An open information session of the Board of Trustees of the Community College District of the County of Macomb was held Wednesday, September 21, 2022 at 6:00 p.m., in Room 341 of the John Lewis Student Community Center, South Campus, 14500 E. Twelve Mile Road, Warren, 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
Roseanne DiMaria, Treasurer
Joan Flynn, Trustee
Shelley Vitale, Trustee
Vincent Viviano, Trustee (Arrived at 6:45 p.m.)

Absent:
Kristi Dean, Secretary

Also present:
James Sawyer, President
Elizabeth Argiri, Executive Vice President, Business
Michael Balsamo, Dean, Business, Information Technology & Culinary
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
Jeffrey Steele, General Counsel, Office of General Counsel
Jill Thomas-Little, Vice President, Student Services
Michael Zimmerman, CIO

3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

ALL IN FAVOR:

AYES: DiMaria, Flynn, Cusumano, Vitale, Lorenzo

ABSENT: Dean, Viviano

NAYS:

MOTION CARRIED.
4.0 AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION
None.

5.0 REVIEW OF AGENDA ITEMS AND MATERIALS
Trustee Flynn asked Mr. Mike Zimmerman, CIO, why the lowest bidder for the IT Security Managed Services wasn’t selected? Mr. Zimmerman said price wasn’t the primary or only reason why we made the choice we did. First and foremost, it was about getting the kind of services we need for the extreme cost of the proposal, not every firm has the expertise that we require. The bidder, the firm we selected for your approval met the college’s requirements. Trustee Flynn pointed out that they overlooked Livonia, Troy, all the firms from Michigan. Mr. Zimmerman stated that the bidder locations on the write-up is the address of their sales offices. For example, Sentinel, Inc. has a two-person sales office in Livonia that happens to be the salesperson’s house. Sentinel, Inc. is a very large organization in Downers Grove, Illinois. The entire team, if we had hired them, would be located in Downers Grove, Illinois. We believe that it is important to have people that are local and that could be on campus to do work for us. The bidder we selected, Ferrilli, while their sales office happens to be in New Jersey, the two primary members of the team that would be working for us, live in Michigan, Clio and Midland. Trustee Flynn responded okay, are they in here with their addresses? Mr. Zimmerman said no but we have that information in the RFP. Trustee Flynn thanked him.

Trustee Vitale asked which vehicle (agenda item 10.1) the $10,000 was added to and what was the final price for the Hybrid Ford Explorer? Dr. Sawyer answered the additional $10,000 was for the hybrid vehicle, the vehicle we have been unable to obtain due to shortages. Dr. Sawyer elaborated more on this issue because Trustee Cusumano had asked him earlier if we were getting value with the additional expense of the hybrid, particularly with the additional expense of $10,000. He pointed out to Trustee Cusumano that this is the first effort of the college to diversify our fleet of vehicles with a hybrid electric vehicle. We have been working with hybrid electric vehicles since 2005 with our first NSF grant and we started our Center for Advanced Automotive Technology in 2010. We really positioned the college as one of the leading colleges, nationally, in the whole mobility space. To be clear, there are other colleges, but we have always been in a leadership role in conjunction with the NSF and Wayne State. At some point in time, we have to start walking the talk and have an electric vehicle as part of our own fleet. It will be available for use in demonstrations to students and utilized to supplement our educational process. In addition, a traditional hybrid vehicle switches between gas and electric. A community police vehicle spends more time on the road, while our vehicle will spend most of the time on campus where the speed limit is 15MPH and will use more electric power than the typical hybrid electric vehicle. EVP L. Argiri added that the total price was $60,556 for the 2023 model because we couldn’t secure the 2022 model. A gas-powered vehicle would have been a similar price increase.

Trustee Cusumano stated that the rationale to purchase the HEV was it would save on gasoline. His calculation is that it would save $123 per year in gas, it gets two more miles to the gallon in its efficiency. He doesn’t think that is a good basis for spending an additional because there is a premium charge for the hybrid. When he looked into the 2022 Ford Explorer it wasn’t ranked very high in its class. One of the problems was jarring gas electric transitions so he wasn’t really sure we are getting value. He knows Ford is an American company, but this is from Cars.USNews.com, “Explorer Hybrid performance is loud and clunky.” He made the comment to Dr. Sawyer that he shudders to think that officers are going to be
sitting in their vehicle that is jarring and clunky and rated so low. He would never buy one of these himself personally. He understands that it was time sensitive. The board approved this purchase in February, was there any notification that the vehicle ordered from Gorno Ford wasn’t available? Dr. Sawyer answered no, and it wasn’t available when we ordered it, but we expected to get it through the course of the year. This is one of the vehicles that was impacted as a result of the supply chain issues. His suggestion was/is to purchase a V6, but that would not allow for the training and image issue of us being involved in this hybrid motor vehicle, so that is the rationale. We are just going to receive and file it as he understands it.

Chair Lorenzo said this is the first pursuit hybrid vehicle, so maybe because it is a different kind of car it drives better than a regular hybrid? Dr. Sawyer said he can’t speak to that because he is not sure, but if the ride is bad, we are going to take it back and if it doesn’t run properly, we aren’t going to accept it. Trustee Cusumano is glad to hear that because looking at the review it said “Is it a good value? Should I buy a Ford Explorer Hybrid? There is no reason to buy this Ford over other hybrids in the class, not only is it pricier than nearly all of them but virtually every class makes better city and highway miles per gallon ratings.”

Trustee Vitale asked if the police chief was happy with the vehicle, seems they are all transferring over to electric. Dr. Sawyer said you can still buy an internal combustible engine but again for the reasons he cited, and he will accept responsibility for that decision, because the question came up, and he was the one that pushed for this direction.

Trustee Cusumano asked if there are issues with this vehicle, we are going to press for value, and return the vehicle. Dr. Sawyer said our expectation is that we are buying a good vehicle so if there is something wrong with it, we will work with the dealership until we are satisfied we have a good vehicle.

Trustee Vitale (Agenda Item 10.2 Statement of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access) asked if the statement is going to be shared within the college? Dr. Sawyer said yes and with the approval of the board it is a powerful statement as we share with the college community. Trustee Vitale asked if it will only be on our website, or will it be shared more publicly? Dr. Sawyer said it is hard to say, it will be on the website, and it will be used in a variety of other ways too as we go through our work. At this point he doesn’t have any specific places, but it will be our guiding aspirational statement going forward.

Trustee Vitale (Local Strategic Value – Best Practices Agenda Item 11.4) said the report is amazing and she’s impressed on how it was put together. But she guesses we are a little lean on Category C: Community Services (iv) The community college operates public facilities to promote leisure or wellness activities for community members, including gymnasiums, athletic fields, tennis courts, fitness centers, hiking or biking trails or nature areas. Our Examples of Adherence: Macomb has athletic fields, tennis courts and a nature center at each campus. The center campus nature center offers hiking trails. She thought that was a little lean for the college and maybe we could have that on our agenda to have a little bit more available to the community. She knows that Macomb isn’t thought of the place where you land for those kinds of fun activities but we basically rely on some of the senior centers for stuff. Dr. Sawyer noted her concern.
6.0 **ISSUES AND UPDATES**

6.1 **President’s Report**

*Enrollment Update* – Dr. Sawyer stated that this week enrollment by credit hour is down 5.8 percent which is a good improvement over last month when enrollment was down 9 percent.

- Future for Frontliners – 723 students registered to date for the Fall 2022 term. That number will continue to decline as students complete.
- MI Reconnect – 1,470 students have registered for the Fall 2022 term
  - Received additional allocation for MI Reconnect students, called “wrap around funding”
    - 567 students awarded $82,983 for tuition and course fees
    - 788 students received $137,178 for books, supplies, childcare and transportation

*Personnel* – Dr. Sawyer said there are two hiring recommendations, a nursing faculty and an academic advisor. Also based on his evaluation last month his contract is before the board for approval of an extension through June of 2025.

*Purchases* – Dr. Sawyer said there are three purchases:

11.3A Replacement of a 20-year-old tractor - a critical piece of equipment needed to maintain center campus in a variety of ways including being the only fork-lift at center campus

11.3B Electronic Budget Software - which will be addressed in more detail by M. Zimmerman during his presentation. This software is critical as we look to improve the efficiency with what we use to prepare the budget across the college

11.3C IT Security Managed Services - M. Zimmerman has already shared the rationale behind the selection of Ferrilli for this service.

11.4 Local Strategic Value – annual request for approval of this resolution in accordance with PA265 in order to receive our performance element portion of our state allocation.

*IDEA Update (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access)* – Dr. Sawyer said it is exciting to have the IDEA statement before you tonight. We have spent a great deal of time crafting it and appreciate the trustees’ involvement with that. We are comfortable with the statement – it’s been approved by the executive leadership team and the IDEA Council so with your approval we will share it with the college. We had additional sessions focusing on Strategy 6 and developing the objectives. We have identified four and have another session on Tuesday (9/27/2022) to start working on the action plans. We are making great progress and will keep you informed. He expressed his appreciation to the people involved in this, we have a nice cross-functional group working together to drive this initiative forward.

*Administrative Items* – Dr. Sawyer said we discussed the electric hybrid vehicle and why we chose to stay with that choice and ask the board to receive and file the additional $10,000.

*Dental Accreditation* – Dr. Sawyer was excited to tell the board we have received formal notification of our dental accreditation. We launched the dental hygiene program on September 19 with 36 students and we’ll keep you updated on their progress.

*Detroit Drives Degrees Community College Consortium (D3C3) Grant* – Dr. Sawyer said this grant has been an ongoing effort for about a year. Many people have been working on it with Ms. Gerri Pianko, director
of budgets and grants has been leading the effort from the grant management perspective. The funders have told us to proceed with a final grant proposal for $4.7 million. It is a three-year grant and very significant for us. The three broad areas that will be addressed are success coaches for student services area, our K12 relationships and mobility.

Veteran Friendly School – Dr. Sawyer stated that this the 7th consecutive year the college has been awarded and identified by the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency as a gold level school. A very nice recognition for the college and good for the veterans we serve. He will have details next month, but today we hosted a veterans event called “Stand Down” at the Sports & Expo Center. Typically, we have several hundred veterans take advantage of the services offered. We try to do everything we can to support our veterans, their families and their educational pursuits. The fact that we continue to receive this award reflects the good work we are doing in that area. Congratulations to Kara Fields, director of veteran services, Carrie Jeffers, registrar and their team.

70th Anniversary Book – On August 31, Dr. Sawyer said a large stakeholder meeting was held, primarily with our retirees and a few other people to brainstorm ideas for our 70th Anniversary Book. He thanked Trustees Lorenzo, Dean and Vitale for participating and offering their perspectives. Many stories were shared making it hard to decide which ones will be in the book. There was a short presentation by HOUR, the company approved by the board for the writing and publishing of the book.

Reinstituting Celebrations – Dr. Sawyer said last week we held two 20-year service celebrations for the staff that have been at the college for 20 years. We celebrated the class of 2020 and 2021. It was nice to reinstitute the recognition events that we stopped doing two years ago because of Covid. Macomb is all about the people and what makes this such a special place, so it is nice to be able to recognize our long serving employees.

Update on Macksoud Grievance – Dr. Sawyer indicated that the arbitrator in the Macksoud Case upheld the discharge decision and denied Mr. Macksoud’s grievance. The arbitrator found the college sustained its burden of proof on all counts. From our perspective that matter is now closed.

Date of December Board Meetings – Dr. Sawyer stated the December board meeting is currently scheduled for December 22. We had moved the December meeting from the 21st to the 22nd at the request of Trustee Cusumano and regretfully didn’t look at the calendar at the time to realize that it is very late in the month, the college closes on the 23rd. He’d like to propose an idea with the board and that is to move the meeting to December 14th the Wednesday before. He is a little worried about getting a quorum on the 22nd and it is an important meeting because the revised budget needs to be approved. S. Kowal took the liberty of checking on the Macomb and Shelby Twp. meetings and didn’t see any conflicts. We don’t know if there any sub-meetings on that day. Trustee Cusumano didn’t see any conflict and agreed to moving the meeting. The rest of the board was supportive so the change of date for the December Board of Trustees meetings will be on the October agenda for approval.

October’s Agenda –

- Brandy Johnson, the new president of MCCA (she was selected about 6 months ago to replace Mike Hansen) has made a commitment to visit every community college in the next year. She’s doing a pretty good job which is no easy task because there are 31 of them. She will be visiting Macomb in October to introduce herself to the board and share an update on the MCCA’s Strategic Plan.
• The audit is proceeding well and will be presented to the board in October. We discussed last month about extending Rehman’s contract for one year with a five percent increase and will do a formal RFP the following year.

• For the Capital Outlay process, we need the board to approve a capital outlay resolution for the Skilled Trades and Advanced Technology Center (RST). This is a normal process where the college deeds the footprint of RST to the State. This is a required part of the process in order for the bonds to be issued.

PTO – Knee Surgery – Dr. Sawyer is having knee surgery October 5. His plans are to attend the October board meeting but if he’s unable to the board will be aware.

Republican Political Rally Rental Event at SEC October 1, 2022 – Dr. Sawyer shared that there has been some angst about the Republican Political Rally that is being held at the college on October 1. An organization rented the Sports & Expo Center to hold this event. He has heard directly from a trustee, a legislator and members of the community that expressed some concern because one of the speakers at the event is going to be former president Trump. He wants to be clear – the college did not invite this group or any of the presenters. This is a facility rental, and the college does not manage the agenda for those events – the renter manages the agenda and controls who the speakers are. The college is committed to not being discriminatory when it comes to renting an event. We make it available to any legal group. As a public institution we are required to do that. Trustee Flynn asked if they will be using college police to protect them? Dr. Sawyer said yes, and that we are going to charge the renter accordingly. The company that rented the facility is charged for any additional security. Trustee Flynn said what if there is a riot? Dr. Sawyer said we want to provide a safe environment and Chief Leavens has been meeting with the local officials and has already met with Commissioner Dwyer. Chief Leavens assured Trustee Flynn that he has been working with all the local partners and stakeholders. Dr. Sawyer confirmed that the company pays for the rental and the additional security and have already paid the bill. Dr. Sawyer said the college has a long history of doing this, we are a desirable site for people to present to the voters of Macomb County. We are not in a position to choose one side or the other, we don’t have a political position. We don’t support any party. We don’t support any candidate. That is one of the principles of the college. We certainly support their right to express themselves freely and let the audience choose what they want to accept or not accept. It is not our role to do that. He wants to make it clear this is a rental. We did not invite this organization or any of the speakers here and we are merely renting the facility to them. Trustee Flynn asked if the college had to support the event? Dr. Sawyer said the college cannot discriminate against who we allow to come to campus. Trustee Flynn said she does not support him. Dr. Sawyer said that is certainly your prerogative. By the college renting them the facility does not indicate that you do support him and by no means does it say that you or any of the other trustees or anyone at the college supports them. Trustee Flynn said people ask her why he’s coming to the college. Dr. Sawyer said the right answer to tell them is someone rented the facility and they control the agenda and they invited him, not us. Trustee Cusumano asked what the name of the group is? Dr. Sawyer answered Saving America. Trustee Vitale said the person that wrote the letter to us brought up a good point that is if it isn’t a criminal but someone like David Duke, who doesn’t have anyone’s best interest, is there anything we can do to prevent that from happening here? General Counsel Steele said it would depend on the circumstances, but if there was a security risk that we don’t think we can handle we could decline an event but it’s risky. We are a state entity and cannot discriminate based on the content of someone’s speech. We’ve had rallies for Bernie Sanders and political parties of different sorts so we’ve had both sides and for us to say we are not going to invite someone from a particular point of
view because of their point of view that would be a tough sell. He would have to look at the facts of the case. But if there were a security risk, external circumstances that make us fear that we couldn’t hold a safe event there may be a basis to decline.

6.2  Business and Information Technology
Dr. Michael Balsamo, dean, presented on the Business and Information Technology and Culinary areas. Trustee Flynn asked if the MakerSpace Dr. Balsamo talked about at center campus will be offered at south campus? Dr. Balsamo responded that we want to see if it takes hold. The business program is cross campus, we have business classes at south and most of the computer classes that utilize the MakerSpace are at center campus. The two faculty that pitched the idea are also located at center campus. It is not uncommon for business and IT students to take classes at both campuses. If the MakerSpace is successful, he would love to have it at both campuses. We were just starting to get our feet under us when the pandemic hit. We are still trying to see if it has longevity.

6.3  Information Technology Security Update
Mr. Michael Zimmerman, CIO presented the update on Information Technology Security.

Questions:

Trustee Cusumano asked if the college has used Sentinel in the past? Mr. Zimmerman said yes, we have contracts with Sentinel today, they are the managed services provider for our telephony system. Trustee Cusumano asked if Sentinel has done this type of work for us before? Mr. Zimmerman said no.

Trustee Cusumano said we have used Ferrilli in the past. Mr. Zimmerman agreed and said Ferrilli has several of our managed services. Over the years you’ll see a lot of familiar names because there aren’t many companies that work for higher ed, because it doesn’t pay as much. You will find across community colleges that we share many of the service providers.

Trustee Cusumano congratulated the presenters for the professionalism and stated it is really good for the organization to have articulate presentations along these lines. While watching the presentations he was thinking we should videotape them and share them online on our website. He was very impressed.

Trustee Cusumano asked questions submitted by Trustee Dean:

11.3B Electronic Budget Software - Does this software perform all the current functionalities that all the cost centers need? What about customization? Ms. Gerri Pianko, director of budgets and grants, responded that the software does have a lot of functionality. We had eight vendors that submitted proposals, we interviewed four, ranging from $90,000 for our lowest bid to $600,000 for the highest bid. The two finalists were Ellucian and Questica. When we started looking at the demos and the products and the functionality, we realized the Questica software, the software we are recommending, which costs $258,800 provided much more functionality than the Ellucian product that was originally quoted at around $411,000. We would have had to add modules to Ellucian which brought their bid to the $600,000 level. This software will allow us to automate many manual processes and from a user perspective it looks very easy to use. The screens look a lot like Colleague so it will have a familiarity to the user.
11.3C IT Security Managed Services – Will the vendor be granted access to all our systems, i.e., student grades? Mr. Zimmerman responded that this firm would have administrative access to many of our systems. There is a non-disclosure agreement that is signed to ensure that each employee on that bench understands the importance of maintaining confidentiality when they are in our systems, but in this particular case, they have no business being inside the student side of Colleague and would not have access.

Trustee Cusumano asked if there is an emergency protocol if we should be attacked by ransomware and does the organization drill on it? Mr. Zimmerman said the plan is to use tabletop exercises with our vCISO. We do have an incident response plan in place that we have not had to use yet.

7.0 CLOSED SESSION
There was no need to hold a closed session.

8.0 ADJOURNMENT
MOTION by Viviano, supported by DiMaria, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF MACOMB BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Secretary