An open information session of the Board of Trustees of the Community College District of the County of Macomb was held Wednesday, June 15, 2022 at 6:00 p.m., in Room 109 of the 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 p.m.

2.0 ROLL CALL
Present:
Katherine Lorenzo, Chairperson
Frank Cusumano, Vice Chairperson/Acting Secretary
Joan Flynn, Trustee
Shelley Vitale, Trustee
Vincent Viviano, Trustee (arrived at 6:18 p.m.)

Absent:
Kristi Dean, Secretary
Roseanne DiMaria, Treasurer

Also present:
James Sawyer, President
Elizabeth Argiri, Executive Vice President, Business
Kevin Chandler, Vice President, College Advancement & Community Relations
Joline Davis, Vice President, Human Resources
Sharon Kowal, Assistant to the President
William Leavens, Chief of College Police
Deb Mende, Executive Director, Office of the President
Don Ritzenhein, Provost, Vice President of Learning Unit
Jeffrey Steele, General Counsel, Office of General Counsel
Jill Thomas-Little, Vice President, Student Services

3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA
MOTION by Flynn, supported by Vitale, to approve the agenda as presented.

ALL IN FAVOR:

AYES: Flynn, Vitale, Cusumano, Viviano, Lorenzo

ABSENT: Dean, DiMaria

NAYS:

MOTION CARRIED.

4.0 AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION
None.
5.0 REVIEW OF AGENDA ITEMS AND MATERIALS

Trustee Cusumano said he realizes everything is in a state of flux but is there any way of measuring the performance with the consultant versus where we were or is that next to impossible? Ms. L. Argiri, Executive Vice President, Business, said it is difficult to compare the performance before and after the investment consultant, considering the investment market we have been in. We are due for an update from the investment consultant and are currently determining which month would be appropriate for Meeder Investments to provide one to the board of trustees.

Trustee Flynn asked how come we are going to Quebec to buy something? Dr. Sawyer responded that the issue with purchases, and he knows her passion for Michigan, is that the purchasing policy the board has approved says we need to find the lowest price that meets the college’s expectations and location is not part of the selection criteria. It is all about price and if the product will meet the college’s standards and expectation. Trustee Flynn said there was a $2,000 difference in bids, and we are going out of country. Dr. Sawyer said yes because that is what the policy dictates. The board may want to reconsider the policy, however, he cautioned them that is a fiduciary responsibility question. What value do you place on being local? Does someone in Macomb County get preferential treatment over somebody in Oakland County? Does someone in Michigan get preference over someone from out of state? From a board perspective, in his humble opinion, it becomes a challenge for trustees to balance that. But that is what would have to happen for us to place any sort of preferential treatment for vendors that are local. Trustee Flynn said we trust you; you know what you are doing, it is just the idea.

Trustee Flynn said the purchase on Agenda Item 11.3A is from Texas. Mr. Mike. Zimmerman, CIO, responded because he is the one bringing these items in question to the board. He said he and his team follow a very methodical process to adhere to board policies and purchasing policies to make sure that when the bids come in, we rank them by price first. Location is not part of our selection criteria. Our next step is reviewing the bids starting with the lowest price. If the lowest price bid does not meet our specifications or requirements, then we move to the second lowest bid. We also have no control over who bids. For the Microsoft contract, for example, there are only twenty or thirty resellers in North America that are licensed to sell contracts on behalf of Microsoft for an enterprise as large as Macomb. We are bound to whatever the bids come in at and in this case the lowest bid happened to be from Texas. Trustee Flynn asked if the vendor has to come to campus, do we pay for their expenses? Mr. Zimmerman said this contract is strictly for the purchase of licenses and doesn’t involve hardware so there would be no need for them to travel to campus.

Trustee Flynn said we do have one purchase that is in Pontiac. Dr. Sawyer said he understands her passion about buying local, but by strictly following board policy that determines our selection of vendors.

Chairperson Lorenzo asked Mr. Zimmerman if they had factored in the student licenses for all the IT security software bids? Mr. Zimmerman said we did not. Chairperson Lorenzo said the initial bids were for just faculty and staff. Mr. Zimmerman said that is correct, because originally, we weren’t planning on students, but over the past five or six months we have had an “explosion” of
compromised student accounts. In addition to some technology changes we are making in July to better control that, the team felt it made better sense to make an investment in training software to help educate our students to make smarter technology decisions as much as the staff. So, we did add it to the bid after the fact. Chairperson Lorenzo said so the initial bids would not have changed if that had been factored in originally? Mr. Zimmerman said they would have all gone up. Chairperson Lorenzo asked if it would have been the same amount? Mr. Zimmerman said going through our rationale we demoed a few of the more expensive products just to be sure we were making the right choice. The student licenses were the same cost as the staff licenses. The base bid was for 2,100 seats (staff licenses) so by calculating the average cost of a license and multiplying that by 35,000 (students) we are talking about a lot of money. We would not have been able to afford licenses for students with some of these products, but with the product we selected we felt the additional $9,000 was an appropriate expense. Chair Lorenzo said it sounds like a great program and she hopes people take advantage of it.

Trustee Vitale said for Agenda 5.2, the membership renewals, besides lobbying what other services does that membership provide? Dr. Sawyer said the biggest use we have of the Michigan Community College Association, in addition to the lobbying, is the Center for Student Success. We do a number of projects through them on a whole host of different issues, typically revolving around student success. They play a leadership role in the state of pulling those things together, such as going after grant money. Erica Orians, who leads the Center for Student Success at MCCA, just secured a $750,000 grant from Kresge. Although we are paying dues, she is very adept at securing funds from other philanthropic sources which in turn benefits the colleges that choose to participate. There are other things they do that we have chosen not to participate in because we do not see the need. They have Michigan Colleges Online, but we have our own robust online program. They have consortium programs for specific areas, we may get involved with that at some point in time. Colleges can send a few students to these consortium programs and MCCA leads that program through one of the institutions. We’ve chosen not to participate in those smaller programs, but they are available to us if we see a need. Then of course, the lobbying, which they do on a regular basis. He has invited Brandy Johnson, the new CEO of MCCA to be at our October board meeting. There will also be an opportunity to meet Ms. Johnson at the MCCA summer conference. He feels very positive about the job she has done so far. She is very engaged and has done a great job connecting us to legislators. It continues to be an important organization for us.

Trustee Vitale asked if the lobbying is a full-time job for them? J. Sawyer said yes, they did have two employees who worked on lobbying, but one left and has not been replaced. Ms. Johnson has decided to hold off on filling that position but that could change at some point in time.

Chair Lorenzo added that the conferences are also part of the MCCA. She asked if the trustees receive the MCCA weekly newsletter? They conferred that they do not. Chair Lorenzo will forward the newsletter to them.
6.0 **ISSUES AND UPDATES**

6.1 **President’s Report**

*Closed Session* – Dr. Sawyer indicated that we need to go into closed session pursuant to MCL 15.268(e) to discuss collective bargaining matters.

*Covid Protocols* – Dr. Sawyer stated that we continue to monitor the Covid situation, but currently have no plans to change our protocols.

*Enrollment Update* – Dr. Sawyer said as of June 13, 2022 summer credit hours are down 12.3 percent and headcount is down 8.1 percent.

*Futures for Frontliners and MI Reconnect* – Dr. Sawyer said to date, 398 Futures for Frontliners students and 709 MI Reconnect students have registered for the Summer 2022 term.

*MCCA and ACCT Renewals* – Dr. Sawyer stated that the annual renewal for memberships in ACCT – Association of Community College Trustees and MCCA – Michigan Community College Association do benefit the college. We also need to appoint a representative and alternate for the MCCA. He recommends continuing the method used last year to appoint the chairperson as the representative and the vice chairperson the alternate. That needs to be reflected in the motion provided Chair Lorenzo and Vice Chair Cusumano are comfortable with that. Neither one had objections.

*Personnel Hires* – Dr. Sawyer remarked that tonight there are five faculty personnel recommendations, two in vet tech, two in nursing and one in physics. It’s great that we are, upon approval of the board, getting the new faculty on board prior to the start of the fall semester.

*Information Items* – Dr. Sawyer said the college’s cold beverage exclusivity agreement is with Pepsi. Also, we did move ahead with the purchase of mediation equipment so it could be installed in classrooms before the start of school.

*Purchases* – Dr. Sawyer said both purchases are for IT. The Microsoft licensing is important because it touches every aspect of our business. The IT security training software will help us to continue to be more robust in our efforts to protect the college against bad players.

*Professional Leave* – Dr. Sawyer said there is a request for the board to approve a professional leave for Professor Chris Gilliard. The MCCFO contract allows faculty the opportunity to request a leave and they are typically approved. It is great for a faculty member to grow their own expertise and the college benefits from their expanded knowledge as well.

*Legislative Update* – Dr. Sawyer said earlier Trustee Vitale asked about lobbying. We do that as well. Dr. Sawyer and Ms. Nicole McKee, Director of Government and Institutional Relations, were in Lansing a couple weeks ago. Ms. McKee is in regular contact with legislators. We went there with the intent of working on the budget, the Michigan New Jobs Training Program, and, in particular, the supplemental funding for the Public Service Institute. We think we are close to securing $10 million to support the major renovation of the Public Service Institute. We have
several legislators who are on board. We met with Senator Stamas, the appropriations chair. This is an instance where our lobbyist, GCSI is of value, because Dr. Sawyer would not have been able to get that meeting with Senator Stamas, but our lobbyist Kirk Profit, was able to get it scheduled for us. We met with the Senator for 30 minutes talking about the college. It was a great meeting. It is hard to know what is going to happen, but we are well positioned to get that funding and it reinforces just how important those lobbyist functions are. GCSI has been a phenomenal partner for us to date.

Dr. Sawyer said there was something else we touched upon while in Lansing. As you know we are in the midst of our last capital project, the major renovation of RS&T. Our next project will be equally as large, M building at south campus. We like to start socializing things like that in advance and will actually submit this as our capital outlay project in October. We are in the process of putting all the program information and needs together. This is going to be another $60 million plus project that will come before the board. He uses that number loosely because construction costs have substantially increased. We were fortunate to get the RS&T project right before things went crazy. When the renovations and additions are done the facility will be roughly the size of the RS&T complex. In this case we will be addressing it solely from the 1980’s, it is outdated and in very poor condition. More information will be forthcoming, but he didn’t want this to be a surprise to the board.

Debt Forgiveness – Dr. Sawyer said the college has some HEERF funds remaining. We have done a good job using those funds to support some of the college’s lost revenue opportunities but most importantly we have done a great job supporting our students with over $32 million going to them. We have about 2,200 students who incurred an outstanding debt around the time the pandemic hit. The Financial Services staff presented the idea to address this with debt forgiveness. The college will offer an opportunity for them to get that debt forgiven by using the remaining HEERF funds. This is important because this outstanding debt prevents those students from reenrolling at Macomb. This action will serve a dual purpose of relieving them of that debt but more importantly opening the door again for them to attend college and enable them to pursue their educational goals. The process to do this is in development and our intent is to get it operating shortly and provide another great opportunity for students to get back on track.

Veteran’s Administration Audit – Dr. Sawyer said our VA Audit was completed on June 7. Hats off to Kara Fields, Director of Veteran Services, Carrie Jeffers, Director of Enrollment Services, Jill Thomas-Little, VP, Student Success and the rest of their team, as always, they did a fantastic job. The Office of Veteran and Military Services does an outstanding job of serving our veteran students as well as their families. The program resonates well with the veterans, we are tied in with veteran organizations around the county. The board should be very proud of the work they do.

Accreditation Visit for Health and Information Technology (HIT) Program – Dr. Sawyer reported on the virtual accreditation visit for HIT. The visit went well. The visiting team spoke highly about what they saw. The staff did a nice job and showed a video of some of the resources. Hat’s off to the team. No major findings. They had some suggestions, as they always do. Similar to the
other health accreditations, the formal accreditation approval doesn’t happen until they have their board meeting. All indications are positive. He thanked and recognized Kristin Dunsmore, faculty coordinator, Jessica Iannucci, faculty member, and associate dean Paula Primeau, under Dean N. Mirijanian’s leadership.

**Interim Audit** – Dr. Sawyer stated the interim audit went well, it concluded last week. Our pre-audit meeting is scheduled for June 28. The actual audit fieldwork begins the week of August 15.

**Vet Tech Comments** – At the May board meeting a member of the public asked some questions about vet tech. Dr. Sawyer said per vice chairperson Cusumano’s recommendation she was asked to submit her questions to the college. Dr. Ritzenhein reached out to her after the meeting to give her a point of contact. During the board meeting she asked a couple of questions, but in turn submitted 21 questions. Dr. Ritzenhein and the team did a very thorough job of answering her questions. We shared that response with the board on June 7. He brings this up because there may be people at the regular meeting tonight. There is a faction of people who are unhappy that we have decided to go forward in a different way. At some point time there isn’t going to be much more to say, the questions are the same and some are based on rumor and innuendo. Before the board tonight is the approval of two permanent vet tech faculty. We continue to remain committed to moving forward and he can’t thank the board enough for standing behind us during this process.

**MCCA Summer Conference** – Dr. Sawyer reminded the board about the MCCA Summer Conference coming up July 27 through the 29th. He is happy for those of you able to attend, the agenda looks good, and he thinks it will be fantastic.

**Macomb Community College Fashionwear** – Dr. Sawyer told the board to expect an email from Land’s End. The Institutional Development Day gift for faculty and staff was Macomb fashionwear. There are a variety of polos, shirts, jackets, etc. to choose from, you pick what you want, and it will be sent to you. If you need any assistance please contact Ms. Kowal.

**July 12 Board Meeting** – Dr. Sawyer said he can’t thank the board enough for your flexibility for having the July board meeting on July 12 at south campus. We will continue to plan to have that meeting. The intent is to have a plan for the provost to recommend to the board and potentially some additional new hires that are currently in the pipeline.

6.2 **Macomb.Edu Website Redesign**

Dr. Sawyer said tonight’s presentation is a tour of the college’s redesigned website. The redesign is one of the major outcomes of the strategic plan and was launched a few weeks ago.

Dr. Chandler, vice president, College Advancement and Community Relations, Audrey Takacs, director of marketing and Scott Menig, web marketing manager, with the web committee present gave an overview of why and how the redesign was necessary and a live tour of the new site and the major changes highlighted.

The trustees were happy, excited and impressed with the redesigned website.
7.0 **CLOSED SESSION**
A closed session was called pursuant to MCL 15.268(c) to discuss collective bargaining matters.

8.0 **ADJOURNMENT**
MOTION by Flynn, supported by Vitale, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF MACOMB BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Secretary