

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, January 19, 2022 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 6:01 p.m.

2.0 [ROLL CALL](#)

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

Absent: Roseanne DiMaria, Treasurer
Joan Flynn, Trustee

Also present: James Sawyer, President
Elizabeth Argiri, Vice President, Business & Interim Vice President, HR
Kevin Chandler, Vice President, College Advancement and Community Relations
Sharon Kowal, Assistant to the President
Bill Leavens, Chief of Police
Deb Mende, Executive Director, Office of the President
Kathleen Poindexter, Interim Vice President, Business
Donald Ritzenhein, Provost and Vice President for the Learning Unit
Jeffrey Steele, General Counsel, Office of General Counsel
Jill Thomas-Little, Vice President, Student Services

3.0 [Approval of Agenda](#)

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

ALL IN FAVOR:

AYES: Cusumano, Dean, Vitale, Viviano, Lorenzo

NAYS:

ABSENT: DiMaria, Flynn

MOTION CARRIED.

4.0 [Audience Participation](#)

None.

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

None.

6.0 Issues and Updates

6.1 President's Report

Dr. Sawyer's Report:

Closed Session: Dr. Sawyer requested the board go into closed session tonight pursuant to MCL 15.268(e) to discuss collective bargaining matters.

Covid Protocols on Campus: Dr. Sawyer said the mask wearing policy has been extended through the end of March. We continue to monitor the situation and will make adjustments as necessary. We will revisit the policy in late March to decide if it should be extended further.

OSHA Mandate: Dr. Sawyer stated that on January 14 the U.S. Supreme Court blocked the emergency temporary standard that OSHA had issued regarding mandatory vaccination or weekly testing for employers with more than 100 employees. The college was prepared and ready to fulfill the mandate but we're not disappointed to see it blocked just because of the amount of work that was required. We have suspended the policies and procedures we had developed to be compliant with the order. We will retain the data collected from our employees for 90 days because it is possible that additional action may be taken by the State or the Feds and we do not want to repeat the data collection process. If after 90 days we no longer have a need for it, the vaccine data will be purged.

Enrollment: Dr. Sawyer shared that enrollment is down 9.3 percent in credit hours compared to last year, this is consistent with the 9 percent we budgeted.

- ✓ Futures for Frontliners: 1,185 students have registered to date for the Winter 2022 term
- ✓ MIReconnect: 1,363 students have registered to date for the Winter 2022 term

These programs continue to be very important for our students – last dollar scholarships allowing them to attend Macomb.

Federal (HEERF III) Funds Update: The HEERF II grant has been fully spent and will be closed out this month. We have spent \$3.8 million of the institutional HEERF III funds and have commitments for the balance. This month we distributed \$9.2 million to almost 17,000 credit and noncredit students, like we did last year in providing them with additional support.

Purchases: Dr. Sawyer said there are four IT purchases on the agenda. Given their nature, Mike Zimmerman will make a presentation and answer any questions.

Facilities: Dr. Sawyer said there is one facilities item for the replacement of the HVAC system and the addition of cooling equipment for the Sports & Expo Center.

Dental Program: Dr. Sawyer said we had great news regarding our Dental Accreditation visit that took place on January 18 and 19. A team of two evaluators assessed the program and were very complimentary of the work in terms of the program, the curriculum and the facility itself. They did make three minor recommendations. One has already been addressed by Dr. B. Ellis and the other two are minor and we have time to remedy them.

Dr. Sawyer said the dental accreditation process started with the evaluation team making their visit. They will write their report and it will go to the full board of the accreditation body for actual approval. The full board has two meetings per year (January or February and July or August). We suspect at the July or August meeting it will be on the agenda and we will get formal approval for the program. We are still on target to start the dental program in October. The evaluators were confident that we could do that but technically we have to wait until we get the formal accreditation from their board.

Dr. Sawyer recognized our dental program director, Dr. Barb Ellis, who did an outstanding job. The evaluators were very complimentary of all the work that has been done. He thanked Dr. Nara Mirijanian for her leadership and the great job she did shepherding it through and coordinating everything. Our facilities staff did a great job with the facility. Most important, he thanked the board. This was a major decision with a significant financial commitment. He appreciates and thanks the board for supporting the project and expects this is will be something that we are going to be very proud of when we start in earnest in October.

Vet Tech Program: Dr. Sawyer said the trustees recently received letters of concern about the Vet Tech program. In his email he shared with you last Sunday, he described what happened and what has taken place thus far. In summary, the former program director wanted to suspend the program for one year for our junior students, which are our first-year students, and administration disagreed. The program director disagreed with Administration's decision, and subsequently resigned from her role as program director but continues to be a full-time faculty member. Dr. Nara Mirijanian had previously been involved with the vet tech program for Baker College and through her connections was able to hire a temporary part-time person, Marianne Tear, to serve as the program coordinator. Ms. Tear is very well connected in Macomb County having previously served as the program director at Baker College. When the previous program director stepped down several other staff members abruptly resigned as well so there is a need to hire additional staff and that is in process. We have hired a new attending veterinarian, Dr. Susan Burcham.

Dr. Sawyer said some complaints were sent to the accrediting body for the vet tech program, the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). We have submitted our response and are working through that process.

Dr. Sawyer thanked Dean Mirijanian and Ms. Andrea Shaw for the extra work they put forth to make sure we continue to serve all our students. We felt it was critical for both our junior and senior students to continue to make progress. He thanked HR and the provost office for the support they have provided to Dean Mirijanian and Ms. Shaw.

Fire Academy: Dr. Sawyer said the college was approached by Warren Fire Commissioner, Skip McAdams, asking us to conduct a fire academy class specifically for their 28 cadets. The academy will be held this winter. This is an exciting and great opportunity to serve Warren directly.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day: Dr. Sawyer said we celebrated our MLK Day of Service event similar to what we did last year. It was a small affair as we continue to avoid large gatherings on campus. We still had 104 people participate, 16 on campus and 88 individuals who picked up project bags. They will complete

the projects at home and return them to the college. We look forward to returning to a more traditional program as we had in the past, but it was nice to have had a day of service program on MLK Day.

DEI – Kennedy Update: Dr. Sawyer said our diversity, equity, inclusion and access efforts continue. Ms. Kowal will be reaching out to the trustees to assess your availability for a working meeting with Kennedy & Co. on March 28. This meeting would be similar to the meetings we had with CampusWorks for strategic planning. We are waiting until March because by then Kennedy will be able to provide survey results and have feedback for the board to react to. They are currently in the process of holding focus groups. When completed we anticipate they will have met with a hundred faculty, staff and students to garner their input. On January 14 we sent a survey to 30,000 students, including those who attended in the of fall 2019 to the current semester. Kennedy has been very active in the data collection mode and doing a lot of document review as well. We are pleased with Kennedy thus far and look forward to continuing that work.

Next Month: Dr. Sawyer said there are a few items coming up next month that he wanted to make the board aware of:

- Perkins Equipment approvals
- HEERF Funding Information Items for the Siemens Building Automated Systems controls software
- Video Repository and Streaming system for the Learning Unit
- Increasing the advertising budget with SMZ
- Merit Internet Network, five-year agreement

A couple of items that may come through February or March depending on when they are complete:

- Information Item for RST bid results
- Security Training for IT
- Two police vehicles

Presentations:

- Dr. Sawyer and Ms. Argiri are presenting an overview of the tuition and fee recommendations for the 2022-2023 academic year.
- Mr. Zimmerman will be presenting an update on IT and specifically address the purchases on tonight's agenda.

Questions:

Trustee Cusumano asked if the fire academy for the Warren Fire Department cadets is being completely paid for by the Warren Fire Department? Dr. Sawyer responded yes, it is being funded by Warren. *In an email sent to Dr. Sawyer from Mr. Mike Lopez, Director, Public Service Institute, he confirmed the city of Warren is covering the total cost of the academy.

The February Board of Trustees meeting will be held at M-TEC, 7900 Tank Avenue, Warren, MI 48092

6.2 Tuition and Fees

J. Sawyer and L. Argiri presented their recommendation of tuition and fees for the 2022-2023 academic year. Their recommendation is a 2 percent increase in tuition.

Dr. Sawyer asked in order to prepare for next month, can we get some feedback on the recommended \$2 increase?

Trustee Vitale commented that her daughter has been attending Macomb for many years, paying her own way and working a part-time job. She hasn't had any problem and the HEERF funding has periodically been deposited directly into her bank account, sometimes \$50 and sometimes a little more. It has been helping cover some of her expenses. It has been beneficial for her daughter. Trustee Vitale doesn't think this is an unreasonable request at this point, especially when considering the changing environment and many different things that have to be in place. The college really needs the extra money for the things we are doing here that are changing.

Trustee Cusumano said a slide in the presentation showed a decline in property tax revenues, is that due to the Headlee rollback or what would be the reason for the decline given that housing is at an all time high? Dr. Sawyer responded that (slide 2) is the property tax that is a percentage of the college's revenue, not a measure of property tax value.

Trustee Cusumano said that he is not a mathematician but there was a slide that showed \$41 million in cuts. When he was elected to the board, he recalls the budget being somewhere in the range of \$142 million, so with \$41 million in cuts the budget should be at \$100 million. He is wondering if there is some voodoo going on that he can't grasp because he is not a mathematician? How can there be \$41 million in cuts whereby the proposed budget is anticipated being right back where it was during the peak periods when student enrollment was at its highest ever? Ms. Argiri responded that the cuts go back 18 years to 2003. She said she believes Trustee Cusumano joined the board in 2012 and that was the year we had changes within the MPSER system requiring the college to record the unfunded pension liability on our financial records and financial statements. Working with our auditors, the initial decision was made to include that funding of the unfunded liability as well as the balance sheet implications in the general fund. We have since revisited that decision and took steps to separate that out into a separate pension fund that is shown separately on the college's audited financial statement. She believes that when Trustee Cusumano joined the board the budget was at a pretty high point (inflated) due to that reason.

Ms. Argiri said his point is well taken, the cuts that have been made, some are permanent, some are temporary, but what's not to say we are increasing the budget in other ways such as the strategic investment we made? Those were increases to the college's budget. We took action to make budget cuts but still needed to add expenditures for various reasons whether for new initiatives or increases in wages and benefits. Trustee Cusumano thanked Ms. Argiri for the explanation.

Trustee Cusumano asked if it is being argued that there is a higher quality educational experience with higher percentages of full-time faculty than if the adjunct faculty is leveraged to teach more classes during economic downturns? Dr. Sawyer responded that being full-time or an adjunct has no direct impact on quality, but we are very reliant on our full-time faculty for a lot of other things

to help make the college run. The full-time faculty have responsibilities with curriculum, they have broader responsibilities of shared governance within the institution and that is where the roles differ greatly from adjunct faculty who we largely rely on to teach the courses, but he would argue that both do so with a quality manner. Trustee Cusumano appreciates that, thank you, because implicit in the argument that somehow or another the higher percentage of full time faculty means that there was a lower quality educational experience during those periods when the leveraging is taking place. He appreciates that every student here, whether you took classes back in 2010, 2012 or currently, is receiving the same high quality educational experience.

Dr. Sawyer asked if any of the trustees is unwilling to support the \$2 increase?

Trustee Cusumano said he appreciates administration putting together an explanation to explain the counter intuitive principle that despite declines in enrollment (fiscal year equated students) that the institution continues to need increased revenues. He understands the institution, as a whole, needs to maintain its integrity and its bearing in the community. He complimented the administration on trying to be reasonable and not proposing a greater percentage increase on the students and their families. He noticed the highest percentage of the budgetary pie is coming from tuition, fees and costs. Although the state has not stepped up as they had historically, the property revenues, including the millage restoration, should be enough to sustain the institution without further laboring the students and their families. Now again it is all in the mix, he has heard all the arguments over the past nine years about “well look at where we are compared to Michigan State” and the response was how can you compare the experience at Michigan State or University of Michigan to what students get at Macomb Community College? Well he understands that Michigan State has just gone over to virtual learning, so he would argue now at this point, at least persuasively, that there is a comparable educational experience here at Macomb Community College than at any of the other four-year institutions.

Trustee Cusumano said he is a fiscal conservative and he is always looking for institutional right-sizing for what the demands are, and he thinks the demands for the students and to the community is reflected by the lower enrollments. He still can't get around that, so he hasn't decided yet, but he has consistently been against tuition increases unless there have been comparable cuts in expenditures. That is no secret, he has been a tough sell on this straight through, but he appreciated the presentation. He thinks, over his tenure as a trustee, this is the most reasonable presentation that he has seen so far on tuition increases, other than the no tuition increases.

Trustee Vitale said as far as adjunct faculty being any less of an experience, Dr. Sawyer addressed that correctly with the additional responsibilities put on the full-time faculty. The adjunct teaching experience is just as high of a quality as any other, they just don't have the benefit of having a full-time job. Macomb Community College has been so amazing, especially during this pandemic, the administration, the faculty, everyone and Dr. Sawyer have done an amazing job getting us through this period, so we need all the creds to Macomb.

6.3 [Update on IT](#)

Mr. M. Zimmerman said essentially, he is here to address questions the board might have on the IT purchase authorizations that are on the agenda tonight. He gave a high-level view of the state of IT security at the college.

Questions:

Trustee Dean asked about item 11.3B. Temporary IT Security Staffing – how long will you need to have temporary staff? Mr. Zimmerman responded that our only IT security analyst goes on maternity leave March 1 and she returns in June. But we need time before she leaves so, we can make sure that whoever is taking that place can actually do the work that is required, and we have a level of trust with that individual. Trustee Dean asked if he had anybody in the pipeline? Mr. Zimmerman said yes, we have tagged an individual with Ferrilli, one of the bidders on the list, assuming that individual is still available after board approval. Trustee Dean said so the temporary staff would all be external. Ferrilli is the highest dollar amount at 180. Mr. Zimmerman said Ferrilli comes with a team, it is not one individual. The individuals quoting rates of \$90 per hour are contract staff, they are typically either overseas institutions or they are local companies with overseas help. Ferrilli is all U.S. based, in fact the individual that we've selected lives an hour away.

Trustee Dean asked if we couldn't bundle some of these services? Mr. Zimmerman said some of these firms have different levels of expertise, it's all about the people they have. Ferrilli also provides us managed services for our Colleague environment. They do a great job because they have great competencies there. When it comes to penetration their competencies and skill levels aren't as good as the others on that bid list.

Trustee Dean asked with the penetration testing are they only testing the known viruses? Mr. Zimmerman said they test for the known and unknown. Trustee Dean asked so what if there is something new coming out of "X" country and we are not aware of that yet? Mr. Zimmerman responded that is why Illumant was picked, that is the only thing they do. Ferrilli is a large-scale management services firm, they have many different types of services that they provide, where Illumant basically does two things, vCISO and penetration testing. Those are the only things that they do and because of that their expertise is much higher than the other bidders on that list.

Trustee Dean asked if CampusWorks is the same organization that we worked with on our strategic plan? Mr. Zimmerman said yes. Trustee Dean said they are the highest bid for the vCISO. Mr. Zimmerman said the vCISO chart in the write-up indicates a wide range on all those contracts as well as how many contact hours each firm would provide for that monthly rate. Some firms think they can do the vCISO engagement for twenty hours a month which is just unreasonable, but that is why they are low bid. CampusWorks, while they were the highest bid, also were providing the highest amount of contact hours, 87 hours per month. The organization we selected gives us about sixty hours a month. That is about the amount we are looking for along with a

support team of other individuals that help compliment what that virtual vCISO will do for the organization in reducing our threat profile.

Trustee Cusumano asked what the Michigan Community College Association (MCCA) has available regarding IT Security Best Practices? Mr. Zimmerman said he is not aware of anything they have published. The college follows a national IT security standard called CIS Controls (Center for Internet Security) which is a worldwide standard and what we measure ourselves against. Dr. Sawyer added that he is not aware of MCCA having any expertise in IT security and if they have delved into the field. Trustee Cusumano asked if Mr. Zimmerman has surveyed what other community colleges, such as OCC, WCCCD, MCCC or WCC do for their vCISO? Mr. Zimmerman said yes, he had a conversation with OCC today as part of a North American Consortium of Community College CIO's who are having the same issue. We all need a vCISO or dedicated security officer, none of us can afford them – there are two colleges on the west coast that can afford them, but the positions have gone unfilled at \$300,000 a year now for six months. Trustee Cusumano asked since we are purchasing a slice of time from the vCISO is it practical or wise to group up with other community colleges locally to form a consortium to purchase those services? Mr. Zimmerman said probably, we have grouped up with other community colleges where it makes sense. IT security is a sensitive spot, nobody wants to share their flaws even though none of us is perfect because there is no such thing as perfect security. The cost of these kinds of engagements are already so large and these firm do this on a volume scale that the pricing you may get through a consortium is not going to be any different than it would be if you do it individually.

Trustee Cusumano said the yearly breakdown is \$170,285 per year for three years, that is a significant amount of money. There is no guarantee in any agreement that is executed with the firm that the college won't be hacked, that they won't make the college whole. Mr. Zimmerman said yes that is true. It is all a matter of what the college's appetite is for risk. You can do nothing and hope you don't get hacked or you can make what he recommends to be a reasonable investment in doing the right things, putting your money where it makes the most sense, and that is why you hire an expert to come in and say these are the investments you should be making. We did make sure the firm we picked has extensive experience doing these kinds of things for higher education, because higher education is different than manufacturing for example. Trustee Cusumano said as he understands it there is not constant monitoring of the network by anyone or any firm, no one is sitting at a monitor during the entire shift, so are there alerts? Mr. Zimmerman said with the firm we recommended, RSI Security, was the only bid that had that, so through the price of the contract they install an appliance on the college's network that 24/7 monitors, looks for alerts, looks for malicious threats. They monitor, they aggregate this information they begin to proactively do vulnerability management so that we get out in front of any potential malicious activity that might exist. That is one of the reasons why they may cost a little bit more because of these services and the low bidders did not provide them. Trustee Cusumano said this is a \$510,000 contract and he thinks it is giving pause to some members of the board. Is there an exit clause if their services are not meeting our expectations? Mr.

Zimmerman said yes, absolutely, we have an exit clause in every contract we ink with any one of our contract vendors. Ms. Argiri clarified that the \$510,000 is over 36 months and is not an annual cost, so it is \$170,000 per year.

Trustee Vitale thanked Mr. Zimmerman for his report in the board packet. As for security breaches at a community college are they mostly about stealing information or derailing the organization? Mr. Zimmerman said it is all about money and for the most part they are looking to exfiltrate or get data out that they can sell. The people who want to disrupt operations for some cause are few and far between, they happen, but most of these attacks are to make money. The newest thing is ransomware. They can infect thousands of files and bring the college or organization completely to its knees in a matter of 15 minutes. The cleanup effort takes weeks and that is assuming you don't pay the ransom, which most places don't. This is what is driving all industries, how do we protect ourselves? Macomb is very fortunate to have the support of the board and the taxpayers for what we have been able to do.

Trustee Cusumano asked if you didn't receive approval or authorization for less what would you do? Mr. Zimmerman said sit down and have a long conversation with you. Here is why. The vetting process that administration went through to make this decision was onerous, it was big. There are hundreds of pages of documentation as to why we made the selection we did, the questions that we asked. There was a purposeful reason why we selected who we did. Most of the time when he reviews RFPs he will interview the three lowest bidders and he is done. Out of the 12 bids we received, we interviewed all but two because we knew those organizations. That is how detailed we had to be. What you see in a proposal for the cost that's there, there are a whole lot of people throwing out costs and hoping they get the work. Then what do you end up with? 20 hours a work per month? Managing the security of Macomb Community College for 20 hours a month cannot be done. But again, it is that appetite for risk, what kind of investment does the college want to make to reduce the likelihood of a catastrophic ransomware attack or malware attack – that is really the question. It is a damage to the reputation of the college and fiscally it can be damaging. His goal is to make sure it doesn't happen and if he didn't think this wasn't going to make a difference he wouldn't be asking for the funding.

Trustee Cusumano said it is his understanding that there are statutory protections for businesses and government entities that if there is a data breach or a harvest of data that there is no recourse for persons to sue the institution or company if there is a warning issued and an offer to provide credit monitoring services or identification protection services to those people who were hacked. The imperative isn't so much for liability, it is to protect our student's data and spare them the anguish of having a detrimental experience to their life experience. Now there is a separate matter about shutting down an institution that's reliant on the internet and access, especially in the Covid-era. Our IT specialist who has proven himself competent over the years, so he is in favor of the proposals.

Mr. Zimmerman continued his presentation on improving support for our faculty, students and staff. There are four separate help desks available during regular business hours. IT and the

Learning Unit have decided to combine the help desks for afterhours basic level support. They looked for a firm that could provide academic support and service desk support to our faculty students and staff on the weekends.

Trustee Cusumano asked if the collective bargaining units have approved this to the extent this outsources work that may be in the job descriptions in the collective bargaining agreements? Dr. Sawyer said no, these are outside services we are purchasing and there aren't any terms in the collective bargaining agreements that require approval by the union. Mr. Zimmerman said we are not eliminating any jobs internally. We are extending support during the periods of time the current staff doesn't work.

Trustee Vitale asked if the bid was for five-years? Mr. Zimmerman said the bid was for five, but it is a three-year contract with the possibility of a two-year extension if we decide to continue the service. The bids are based on a hypothetical call volume and we don't know how many calls we are going to get. We will only be invoiced for the calls that we get, so we set the board authorization to what we thought would be worst case. If after three years this company isn't doing a good job, or our faculty, students and staff aren't using it, we will end the contract.

Trustee Dean said so currently we have four different desks serviced by four different vendors. Mr. Zimmerman said the desks are serviced by internal IT and academic staff. Trustee Dean said so that will continue as is, but it is going to cost for a total of five years, \$378,000 for weekend hours? Mr. Zimmerman said and evenings from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Trustee Dean asked what is the need of this service, do you have any numbers that will support this request? Mr. Zimmerman said the only numbers we had were pre-pandemic and we put the numbers in the board document and the RFP. We don't know the anticipated demand or the amount of calls. That's why the bid awards for a pay as you go service are \$7 a call, so if after one year we only have seven people calling on the weekend we will be nowhere near where that authorization is. Trustee Dean asked if he has an exit or will this continue? Mr. Zimmerman said we can exit the contract whenever we want and the way the contract is being worded it is three years and then we have an option to renew at years 4 and 5. We did that to keep the price down. Trustee Dean said so it is \$7 per call regardless of length? Mr. Zimmerman said yes. Trustee Dean asked what does multi-lingual service mean? Mr. Zimmerman said they offer translation services, they will have someone translate for them dynamically on the fly and we pay so much per minute for that service. We do have people who call in looking for help and this is a service we have never offered, and we think it is a service the students will enjoy. Trustee Dean said we don't have a proven track record that we need this service, is it just an assumption? Mr. Zimmerman said we have a low number of callers today that call late in the evenings and on weekends and they get an answering machine and we call them back on Mondays. The call volume is low because they know they are not going to get an answer. So there was an outcry from students that they really want someone to talk to on the weekends, that is what drove us to put out the RFP.

Trustee Vitale asked if they are going to publicize this to the general student body letting them know we are having additional support? Mr. Zimmerman said yes.

7.0 [Closed Session](#)

MOTION by Cusumano, supported by Viviano to go into closed session pursuant to MCL 15.268 (e) to discuss collective bargaining matters.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Cusumano, Viviano, Dean, Vitale, Lorenzo

NAYS:

ABSENT: DiMaria, Flynn

8.0 [Adjournment](#)

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF MACOMB BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Secretary