



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Thursday, December 18, 2014
Murdock Hall Room 218**

The following Trustees were present:

Tyler Fairbank, Chair
Mohan Boodram
Lisa Chamberlain
JD Chesloff
William Dudley
Shirley Edgerton
Susan Gold
Buffy Lord
Denise Marshall
Alyson Stolz, Student Trustee

Trustees not present:

Jim Clemmer, Vice Chair

Others present:

Cynthia Brown, Interim President
Marianne Drake, Chief Advancement Officer
Monica Joslin, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs
Theresa O'Bryant, Interim Vice President of Student Affairs
Denise Richardello, Executive Vice President
James Stakenas, Vice President of Administration & Finance
Bernadette Alden, Director of Marketing and Communications
Ginger Menard, Clerk

Joseph Charon, Director of Public Safety
Curt King, Chief Information Officer
Roberta McCulloch-Dews, Assistant to the President
Brandon Pender, Web and Communications Manager
Brendan Peltier, Student Government Association President
Ed Damon, reporter

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 5:31 p.m. in the Room 218 of Murdock Hall on December 18, 2014 with Board Chair Fairbank presiding.

Chair Fairbank opened the meeting 5:31 p.m. He extended his thanks to Interim President Brown and welcomed her to her first meeting as Interim President.

Approval of the Minutes of the October 23, 2014, Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the October 23, 2014, meeting of the Board and all actions contained therein.

Report of the November 13, 2014, Fiscal Affairs Committee Meeting

Trustee Marshall presented the report on behalf of the committee. She noted that the FY2015 First Quarter report is on target regarding revenue and expenses.

The committee received a report from Jay Pearlman on the FY2013 Return on Physical Assets – ROPASM as prepared by Sightlines, a company that has been hired to evaluate all 29 of the state public campuses. The report detailed issues regarding maintenance of the physical campus, the need for capital investment, and noted the effectiveness of the College's current operations. The College will participate in the next step in this project, ROPA+ which includes three phases – discovery, prediction, and performance.

Jena Ide from the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) provided detail on the Co Gen project which will provide a combined heat and power upgrade for the campus. The Co Gen boiler will burn natural gas, and generate electricity and heat in the form of steam for the campus resulting in energy savings, a reduction in pollution, and increased efficiency. The total contract amount for this project will be just over \$4.6 million and includes additional energy conservation measures within selected buildings. The College's commitment is for \$2.1 million at an interest rate of 3%. The balance of the project is being paid for via bonds available from DCAMM, incentives and rebates from National Grid, as well as a grant from LEAD by Example. The new boiler with the Steam Turbine Co Generation should be fully operational by November 2015.

The Committee then reviewed the contract for Interim President Brown which is in line with the contracts for other interim presidents in the State University system and has been approved by Commissioner Richard Freeland.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the November 13, 2014, meeting of the Fiscal Affairs Committee and all actions contained therein.

Report of the November 12, 2014, Academic Affairs Committee Meeting

Trustee Dudley reported on behalf of the committee.

He noted that there have been discussions regarding a proposed new major in community health which would be housed in the Biology Department but would draw upon courses from various programs including biology, psychology, physical education, and sociology. This proposal was created after reviewing the field and the growing industry of community health. This proposal is in the beginning phases and must advance through a number of steps before it can be officially included in the curriculum.

The committee also received an update from Professor Chris Himes of the Education Department on the second National Science Foundation (NSF) grants – Professor Ann Billetz provided an overview of the S-STEM NSF grant at the October meeting. He explained that this grant is in partnership with Williams College and the North Adams Public Schools for a four year program entitled “Teaching to Learn.” It was established to foster undergraduate appreciation and learning of science through the process of teaching and explaining general science concepts to a general audience, and also to increase the number of students in science courses and the number of science education majors. Currently seven MCLA students are working with teachers in the classrooms of Sullivan Elementary. There is also a research component as faculty will measure the impact of this program on participating teachers as well as the student teachers. .

The Committee also discussed sabbatical leave requests for the coming academic year, 2015-2016. Faculty are eligible to apply after six years. The request is then reviewed by the department chair and funding must be available for coverage. Sabbaticals are important as they allow faculty to further their own projects/research. This also benefits the students as faculty share the results of their research and projects with their students and often develop new courses as a result.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the November 12, 2014, meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee and all actions contained therein.

Report of the November 13, 2014, Student Affairs Committee Meeting

Trustee Edgerton delivered the report on behalf of the committee.

She noted that Student Affairs also received a report on the NSF grant from Professor Nick Stroud, Education Department, along with one of the student participants, Jess Wojick. Wojick is a sophomore majoring in Interdisciplinary studies and is planning for a career as a school adjustment counselor. She shared her enthusiasm for the program and offered that she is gaining transferable skills while acting as both teacher and student.

The committee received an update on Athletics update from Scott Nichols. The fall teams enjoyed successful seasons and off the court/field MCLA's student-athletes teams were involved in a variety of community service activities with close to 50% of all student-athletes receiving All-Conference honors for their academic performance. Additionally, Women's Tennis Coach, Holly McGovern, was named the North Atlantic Conference (NAC) Coach of the Year

It was also noted that this was Nichol's last committee meeting as he will retire in February after 18 years of service. Nichols thanked the Trustees and staff for all of their support and shared how proud he is of all the student-athletes for their academic and athletic performances as well as their commitment to community service. Trustee Edgerton thanked Scott Nichols for his service to the College.

Director Joe Charon provided a public safety update regarding various issues that surfaced during the semester. The department will continue to evaluate its critical incident response management which includes transitioning to a new software-based alert notification system. Emergency tests, including building evacuations, are being planned to ensure that faculty and staff are aware of emergency procedures.

Trustee Edgerton noted that she is reassured by the responses of the campus police to the incidents on campus this semester. Interim Vice President Theresa O'Bryant also expressed her confidence as well in Director Charon and his experienced team of officers. It is clear that he leads a very effective team. The Trustees offered thanks for their good work and attention to the needs of the campus.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the November 13, 2014, meeting of the Student Affairs Committee and all actions contained therein.

Report of the October 23, 2014, Enrollment Management Committee Meeting

Trustee Boodram provided an update on behalf of the committee.

He noted that Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, Monica Joslin, reported on the Center for Student Success (CSSE) as it is now reporting through Academic Affairs. She reiterated CSSE's mission to provide multiple support and advising services for students and spoke to its success around first to second year retention rates as well as progress towards goals for MCLA's six-year graduation rate. Work continues to address four year graduation rates.

The Admission Office shared that they will have made over 800 visits to colleges and college fairs. Director of Admission, Gina Puc, reported that early indicators for the cycle were positive, with increased Common Application traffic as well as an increase in Fall 2015 inquiries for both freshmen and transfers.

Report of the Presidential Search Committee

Trustee Gold, search committee co-chair, noted that the search is still in the confidential phase to protect the anonymity of all candidates until the finalists are named. The committee is scheduled to conduct interviews in January at an offsite location. They met on December 18 and will meet again on January 6 to identify those to be interviewed. Following the offsite interviews, the committee will advance three to five names to the Board for campus interviews. The plan is to hold these interviews in February.

Chair Fairbank extended his thanks to Trustee Gold as well as Co-Chair Trustee Boodram for their hard work along with Trustees Edgerton and Chesloff who also serve on the search committee. All involved have shown tremendous dedication and given selflessly of their time into this process.

Chairperson's report

Chair Fairbank shared that throughout the presidential transition it has been his responsibility to pay close attention to the details and processes in place to ensure that the College continues to move forward. He commended the senior team for their time and expertise, and for working so closely with one another. Prior to President Grant's departure he met with the senior team to review a thorough outline of projects/events/deadlines for the coming months. He stated that he could not be more pleased with the transition process and continues to meet with Interim President Brown as well as Executive Vice President Richardello and Vice President Stakenas, and will continue to do so throughout the coming semester..

Chair Fairbank then reported that a Memo of Understanding (MOU) between MCLA and MCLA Foundation Inc. had been signed. He asked Trustee Lord to provide additional information as she serves on the Foundation Board as well and was integral to developing this document. Trustee Lord shared that as the role of Foundations become more important in light of fundraising needs, an understanding between both entities had to be established. While MCLA's Foundation and College work closely together there have been issues with other foundations and institutions. The MOU provides transparency, accountability, and a source of continuity. It also documents expectations, establishes the role of the Foundation, and outlines its separate charitable status. It further enumerates ways the Foundation will support the institution. The Advancement team worked extremely hard, with great detail, to outline such needs as they pertain to MCLA and the MCLA foundation. The document was then reviewed in extensive detail at a meeting with members of the Advancement staff, Foundation Board, and Board of Trustees. Trustee Lord offered that she is very pleased with the outcome and expects others will look to this document as an example.

Trustee Marshall noted that the foundation/institution relationship was a topic at the Trustee Conference so this is a very important step. It is also important for public trust and will assure donors that their intentions will be followed.

Chair Fairbank expressed his gratitude to Trustee Lord and all those involved in crafting this important document.

Interim President's Brown report

Interim President Brown began by sharing that she is happy to offer her first report as Interim President.

It has been an eventful fall marked by progress and transition. She noted that the College continues to be recognized for its service learning and was also recently named one of Kiplinger's 100 "Best Value College", the only one of the seven state universities in Massachusetts to be so recognized. She also shared that the NSF "Teaching to Learn" grant, as reported on earlier during the meeting, was recently included in a White House report on K-12 Education in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM).

MCLA welcomed some important speakers to campus this semester including social activist and owner of Dean's Beans, Dean Cycon, and Jose Antonio Vargas, a Pulitzer prize winning journalist, found of DefineAmerican.com, an undocumented immigrant speaking out about major policy issues impacting immigrants.

There have been a number of shows and productions from Fine & Performing Arts and the Berkshire Cultural Resource Center. MCLA students will also be participating in the Kennedy Center's American College Theater Festival for Region 1.

This spring will bring the first games of the new women's lacrosse team. Basketball season is underway and the fall teams finished strongly as noted in the Student Affairs Committee report.

The fall tradition of service continued on October 25 with a day of service. Students also participated in "Winter Blitz" in conjunction with Williams College to winterize homes in the area. Additionally, the "Green Team" will be reestablished in the coming semester to explore ways to save, reduce, reuse, and recycle.

As the Capital Campaign winds down, Interim President Brown extended her gratitude to all who contributed and continue to support the College along with the staff who work tirelessly to cultivate resources needed to fulfill our mission.

The College recently held its annual Giving Thanks event to celebrate those who have served 10 or more years. Public Safety also held a ceremony to recognize the contributions and good work of the public safety officers. Interim President Brown noted that the recent Alumni event in Boston on December 10 celebrated President Mary Grant and her leadership at MCLA. She noted that none of the efforts reported on tonight were untouched by her, her leadership, and her vision.

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 6:18 p.m.