

MINUTES  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING  
OF McHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE

A Special Board meeting of the Board of Trustees of McHenry County College was held on Tuesday, September 25, 2018 in the Board Room, Room A217, in Building A on the campus. Chair Liddell called the meeting to order at 7:44 a.m. When Ms. Walsh called the roll, the following were present:

Mr. Allen  
Ms. Liddell  
Mr. Parrish  
Mr. Smith  
Ms. Walsh

Ms. Evertsen and Ms. Tirio were absent.

Also present were the members of the Higher Learning Commission Peer Review team: Dr. Sheri Barrett, Ms. Chandra Arthur-Dull, Dr. Linda Wellborn, and Dr. John Zimmerman.

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

DISCUSSION WITH HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION PEER REVIEWERS

Dr. Barrett began discussion by stating that the Higher Learning Commission requires all colleges and universities to have a comprehensive site visit in the eighth to tenth year of the accreditation cycle, depending on the pathway chosen, as part of continuous quality improvement. She noted that the criteria for community colleges are the same as for four-year universities. She stated that the team meets with the Board to discuss the Board's role at the College, what the Board sees as the future of the College, and current challenges. All members of the Peer Review team were introduced, and members of the Board of Trustees introduced themselves and spoke about their backgrounds.

The team's first question to the Board was "What do you consider to be the role of the Board in the governance of the College?"

General responses were given, which included that the Board's role is a fiduciary role, making sure the Board are good stewards of the College's money, the number-one job of the Board is hiring and

overseeing the president and the president's goals, acting without conflict of interest of all stakeholders: the taxpaying community, student body, senior administration, faculty, and staff, setting policy, representing the College everywhere they walk in the community, and modeling the way as lifelong learners.

Dr. Barrett then asked "What does the Board sees as challenges?"

Responses included that financial challenges loom heavily; the State of Illinois is pushing unfunded pension liabilities into community colleges which could be catastrophic to many. It was noted that McHenry County College has been fiscally conservative and will likely be one of those that remain standing. It was also noted that the Board has been able to keep a flat levy the past five years, which is a value proposition to the community and can also lead to private fundraising success. Another challenge is that our population is not growing. It was noted that the average age of students is 19 or 20, which brings a challenge to attract non-traditional students, offering more certificate and occupational programs. It was also noted that McHenry County College is known as a transfer school and is now moving in the direction of economic development and job creation, with great collaborative partnerships with industry. It was noted that enrollment is growing, which shows that McHenry County College is meeting the community's needs.

Further questions were asked regarding how the Board ensures that there are policies and processes in place for conflict of interest; answers from Trustees included keeping lines of communication open, the fact that all Trustees are required to take ongoing training, and each must submit a yearly Statement of Economic Interest form to the County Clerk. It was pointed out that Board meetings are streamed live, and that all Trustee expenses are posted on the website.

The last question asked by the Peer Review team was, "What is the message you want us to take away from this experience? Why do you serve on the Board?"

Replies included that a Trustee can help students at the same time they are watching out to make sure that tax dollars are spent wisely. It was also noted that the community college plays a vital role in

economic development and lifelong learning. Also noted was the fact that the community college provides opportunity and hope to a very diverse population, and the belief that the College is an economic engine and can lead to economic development in different directions. It was also noted that that the community college has expanded students' horizons, interacting with others and learning the local culture. It was also noted that education is a game changer that can decrease poverty, and move to better collaboration and decision making. Discussion followed on funding for the science center, and how the campus culture has changed.

Discussion followed on the accreditation process; Dr. Barrett stated that the team will complete its report, and send it to the College for an opportunity to correct errors of fact. After that is completed, it moves forward to the Institutional Actions Committee, who makes the final determination. The report will then go the Higher Learning Commission Board for a full vote, after which the College is notified of continued accreditation. Dr. Barrett added that reaffirmation will come as a ten-year time period, and there will be an opportunity to do a quality initiative part way through the cycle. She stated that the College would know before the end of the year.

#### CLOSED SESSION

No closed session was held.

#### SUMMARY COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Trustees expressed their thanks to the Peer Review team for taking time to meet with the Board.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 a.m.

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Patricia Kriegermeier, Recording Secretary

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Molly H. Walsh, Board Secretary