



**Minutes of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Thursday, April 6, 2017
Fitzpatrick Room, Murdock Hall 208**

The following Trustees were present:

Susan Gold, Chair
JD Chesloff, Vice Chair
John Barrett III
Mohan Boodram
Lisa Chamberlain
Buffy Lord
Denise Marshall
Rob Reilly
Brianne O'Rourke, Student Trustee

Others present:

Dr. James F. Birge, President
Denise Richardello, Executive Vice President
Cynthia Brown, Vice President of Academic Affairs
Larry Behan, Vice President of Administration & Finance
Cathy Holbrook, Vice President of Student Affairs
Monica Joslin, Dean of Academic Affairs
Theresa O'Bryant, Associate Dean of Students and Title IX Coordinator
Karen Cardozo, Carolyn Dehner, Ryan Krzyzanowicz, Tom Whalen – Faculty
Ginger Menard, Clerk

Special Guests

Carlos Santiago, Commissioner, MA Department of Higher Education
Michael Mizzoni, Director of Trustee Relations, MA Department of Higher Education

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 April 6, 2017 with Board Chair Gold presiding.

Chair Gold called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m. and introduced Massachusetts Department of Higher Education Commissioner, Dr. Carlos Santiago.

Remarks and discussion with Commissioner Santiago

Commissioner Santiago extended his thanks for the opportunity to meet with the Board. He addressed the challenges across New England and the nation in public higher education in regards to demographic changes, population decline, and a greater degree of regional competitiveness, an example being Maine offering resident tuition rates to MA residents. The work to improve the skills gap also continues as MA currently has the most educated populace over 55 years of age – a majority of whom will be retiring from the workforce in the next 10 years. He also reviewed the gaps in populations underserved by public education and the need to ensure for the success of all by creating a pipeline of students who are college-ready.

Commissioner Santiago discussed the goals for the Board of Higher Education for 2016-2017. He noted the consolidation of Boards that is occurring in many New England states while in Massachusetts there are still 25 separate Boards overseeing each of the state university and community colleges. He shared his thoughts on the need to foster a more integrated system and to learn from one another while working together to move forward policies that will impact the greatest number of students and elevate the performance of all students.

There is also work to develop better integration with P-12 and workforce sectors and to develop a more integrated dual enrollment system that is better aligned with academic or workforce plans. He noted some students have graduated high school with an Associate's Degree, a model for early college high schools. Data also suggests that providing a more college-like experience in high school prepares students exponentially for success in college.

The Commissioner stressed the need to continue to make the case for public higher education across the Commonwealth as the majority of our students are being educated in the public system. He also noted the importance of innovation and experimentation and to move away from what is not working

Commissioner Santiago then provided an overview on a variety of projects with which the DHE is involved including

- Campus Safety & Violence Prevention
- Campus Strategic Planning
- Civic Learning
- Competency-based Learning (Early Education)
- Developmental Education, Early College Design (CDEP, LIM-MOC, STEM Starter Academy)

- Financial Aid Redesign
- Learning Outcomes Assessment
- Legislative Strategy
- Nursing & Allied Health
- Online Learning Portal and Reciprocity Agreement
- Performance Measurement System
- PIF Grants
- Program Approval Process
- Teacher Education Preparation & Diversity
- Trustee Relations
- Unified System of Transfer (Commonwealth Commitment)

With the many projects and priorities, the need for increased funding for public education is critical. Commissioner Santiago stressed the importance of trustees, staff, faculty, and students taking on the roles of advocates with their legislative leaders on behalf of public higher education.

Chair Gold noted that she was impressed by the Department of Higher Education's many goals and especially noted the importance of Financial Aid Redesign as that issue affects the majority of MCLA students.

Approval of Minutes: December 1, 2016 Board of Trustees meeting

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the December 1, 2016, meeting of the Board and all actions contained therein.

Report on the Minutes of the December 1, 2016 Enrollment Management Committee Meeting

Trustee Boodram reported on behalf of the committee. The committee received updates from Admissions and Financial Aid and discussed more active recruiting in the mid-Atlantic states. Financial Aid reported that approximately 50% of applicants were Pell eligible. The office has participated in financial aid information meetings with students and families across the county. There has been a shift in the timing of financial applications due to the new Prior-Prior year requirements of the FAFSA.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the December 1, 2016, meeting of the Enrollment Management Committee and all actions contained therein.

Report on the Minutes of the December 1, 2016 Executive Committee Meeting

Chair Gold reported on behalf of the committee. The committee discussed the post-election climate on campus and in the region and the events that were held on campus in response. A part-time counselor was hired by Counseling Services to assist with additional student need.

The committee reviewed and discussed the Strategic Planning process and the upcoming president evaluation. Chair Gold, Vice Chair Chesloff, and Trustee Lord will serve as an ad hoc committee for the presidential evaluation.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the December 1, 2016, meeting of the Executive Committee and all actions contained therein.

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

Trustee Lord reported on behalf of the committee. The committee discussed the movement towards a smoke-free campus. The implementation goal is the fall of 2018. This issue will be brought before college governance so that the campus community can be involved in this transition. Smoking cessation programs will be available for all members of the campus community.

The committee received a report on the Supportive and Inclusive Community survey. Based on the number of respondents the results were deemed statistically significant. Areas for improvement have been identified and the campus now has a benchmark from which to move forward.

The “Dear World” program is coming to campus on April 12 and 13. It is a project that began after Hurricane Katrina and has continued as a way of having participants to tell their stories and have their photos taken.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

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

Report on the Minutes of the March 22, 2017 Academic Affairs Committee Meeting

Trustee Chamberlain reported on behalf of the committee. The committee discussed the proposals for the 2 new majors: Health Sciences and Community Health Education. The next step is to submit these to the Department of Higher Education for approval. These new programs were developed in response to local, regional and statewide needs and should be a draw for new students. The committee endorsed both to bring before the Board for approval.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED To approve the new majors of Bachelor of Community Health Education and Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences.

Vice President Brown then provided an overview of the requirements as stated by the MSCA Agreement (the faculty contract) for tenure and promotion. The committee received a summary of the faculty members being recommended for tenure and all were approved to bring before the full Board.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED To recommend tenure for Karen Cardozo, Pamela Contakos, Carolyn Dehner, David Zachary Finch, Ryan Krzyzanowicz, and Thomas Whalen.

The committee also reviewed the names of faculty receiving promotions as well as those being reappointed for third, fourth, fifth, and sixth years of service. They received a report on the Supportive and Inclusive Community survey and discussed issues identified involving the local community and plans to facilitate dialogue with local community leaders.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the March 22, 2017, meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee and all actions contained therein.

Report on the Minutes of the March 22, 2017 Fiscal Affairs Committee Meeting

Trustee Marshall reported on behalf of the committee. The committee reviewed the 2nd quarter report which showed year-to-date results exceeding expectations due to higher enrollment and vacant positions.

Bonnie Howland shared a report on outstanding account balances. She noted there are no concerns with collections at this point. VP Behan noted that an ad hoc committee will be meeting to review and revise parameters for those with outstanding balances.

An ad hoc campus group is being assembled to participate in the budget process which will comprise three faculty members, two students, and 2 staff members. Trustee Barrett asked about the possible inclusion of a trustee in this group as well.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the March 22, 2017, meeting of the Fiscal Affairs Committee and all actions contained therein.

Chair's Report

Chair Gold extended her thanks to consultant Linda Campanella and to the Strategic Planning co-chairs, Adrienne Wootters and Gina Puc, for their leadership. This has been a comprehensive and transparent process and their organization, thoughtfulness, and leadership has kept the planning process on schedule. She also thanked the Board representative to the Committee, Buffy Lord, for her service in this important role.

Chair Gold reviewed many of the events on the calendar from now through the end of the semester. She noted that it is very meaningful to the faculty, staff, and students to have trustees attend these year-end celebrations.

She reminded the trustees about the upcoming Inauguration reception on Thursday, April 20, and the Inauguration ceremony on Friday, April 21.

President's Report

President Birge reported that Molly Williams will serve as Interim Vice President of Institutional Advancement beginning April 18. She will serve in that position until June 2018 which will allow time to begin a search in the fall and build a more comprehensive pool of candidates.

He then shared the Advancement Office's Phone-a-thon results noting that there were two anonymous donors who provided matching challenge gifts. The goal is \$65K and the current total is \$61K. Though the goal has not yet been met they are still above previous years.

Last Sunday the Taconic Society donor recognition brunch was held. Faculty and students attended and student Amber Coombe shared her powerful story about how financial aid has allowed her to achieve her dream of receiving a college education.

President Birge reported that MCLA will be submitting a proposal to the Mellon Foundation. Staff from the Mellon Foundation visited campus earlier this semester to meet with faculty and students and to learn more about the impact of the humanities at a liberal arts college. The proposal focuses on opportunities to enhance and elevate teaching in the humanities at MCLA and in the Berkshires.

Finally, President Birge shared that fundraising for his inauguration has been successful. Many vendors and friends of the institution have contributed and their gifts will cover the full cost of the event.

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 7:08 p.m.