



**Minutes of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Thursday, December 7, 2017
Fitzpatrick Room, Murdock Hall 208**

The following Trustees were present:

Susan Gold, Chair; JD Chesloff, Vice Chair; John Barrett III; Lisa Chamberlain; Buffy Lord; Denise Marshall; Rob Reilly; Kathleen Therrien; Stephanie Collins, Student Trustee

The following Trustee was absent:

Mohan Boodram

Others present:

James F. Birge, President; Denise Richardello, Executive Vice President; Larry Behan, Vice President of Administration & Finance; Cindy Brown, Vice President of Academic Affairs; Barbara Chaput, Director of Human Resources; Dan Colonna, Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police; Cathy Holbrook, Vice President of Student Affairs; Monica Joslin, Dean of Academic Affairs; Theresa O'Bryant, Associate Dean of Students; Brianne O'Rourke, student; Molly Fannon Williams, Interim Vice President of Institutional Advancement

Faculty members: Graziana Ramsden, Sumi Colligan, Jennifer Zoltanski, Michelle Either, Kelli Newby, and Ely Janis

Ginger Menard, clerk

Chair Gold called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: October 19, 2017 Board of Trustees meeting

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the October 19, 2017, meeting of the Board and all actions contained therein.

Trustee Marshall abstained as she was not present at the October 19 meeting.

Report on the Minutes of the October 19, 2017 Enrollment Management Committee Meeting

Trustee Lord reported on behalf of the committee as the committee chair, Trustee Boodram, was not in attendance.

Complying with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30 and 15A, Section 9, and with a quorum present, the Board of Trustees of Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts met at 5:30 p.m. at Murdock Hall on December 7, 2017 with Board Chair Gold presiding.

The committee received an update on Admissions from Director of Admission Gina Puc and discussed trends among prospective students. Students are visiting colleges later in the Admissions cycle and are looking for more personalized visits or choosing to show up without an appointment in order to have an un-curated tour of campus. Key strategies for new student enrollment were discussed.

The Commonwealth Commitment has been expanded to include 40 majors for 2017-2018, a program that includes a tuition freeze and tuition rebate. MCLA also has a number of other articulation agreements with community colleges, particularly in NY.

The committee also heard about the expansion of digital marketing efforts which include targeted demographic ads developed in collaboration with Admissions and Marketing. Marketing is also working on videos for five academic programs to roll-out in the New Year. Other departments will follow.

The committee received an update from Director of Financial Aid, Elizabeth Petri, on student financial need noting that 46% of registered undergraduate students are Pell eligible this year, a slight increase over last year.

Dean Monica Joslin reported to committee on current enrollment and retention numbers and discussed strategies that are being implemented to increase retention.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the October 19, 2017 meeting of the Enrollment Management Committee and all actions contained therein.

Report on the Minutes of the October 19, 2017 Executive Committee Meeting

Chair Gold reported on behalf of the committee.

President Birge shared details with the committee on the new submission process set by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance to distribute funds for major capital projects. The Commonwealth will be awarding up to \$140M to cover the DCAMM portion of the total project costs for the 29 state and community colleges and UMASS campuses. A priority is being placed on renovating existing buildings rather than building new facilities.

Mark Hopkins Hall, a former elementary school built in the 1930's that has never been fully renovated, is the top priority for the campus. Hopkins Hall also houses two of the largest majors, English/Communications and Education. Admissions has heard from prospective students that the condition of this building is a detriment to recruiting students in those majors. The theater in Venable Hall is also in need of renovations and donor funding options will be pursued for that project.

The committee received an update on trustee nominations. There is currently one open slot and four trustees pending reappointment. Trustee Chesloff has spoken with Secretary Peyser about the need for consistency on the MCLA Board as well as diversity and hopes to have a follow-up conversation in the near future. The Department of Higher Education has hired a new Director of Trustee Relations, Matt Noyes. Chair Gold will be meeting with him on October 24 and will also share her concerns about the number of reappointments outstanding as well as the open slot.

As an amendment to the minutes, Trustee Lord noted that the College has some, but not full, control over appointees to the Alumni Board as the majority are voted on by fellow alums.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the October 19, 2017 meeting of the Executive Committee and all actions contained therein.

Report on the Minutes of the November 7, 2017 Academic Affairs Committee Meeting

Trustee Chamberlain reported on behalf of the committee.

Professor Mariana Bolívar Rubín met with the committee and shared her story of coming to MCLA and how she hopes to give back to her students and support them in the way she was supported while finishing her college education. The committee and Professor Rubín also discussed ways that MCLA could provide support to the immigrant population in Berkshire County.

The committee then reviewed sabbatical applications for the coming academic year and reviewed the requirements and process to apply. They also discussed faculty coverage for faculty who are on sabbatical.

Vice President Brown provide an update on faculty searches and Dean Joslin shared that potential students have been inquiring about both new majors – Community Health Education and Health Sciences. Interest is also being expressed in the new Electrical Engineering concentration.

Trustee Therrien offered that certificate programs can be a draw for non-traditional learners who might then choose to matriculate.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the November 7, 2017 meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee and all actions contained therein.

Report on the Minutes of the November 9, 2017 Student Affairs Committee Meeting

Trustee Lord reported on behalf of the committee.

SGA President, Samantha Giffen, shared SGA's goals for the upcoming year which include becoming a more inclusive and diverse organization as well as more being accessible and identifiable to students. Giffen also provided an update on the revisions to SGA's bylaws as well as future plans for the annual Sam Gomez race.

Celia Norcross and Michael Obasohan shared information on conferences that students recently attended and the learning opportunities they provided. Obasohan shared a letter written by student Kircys Canela about the impact of her attendance at the National Student Leadership Diversity Convention.

Vice President Cathy Holbrook and Associate Dean Theresa O'Bryant provided an update on new campus sexual assault legislation. Some requirements outlined in the law are in the current College policy but there are additional items that will need to be added pending final passage of this bill. The committee discussed the potential implications of this law and the new parameters it will introduce such as the addition of a designated confidential resource advisor. The committee also received information on the MA Transgender Anti-Discrimination Referendum which will be on the ballot in 2018. VP Holbrook noted that regardless of the outcome the College will not change its policies related to transgender rights.

The final agenda item was the committee's discussion of the campus center renovations as well as meal plan options for students that will meet the needs of the largest number of people.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the November 9, 2017 meeting of the Student Affairs Committee and all actions contained therein.

Report on the Minutes of the November 15, 2017 Fiscal Affairs Committee Meeting

Trustee Marshall reported on behalf of the committee.

Director of Fiscal Affairs, Laura Brown, reviewed the 1st Quarter Report and noted that the revenue and expense lines showing the greatest variance are mostly due to timing issues. Of note is the increase in collected revenue which is due to the new payment policy established by the Bursar's Office.

Vice President Behan shared that the 75K funding for Gallery 51 has been included in the Senate's override budget. It is also anticipated that funding for the State University Internship Program will be restored.

Administration & Finance continues to work on transferring to new budget software. Director of Student Accounts, Bonnie Howland, shared that her office continues to work with students on payment options for those who have outstanding balances.

The committee then received an overview of the DCAMM submission process that has been established to distribute funds for major capital projects. The College has submitted a proposal for the renovation of Mark Hopkins Hall. President Birge and Vice President Behan will attend a peer review session on November 27 at which representatives from DCAMM and the Executive Office of Education and peers from other institutions of Higher Education will provide input on the proposal. The final submission is due on December 22.

For the final submission documentation outlining the approval of the Board for this project will need to be included. A summary of the project will be provided and a motion will be included at the December 7 meeting regarding approval of the Mark Hopkins Hall renovation.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the November 15, 2017 meeting of the Fiscal Affairs Committee and all actions contained therein.

Chairperson's Report

Chair Gold noted that the statewide trustee conference has been postponed and will be held on Thursday, March 1 in Westborough. She extended her thanks to everyone who attended the 7th annual Michael S. and Kitty Dukakis Public Policy Lecture with Jeffrey Toobin and added her gratitude to John DeRosa and the Ruth Proud Charitable Trust for their ongoing support of this lecture series.

Chair Gold reported that there is still no news on Trustee appointments and reappointments and she will keep the Board updated as news is received.

Chair Gold shared that Student Trustee, Stephanie Collins, will be stepping down from this role at the end of this semester. Due to recent changes with her spring schedule she is not able to meet both the requirements of her major and the student trustee position. Chair Gold added that this was not an easy choice for Stephanie but the Board understands and supports her in this decision. Stephanie will be notifying the Student Government Association (SGA) of this decision at their meeting on December 11 and SGA will make arrangements for a special election for the spring. She thanked Stephanie for her good work. The Board has enjoyed working with her this semester and she will be missed.

Chair Gold also extended thanks on behalf of the Board to Vice President Cindy Brown as she will be leaving MCLA at the end of the semester.

President's Report

President Birge noted that there is one action item for this evening which is to approve the College's submission to DCAMM for the renovation of Mark Hopkins Hall. As noted earlier during the meeting, it was built in the 1930's as an elementary school and has never been undergone any major renovations. Currently housed in Hopkins Hall are the English and Education departments, two of the largest majors, as well as the Department of Graduate and Continuing Education and the television studio. The proposal received positive feedback from the peer review as well as some suggestions to strengthen the proposal which will be incorporated into the final submission that is due on December 22.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To submit a request for the renovation of Mark Hopkins Hall in the amount of approximately \$16,000,000 to the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) for consideration for DCAMM's FY 19 Higher Education Capital Project Funding.

Trustee Barrett abstained from the vote to avoid conflict with his role as State Representative for the First Berkshire District.

President Birge shared the full page insert from the *Berkshire Eagle* and recognized the good work of Marketing and Communications.

With the upcoming retirement of Executive Vice President Denise Richardello that position will be restructured and new position of Assistant to the President for Community Relations will be established and will incorporate some elements from Denise's position. The job description is still being created and the hope is hire someone this semester.

President Birge presented the Strategic Plan at the College's third touchpoint with the Department of Higher Education (DHE). There was a request for more data points and additional information on how the plan aligns with the DHE "big 3" priorities. President Birge then met with Secretary Peyser and Commissioner Santiago on November 27 and will be submitting the final plan to the Commissioner before the holiday break.

President Birge provided an update on the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) search. Two candidates have visited campus and two more will be on campus next week.

President Birge recognized Vice President Brown for her service to MCLA as she will be leaving the College in June. He offered his gratitude for her good work over the years and shared an overview of the search process with the trustees.

President Birge then introduced Professor Graziana Ramsden, President of the MSCA Executive Committee at MCLA. Dr. Ramsden had asked to address the Board on behalf of the union because of the protracted contract negotiations.

Dr. Ramsden shared that the faculty has been working since July 1 without a contract and the faculty is currently on "work to rule" status. She noted that this is an extremely busy time for faculty and the lack of a contract is impeding work and also hinders faculty searches. She shared that the faculty has remained committed to student success and retention which she noted is closely linked with faculty success and retention. Dr. Ramsden thanked President Birge and the Council of Presidents for their support and asked that the Trustees utilize any connections they might have to aid in contract negotiations.

President Birge recognized Trustee Barrett on his recent election as State Representative. Trustee Barrett shared his thoughts on the underfunding of higher education. He encouraged his fellow Trustees to be in touch with their local legislators as well on this topic.

Trustee Marshall followed up on the issue of funding and shared that she had recently spent time at the Advancement office which provided her with a better understanding of the Foundation and Alumni Office and the many ways in which they support the College. She encouraged her fellow Trustees to meet with them as well.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m.