



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

September 19, 2019

Murdock Hall, Room 208

The following Trustees were present:

Denise Marshall, Chair
Brenda Burdick
JD Chesloff
Susan Gold
Frederick Keator
Karen Kowalczyk
Kathleen Therrien
Mohan Boodram
Robert Reilly
Jacob Vitali

The following Trustees were absent:

John Barrett III

MCLA staff in attendance:

President James Birge
Lawrence Behan, Vice President of Finance and Administration
Barbara Chaput, Vice President of Human Resources
Catherine Holbrook, Vice President of Student Affairs
Lisa Lescarbeau, Clerk
Gina Puc, Director of Admissions
Adrienne Williams, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs
Robert Ziomek, Vice President of Institutional Advancement
Kate Gigliotti,
Samantha Cocove,
Marcus Morandi,

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 5:00 p.m. at Murdock Hall on September 19, 2019 with Board Chair Marshall presiding.

Approval of Minutes: May 30, 2019 Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Upon motion duly made and seconded, with the correction to reflect that Lisa Chamberlain was not in attendance, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the May 30, 2019 meeting of the Board, with the correction noted, and all actions contained therein.

Executive Committee Chair Report on the Meeting of September 19, 2019

Chair Marshall reported on the activity of the meeting of the Executive Committee of September 19, 2019. An update was provided on all current campus construction and renovation projects. The Centennial Room renovations are expected to be fully complete by the end of the Thanksgiving break. The Campus Center Fitness Room construction is well underway with anticipated completion in late spring. Venable Theatre will receive a mini-renovation with new seating, upgraded lighting and improved accessibility.

Technology upgrades to improve campus Wi-Fi and cellular service were discussed.

President Birge provided an Enrollment Update, which will be presented in more detail by Trustee Mohan during his update from the Enrollment Management Committee meeting.

The US News & World Report rankings were released and MCLA is ranked #7 for best public liberal arts colleges.

Trustees heard updates on Alumni Relations, the results of the Student Satisfactory Inventory survey, and administrative changes made over the summer.

MCLA will submit a proposal to DCAMM for funding a renovation and construction project to include Mark Hopkins, Eldridge Hall and a new connector building. Estimated costs are \$30MM with funding sources to include MCLA's Foundation, fundraising and the state. A match of \$1.5 MM will also be recommended by the Susan Gold during the Fiscal Affairs Committee report.

Trustees are asked to provide President Birge with recommendations for honorary degree recipients.

Lastly, the board and committee meeting scheduled for AY20/21 will be considered for possible changes to meeting timing at a future meeting of the Trustees.

Fiscal Affairs Committee Chair Report on the Meeting of September 9, 2019

Trustee Gold reported on the activity of the meeting of the Fiscal Affairs Committee of September 9, 2019 at which financial updates for the fourth quarter of FY19 were provided including revenue and expense variances.

MCLA recorded a net operating loss of \$654,335 due to the over-awarding of financial aid. The \$265,000 draw from fund balance authorized in the approved budget was expensed during FY19 for items in the strategic plan. The projected decline in total fund balance is \$919,335.

Management reviewed corrective actions that have been taken with regard to financial aid awarding, and the financial aid leveraging tool which resulted from work with Ruffalo Noel Levitz.

The FY20 operating budget as approved at the May 30, 2019 Board of Trustees meeting was discussed. All state appropriates were received and includes an \$881,000 increase in appropriation. Detailed FY20 budget reports will be available once enrollment freeze has occurred. The Committee also discussed the surplus in state funds that may be available to augment higher education.

Accounts receivable were approximately \$200k and will reduce as the add/drop period comes to a close.

Campus renovations were reviewed, and were noted in Chair Marshalls Executive Committee report.

MCLA's auditors were on site the week of September 9 and the audit is expected to conclude in mid-October with reporting to this board at the October 24 meeting.

DCAMM funds are being pursued for renovations to include Mark Hopkins and Eldridge Hall, and the addition of a connector building between the two. Early estimates place the project, being referred to as the Connector Project, at \$30mm. President Birge informed the Committee that the goal is to raise \$5mm and request \$25mm from the state. To improve the chances of receiving DCAMM funds, MCLA should match a portion of funding. The Committee voted to recommend to this board the commitment of up to \$1.5mm from MCLA's surplus funds to be designated for matching a portion of DCAMM funding for the proposed Connector Project.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: to allocate up to \$1.5mm from MCLA's reserve funds to match a portion of funds of DCAMM grant for the Connector Project.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the September 9, 2019 meetings of the Fiscal Affairs Committee and all actions contained therein.

Enrollment Management Committee Chair Report on the Meeting of September 19, 2019

Trustee Boodram presented the report of the Enrollment Management Committee of September 19, 2019.

The Committee reviewed enrollment results and admissions initiatives for the year. Enrollment for fall 2019 stands at 450 new students with an increase in interest in honors programs express by first year students. There has been a 10% increase in first year students year over year.

MCLA's competitor schools were reviewed.

There were 156 transfer students, 63 of which resulted from the teach-out agreement with SVC. Additional transfer student demographics were presented.

The Committee heard an update on undergraduate financial aid including a student profile. Need based aid is awarded to 79% of full time undergraduates students, while 96% of full time undergraduate students apply for financial aid. MCLA meets, on average, 82% of a student's need; 44% of undergrads receive a Pell grant.

DGCE enrollment and programs were reviewed.

An overview in the projected change in high school graduates from 2019/20 to 2029/30 was presented including data detailing graduating seniors and the competition for these students among Massachusetts higher education institutions.

Enrollment Management Division priorities for 2019/20 include developing a five year divisional plan, data dashboards, MCLA Pittsfield utilization study/recruitment pilot and staffing realignment for strategic initiatives.

The Committee reviewed enrollment by initial source data, an econometric model and first time/full time retention data.

Chairperson's Report

Chair Marshall began the Chairperson's Report and thanked Trustees for agreeing to chair committees. Trustees are encouraged to attend events as the campus community appreciates seeing trustees on campus.

The annual Statewide Trustees Conference is scheduled for October 31 in Westborough and Trustees are asked to attend as their schedules allow. Lisa Lescarbeau will share registration details once they are released by the state.

Annual trustee confidentiality and disclosure agreements were provided with the meeting materials. These should be completed and returned to Lisa Lescarbeau.

The Board of Trustees has an appointed seat on MCLA's Foundation Board, and Trustee Therrien has agreed to serve as appointee for this board for FY20.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: to appoint Kathleen Therrien to stand for election to serve a one year seat as MCLA's Board of Trustees representative on the MCLA Foundation Board.

President's Report

President Birge discussed MCLA's volunteer fall day of service scheduled for September 28 and encouraged Trustees to participate.

The second President's Update report was provided this week and Trustee feedback is welcome.

President Birge introduced Adrienne Wootters, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs and Ely Jains, Interim Dean of Academic Affairs; both administrative changes made during the summer. As well, he welcomed Jake Vitali to his first meeting of the board in his role as Student Trustee.

The MSCA, APA and AFSCME contracts have been settled, with a few lingering items to be addressed in the MSCA contract. MSCA negotiations will begin again in January 2020.

The US News & World Report rankings were released and MCLA is ranked #7 for best public liberal arts colleges. This represents an increase in ranking from #9 and is attributed to the college's social mobility ranking.

On September 27, the Joint Committee on Higher Education, along with members of the Berkshire delegation, will visit MCLA.

On October 29, a presentation will be made to DCAMM to request funding for the Connector Project, which was discussed by others in their committee reports.

MCLA received \$40k for dual enrollment grant from the state, which is an increase of \$10k over last year.

Staff Updates

SSI Survey Results

VP Holbrook presented the results of the SSI survey and discussed actions taken to address concerns expressed by students in the survey. She also stated that meeting will be held with the campus community to share the results and discuss administration's plans to address concerns. The SSI will be conducted again in two years and results will be compared.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

CDO MacDonald-Dennis provided an update on activity related to his diversity, equity and inclusion work with the campus community. An equity action plan, the Colleges diversity strategic plan, has been developed and will focus on measureable, achievable goals.

A diversity education program, known as IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Action), for faculty and staff will take place during the fall semester co facilitated by CDO MacDonald-Dennis and Professor Kerri Nicholl.

A DEI Student Advisory Board will be created during the fall semester to build coalitions between students, advocate on behalf of students at an institutional level, and provide tools from our offices that enable the most effective diversity work possible.

Office of Institutional Advancement

VP Ziomek provided an update on activity of the Office of Institutional Advancement. He presented staffing and organizational changes made in recent months, and reviewed fundraising efforts noting that \$2.5mm was raised during the FY.

He discussed activity in the Alumni Engagement Office and the positive results of growing alumni involvement and new data gathering efforts. The alumni magazine has been rebranded as the Trailhead and will be issued soon.

VP Ziomek reviewed upcoming programs and dates, the agenda of the October 3 MCLA Foundation Annual Meeting, approved property purchases, and the Colleges 125th anniversary celebration plans.

With no other business being brought before the meeting, upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 pm.

All were invited to the roof top of FCSI for a reception honoring former Trustee Lisa Chamberlain.