

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, February 16, 2022 at 6:00 p.m., in Room K301 of the John Lewis Student Community Center, South Campus, 14500 Twelve Mile Road, Warren, Michigan.

1.0 [CALL TO ORDER](#)

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lorenzo at 6:03 p.m.

2.0 [ROLL CALL](#)

Present:

Katherine Lorenzo, Chairperson
Frank Cusumano, Vice Chairperson
Kristi Dean, Secretary
Roseanne DiMaria, Treasurer
Joan Flynn, Trustee
Shelley Vitale, Trustee

Absent: Vincent Viviano, Trustee (arrived at 7:15 p.m.)

Also present:

James Sawyer, President
Elizabeth Argiri, Vice President, Business and Interim Vice President, Human Resources
Kevin Chandler, Vice President, College Advancement & Community Relations
Don Hutchison, Dean, Engineering & Advanced Technology
Sharon Kowal, Assistant to the President
William Leavens, Chief of College Police
Deb Mende, Executive Director, Office of the President
Kathleen Poindexter, Interim Associate Vice President, Business
Don Ritzenhein, Provost, VP for the Learning Unit
Jeffrey Steele, General Counsel, Office of General Counsel
Jill Thomas-Little, Vice President, Student Services
William Wood, Director, Cultural Affairs and Community Enrichment

3.0 [Approval of Agenda](#)

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

ALL IN FAVOR:

AYES: Cusumano, Flynn, Dean, DiMaria, Vitale, Lorenzo

NAYS:

ABSENT: Viviano

MOTION CARRIED.

4.0 [Audience Participation](#)

None.

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

Trustee Cusumano said the statement in paragraph 2 of agenda item 11.4 Campus Wide Door Security Installation Project - "in light of recent events it is crucial for the college to complete the campus wide door security installation project", he asked what "in light of recent events" means? Has there been a history or credible threats to the security of this college, at this time, to support the statement that it is crucial that the college complete it, other than the HEERF funding being a major component of the funds. Dr. Sawyer said the statement is in reference to the tragic loss of life in Oxford and the heightened tension to school security. This has been a pointed discussion amongst college leadership for many years. Currently we do not have the ability to secure facilities, lock them down, in the case of a tragic event. This has been in our vision for quite some time and the HEERF funding provided an opportunity to start the implementation of security on one campus, but there weren't enough funds to complete all the facilities. We feel it is prudent from a security perspective to install this ability to lockdown doors in all buildings.

Trustee Cusumano stated it's not clear to him the ability of the door security, is it to lock each of the doors in either direction? There is a single bidder on each one of these. For bid package 2 his math worked out to \$13,246 per door, if he is reading this properly, which is 210 openings for \$2,781,761. Using the same math at 118 door openings at \$1.74 million comes out to be \$14,000 per door opening. There isn't a description of what the college is going to get for the kind of expenditure per door opening. Can someone explain? Mr. B. Simonson, Executive Director, Administration, responded that the door openings piece is a little misleading and could have been explained better. It is for door openings, not for each individual door. For example, in this building the east opening has six doors, broken down per door it comes out to be roughly \$2,000 per door. This system gives college police the ability to set up the lockdown procedure piece in many ways. They can set it to lockdown each door opening, each building, an individual door and in different levels. For example, they can remotely lock, unlock, or set up a sequence such as having the doors lock behind them after they enter a space.

Trustee Cusumano said from his understanding the \$1.8 million expenditures will be from the college's capital projects fund and not funded by a federal grant? Mr. Simonson said, correct, because of the timing we were only able to have bid package 1 covered by HEERF funding. South campus in its entirety is covered under bid package 1 and HEERF funding. Center campus, east campus and M-TEC make up bid packages 2 and 3 and would be paid for out of the college's capital fund.

Trustee Cusumano said it is the position of the administration that this security installation will provide a workplace free from recognized hazards for the college staff, faculty, students and visitors. Mr. Simonson said College Police has never had the ability to remotely lock the doors and this will certainly do a great deal to make campus a safer environment.

Trustee Cusumano said at the Sandy Hook tragedy the shooter went to the security enhanced door, shot out the windows, walked through and committed his crimes, is it true that this building itself has glass doors that can be shot out and then stepped through? Mr. Simonson said there is a mullion and door hardware, so a person would have to crawl through that space. Additionally, all the doors are covered by the camera system and depending on how the door is shot up, the door would also alert with a "door ajar" alarm. Trustee Cusumano asked if the glass doors that

are susceptible to being broken out and the security feature avoided are going to be replaced with tactical grade glass or is that more expensive? Mr. Simonson said that would be very expensive and it's not practical to try and reinforce the glass in the door opening in that manner. No glass is bullet proof, it is all bullet resistant so a person can still get through, but it is a huge deterrent and a huge help for follow up and investigation.

Trustee Cusumano said his concern, other than making ourselves feel better about the security of the buildings, is not actually avoiding a catastrophic event like the one that occurred at Oxford High School. Mr. Simonson said this is a huge step forward in providing better security. Chief of Police, Bill Leavens, said this is a step in the right direction and aligns with what people are doing for best practices.

Trustee Cusumano asked if all these enhancements will be compliant with fire marshal rules and regulations? He is concerned about blocking the doors in either direction. Chief Leavens said egress is not affected, this is for entry and we have full access control of that.

Trustee Dean asked if an active shooter was potentially here in K building and students were also here, how would you lock that down? Chief Leavens responded that we have to protect from a mobile active shooter. It doesn't necessarily protect what is happening inside this building already, but it isolates the threat to this building, and they can't escape to an adjacent building. Trustee Dean asked if the tunnels are protected? Chief Leavens said there will be limited access to the tunnels and limited access from the tunnels to each building. No system is perfect, but this is best practice to have controlled accesses. In addition, this gives us the ability to terminate access if we have separation with someone or if there is any kind of workplace violence. We can instantaneously turn off that person's access while there is an investigation going on. There are a lot of advantages to having electronic security.

Trustee Dean asked if there was any difference to badge swipes, do all students have ID's? Chief Leavens said the students don't necessarily have that, but every person's access card is ala carte. Access is granted based on work privileges and access is given only to the appropriate buildings or suites that they are supposed to have. Trustee Dean asked if it would be cheaper to have badge swipe technology for anyone entering a building, including students? Chief Leavens said it might be a feasibility thing and it is pretty expensive. Dr. Sawyer said the infrastructure would still be needed. The Infinias cards are parallel to a swipe ID and are very similar to what you are suggesting. Trustee Dean asked if everyone would have a badge to swipe in? Dr. Sawyer said appropriate staff would have a badge, but we don't want students to be able to access buildings. Chief Leavens said the buildings are open during regular class hours so students can come and go but allows staff or authorized people to have entry outside of those open hours. We also can change those open hours and immediately lock doors if we needed to.

Trustee Dean asked if agenda item 10.3, Skilled Trades and Advanced Technology Center Capital Outlay Bids are for south campus RST? Dr. Sawyer responded correct.

Trustee Dean asked if someone could explain agenda item 11.3A, Video Management Platform and the relationship of Panopto, the library and Canvas, how does that work? Does it work like Microsoft Recorder, if you click on the document it starts recording? Recorder takes screen shots of everything you are clicking on with a little definition of it and at the very end there is a whole list, so if you are visual there are screen shots, if you like to read there is documentation, is it like that or is she totally off base? Ms. Louisa Marine, Interim Director of Learning Resources,

responded that Panopto does not offer that. This is for screen recording, making a video and captioning your video software. In Panopto, after you've created a video you can add questions to it that will pop up and students can leave comments. Trustee Dean asked if it helps the student? Ms. Marine said yes, it is free to all students so if they are required to create a video for a course, they can do it using this product in Canvas on their phone however they need to do it. Trustee Dean asked is it going to the instructor or is it the instructor base going to the student? Ms. Marine said both, it is available to all students, staff and faculty, it will integrate into Canvas, but it also stands alone so you can use it outside of Canvas. Trustee Dean asked how does a user export it, by downloading it? Ms. Marine said you can download it. There are multiple integrations, if you need to do advanced editing, we have Camtasia, it will export it right into that, it will populate a link into a Canvas course, or can be sent in an email or posted in a discussion.

Trustee Dean asked if agenda item 11.3B, additional budget for advertising is that for additional costs or additional advertising? Dr. Kevin Chandler, VP, CACR, said we will get additional advertising in terms of that funding. It will allow us to look at other channels that our perspective and current students in those age ranges that we target use, for example, Snapchat, TikTok, etc. It will allow us to buy additional advertising and channels to reach those students. Trustee Dean asked if the website redesign can enable those? Dr. Chandler said those are two different projects but the website certainly is the gateway for our prospects to learn more about our programs and that is where we direct them in terms of this advertisement. The advertisement is typically in banner ads, click through, videos, Facebook where they can click through. You can't fit a lot of information in those banners, so you have to generate interest generated and then direct them to landing pages that are either on the homepage or specifically designed for them depending on the campaign. Trustee Dean asked if he was good with everything that SMZ has provided so far? Dr. Chandler said they have been fantastic. Their commission has not changed, it is 10 percent and 15 percent for the digital market. They understand us, they realize our budget is not that big to begin with, we are in a very competitive market, competing not only with other community colleges but also the universities. They're certainly in tune with that and know the education market and work very hard for us.

Trustee Dean asked what the college does with the vehicles being replaced? Dr. Sawyer stated that we typically sell them. Ms. Argiri said Purchasing handles the sale of those vehicles. Trustee Dean asked if the vehicles will be repainted and the logos removed? Ms. Argiri believes that is the case, but she can check and let Trustee Dean know.

Trustee Dean said in the Merit contract renewal write-up the mega-bits-per-second in 2015 were 400 but in 2025 they are 2,500, she doesn't know what the difference is in that ten-year span? Mr. Mike Zimmerman, CIO, responded that he does not know why but we are absolutely at the mercy of whatever new gadget the students, faculty, and staff walk onto campus with. A few years ago, we needed to increase the capacity of our Wi-Fi system, all of this continues to drive up the amount of bandwidth we are using. It could have been because Netflix had just come out and everyone was running it. He doesn't really know. But we watch these metrics closely and try to be predictive and stay ahead of any slowdown of the internet across the college. Today's authorization is a bit on the conservative side, and he is being humble because he doesn't really know three years from now what kind of bandwidth students are going to demand. He doesn't have good trend analysis from the past couple years because nobody was here. But we do believe in shortening the contract length, which is normally five years, back to 36 months to get us through the next 18 months, the period when students come back on campus. Then it gives him a year and a half, hoping our three megabytes will tide us over, until he can provide the board

with more accurate trend analysis based upon the consumption data we have three years from now. Trustee Dean asked if there is a way to throttle stuff down? Mr. Zimmerman said we already do. It is a very complicated algorithm, but basically academic classrooms and labs get the first bit of bandwidth, next staff and offices, then comes wi-fi for faculty, staff and students that log-in to the wi-fi system, and what is left over goes to the general wi-fi and that is throttled back at half speed. If somebody, who isn't a student, walks into the library and tries to run Netflix, etc. they are not going to get as much bandwidth capacity as perhaps a faculty member would get sitting in their office. Our goal is to make sure there is enough bandwidth for our students, faculty and staff.

Trustee Dean asked about the SLA (service level agreement) for the CISCO contract, if the system goes down, who pays for that? Mr. Zimmerman said there is a clause in the contract that if they go over the downtime, they begin to pay us money back. They have up to .5 percent downtime, and it has not happened as of yet.

Trustee Vitale said in the write up for agenda item 7.3 under enrollment it states, "the college plans to hold 50 percent of classes on campus in the fall semester", where did the 50 percent in the fall number come from as opposed to higher than that? Dr. Sawyer said we have roughly 60 percent online and 40 percent on ground. We continue to try and ramp up the amount of on ground classes. Our ultimate goal is to let the students' preferences drive those decisions, but right now we feel that we don't have enough classes being offered on ground to adequately make that assessment. If we tried to make that assessment today, it could appear that students are choosing online, but the reality is that they may not have had a choice. Until we get a better sense of what student preferences are, we are going to continue to grow the on ground. He thinks it is going to take a couple years post-pandemic to make that determination, so at this point we use that as a guideline for faculty and associate deans to consider with the emphasis of trying to get classes returned to on ground. Trustee Vitale asked then we will get a better idea how much is going to be permanently offered on line? Dr. Sawyer said typically when we report out the modality, which we haven't done for the last couple years because it has been so heavily influenced by online, but normally through the budget process we show the campuses and breakout the online from that as well as where the volume is. Again, we haven't done that the last couple years because it has been predominantly online.

6.0 [Issues and Updates](#)

Chairperson Lorenzo said this past Monday night we had a special board meeting to hear the public comments on the vet tech program and as the board chair she feels a responsibility to address the proceedings of that evening. The board convened solely for the purpose of courteously listening, not to engage the speakers or carry on a debate, unfortunately many of the comments that were offered were misleading, inaccurate, or blatantly false. Perhaps this could have been written off as misguided, however, what was supposed to be public comments on the vet tech program quickly devolved into an unfounded and vitriolic personal attack on our provost, Dr. Ritzenhein, and our dean, Nara Mirijanian. Tonight, she'd like to clear the air, so to speak, and firstly recognize the level of discomfort many of you present at that meeting must have felt, herself included. Secondly, she'd like to repeat what Dr. Ritzenhein said on Monday, number one, the board and the administration remain focused on offering our students a high-quality vet tech program and enabling all students to continue their education, and two, the vet tech program is fully accredited and we are committed to maintaining that status. Please be assured that the board is, has been and will remain focused on the well being of our college, the quality of all of our programs and the success of all of our students.

6.1 President's Report

Covid Protocols on Campus – Dr. Sawyer said today at 1 p.m. the governor released new Covid guidelines and from his understanding they scaled back the mask mandate. Our internal team will read the new guidelines and revisit our current mandate, which is masks must be worn inside college buildings until March 31. It is possible we may roll the date back sooner.

Enrollment – Dr. Sawyer gave the enrollment update, we continue to be down 9.5 percent from last year, but we budgeted for 9 percent keeping us pretty much in line with the budget.

Futures for Frontliners/MIRereconnect – Dr. Sawyer provided the number of students enrolled in Futures for Frontliners, 1,275 and in MIRereconnect, 1,457. More positive news for the MIRereconnect program is that the governor's budget proposal fully funds it.

State Budget – Governor's Proposal for FY2023 – Dr. Sawyer said that the Governor's budget proposal is favorable for community colleges. She is proposing a 5 percent increase to our base funding compared to last year when it was 1 percent. She is also proposing a 5 percent one-time funding for community colleges and an additional \$58.5 million for Infrastructure, Technology, Equipment and Maintenance. The funds will be distributed to institutions based on enrollment which is advantageous to Macomb since we are the largest community college based on our FTE. Keep in mind that this is the first stage of the budget process, both the House and the Senate need to agree as well. However, it is encouraging that the governor's proposal starts in a much more favorable position for the college than we have had in a number of years.

Federal HEERF III Funding Update – Dr. Sawyer stated that we continue to work through the HEERF funding. The grant will close on May 11. There is one number he wants to share with the trustees as that date approaches, and that is after we make one more distribution of \$9 million to students for emergency grants, we will have given students \$32.2 million over the last two years. That is fantastic, this funding came to us through the federal Covid program, some of which was specifically geared towards students, but we also used some funds intended for the institution and redeployed it to students giving them additional assistance. The board should feel good that you've really gone a long way towards trying to help mitigate the financial pressures on our students during this difficult time and he commends you for that.

Tuition Recommendation – Dr. Sawyer said agenda item 7.3 is for the tuition recommendation. We discussed this at great detail in February and we look forward to getting your support for the increase.

Information Items – Dr. Sawyer said there are a few information items. One is related to the automated systems for the HVAC systems for Siemens. Also, the bids for the skilled trades and advanced technology center. We are very pleased those bids came in under budget. We were concerned about that because of the recent escalation of materials and labor costs, so the fact that this came in under budget at this point is very positive.

Purchases – Dr. Sawyer said there are many purchases tonight. We have had a pretty robust discussion about some of them already and if you have any more questions, we can handle them at the regular meeting.

Administrative Item – Dr. Sawyer thanked Chief Leavens and Bill Simonson for helping clarify the campus wide door security purchase for the board.

Tentative Agreement with MCCCOPA – Dr. Sawyer said we recently reached a tentative agreement with our maintenance and operations unit, MCCCOPA. They agreed to the one-year extension with a 2 percent increase that was authorized by the board to extend to all the bargaining units. Dr. Sawyer thanked the facilities and maintenance staff. They don't get nearly enough credit for the hard work they do day in and day out. It is one of those things that is behind the scenes and he thanked them for all the work and support they do for the college.

RST Demolition Event – Dr. Sawyer stated that we had an exciting event on January 31. We began the demolition of RST, the advanced technology center. He thanked Chairperson Lorenzo and Trustee Flynn for attending that event. This is the start of a project that we are very excited about at the college, it truly is transformational for our students in that area. We had good attendance. We had several legislators who played a role in the \$15 million capital outlay project for us, the highest in the college's history. We had two employers, General Motors and Aramark, participate as well and do a great job with very heartfelt remarks.

Vice President of Human Resources Search – Dr. Sawyer said the search continues for our new vice president of Human Resources. We began with 39 applicants. Last week we interviewed six semi-finalists and narrowed them down to three candidates. We have interviews with them over the next two days and at that point we intend to narrow it down to two candidates. We have two meetings setup for the following week, one with union leaders and one with different staff at the college to give them an opportunity to meet the candidates and give feedback as well. Our objective is to present the final candidate to the board of trustees at the March meeting.

DEI – Kennedy Update – Dr. Sawyer said Kennedy & Co. (the firm working with us on our diversity, equity and inclusion project) continues their great work. They were on campus last week conducting on ground focus groups. This week they are conducting virtual focus groups with up to a hundred students. The student groups are broken down into different categories so those that participate feel very comfortable. The focus groups on campus were with faculty, staff and students. Kennedy & Co. has prepared a preliminary report and shared it with leadership. The findings were interesting, some things we didn't think about, some things caught us by surprise and other things were consistent with what we expected. Their findings will be shared with the board as they finish the focus groups and interviews, they are conducting. We are still targeting to hold the meeting with trustees on March 28. We will have a light dinner at 5:30 p.m. and start the working session at 6 p.m.

Grants – Dr. Sawyer provided an update on a few recent grants.

- Community College Consortium: The Community College Consortium was spun off about six months ago from a group we have been working with for the past few years, Detroit Drives Degrees (D3). D3 is a regional group led by the Detroit Regional Chamber that is focused on trying to meet the governor's goal of 60 percent of Michigan residents having credentials by the year 2030. The Community College Consortium is going to be funded by the Ralph Wilson Foundation and the Ballmer Foundation. They are talking significant support, \$20 million plus. The Community College Consortium is made up of the seven community colleges in southeast Michigan. We have a team of staff who are participating in that project and as we go forward, we will have more information for you. We are just at the planning grant stage, and they are providing \$60,000 to help us with that planning process.

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- The Bosch Foundation has again donated \$10,000 to promote STEAM academies for middle school students. They have also been supporters of our CAAT in the past as well. We appreciate their ongoing support.
- The National Fluid Power Association has awarded the college \$25,000 to incorporate fluid power concepts into and across our EAT curriculum.

MCCA Summer Conference – Dr. Sawyer said in your packet there is information regarding the MCCA Summer Conference. The dates are July 27-29. It will be held at the Grand Traverse Resort. The agenda has not been published yet. Let Ms. Kowal know if you plan to attend.

Vet Tech – Dr. Sawyer sincerely appreciated Chairperson Lorenzo's comments regarding the special board meeting held on Monday, February 14, regarding the vet tech program. He would like to add some of his own comments. He agrees that some of the comments were simply misleading, inaccurate and false. It is true, like virtually all employers in Macomb County, the college is struggling with staffing challenges due to the pandemic, particularly for part-time staff. It has impacted us in vet tech. It has impacted us across the college. While we recognize that has been a challenge, we did not see that as rationale to pause the program for a year and have an adverse impact on forty plus students. We were committed to developing a plan to solve that staff issue, unfortunately at that time, as you heard, many staff and faculty abruptly resigned with no notice. In addition to that, 40,000 electronic vet tech files were deleted from our network as we were trying to develop that plan. It is unclear if these actions were in protest of administration's decision or an attempt to force our hand by making it impossible to proceed. As Dr. Ritzenhein stated on Monday, administration remains focused on offering our students a high-quality vet tech program enabling all students to continue their education. As Chairperson Lorenzo said, administration remains committed on maintaining the vet tech program accreditation. Our plan is to provide the board an update on the vet tech program at the March board meeting and giving you an opportunity to ask any questions about the program as we go forward. There were several comments made at the board meeting about conducting an investigation and from our perspective, administration's recommendation is to focus on the findings and reports from the Higher Learning Commission and from the AVMA, the American Veterinary Medical Association. Those are the bodies we are concerned with. As you heard, people have submitted complaints to those bodies, and they will be conducting their own review and analysis. There will be a site visit associated with the AVMA and to him that is the important information for the board, where do our accrediting bodies see us in terms of how we are prepared to go forward. Again, he emphasized we are prepared to go forward with a high-quality program that meets accreditation standards.

March Board Meeting – Dr. Sawyer said we anticipate the following items to be on the March 16, 2022 board agenda:

- The culvert project at center campus. We have been looking at many different repair opportunities to fix the sinkhole that damaged the culvert. We decided on a new culvert with a three-sided concrete arch and a life span of 50 to 70 years. Should we get the board's support, this work will take place between May 2022 and December 2022. We hope to have the bids before you next month. We are ballparking the work anywhere from \$850,000 to \$950,000.
- 2022 Summer Renovation Projects. We are looking at expenditures of about \$2.5 million, which is typical of what we spend on summer renovation projects. These projects are initiated by administrators all over the college, funneled to Bill Simonson and his group, who look at them and determine what they can get done and move forward.

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- Along with the hiring of the vice president of human resources he does anticipate additional new hires of faculty and staff as well.

Questions:

- Trustee Flynn asked for an update on the Zoo. Dr. Sawyer said he recently had a conversation with the new CEO, Dr. Hayley Murphy and Tony Early, Chair of the Zoo Board, and they are still committed to the project in Macomb County but are putting it on pause. Dr. Murphy wants to get an overall grasp of the entire zoo organization. Whether they continue to be interested in the college property remains to be seen. He will keep the board apprised.

6.2 [Update on the Lorenzo Cultural Center Exhibit – Michigan’s Freshwater Seas: Pioneering Progress by W. Wood](#)

Mr. William Wood gave a brief overview of the new exhibit at the Lorenzo Cultural Center that opens on February 19, 2022, Michigan’s Freshwater Seas: Pioneering Progress. The March 16 board meeting will be held at the Lorenzo Cultural Center if the trustees would like a private tour of the exhibit, please arrive at the Exhibit Hall at 5 p.m. Dr. Sawyer thanked Mr. Wood and the staff for the great work they do on the exhibits.

6.3 [Update on Engineering & Advanced Technology by D. Hutchison](#)

Mr. Don Hutchison, dean of Engineering & Advanced Technology (EAT), presented an overview of the EAT area, the renovations of RST aka T bldg. and what is happening at M-TEC.

Questions:

- Trustee Flynn asked if the math the students are required to take is taught at M-TEC or do they have to go to south or center campus? Mr. Hutchison stated that it depends on the program. On the credit side they may be required to take a math class from the actual program at the college. But there are some programs we have a technical math that is required or that students can take, or it can be a combination of both.

7.0 [Closed Session](#)

It was determined that a closed session was not necessary.

8.0 [Adjournment](#)

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

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF MACOMB BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Secretary