0 [Closed Session](#)

It was determined due to the room setup for Covid restrictions to move the closed session to the end of the regular meeting agenda.

8.0 [Adjournment](#)

MOTION by Cusumano, supported by Viviano, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF MACOMB BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Secretary