



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD OF TRUSTEES FISCAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Wednesday, March 6, 2013
President's Office Conference Room**

Members in attendance

James Clemmer, Chair
Buffy Lord
Denise Marshall

Member absent

Stephen Crowe

Others in attendance

Mary K. Grant, President
Cynthia Brown, Vice President of Academic Affairs
James Stakenas, V.P. Administration & Finance
Gerald Desmarais, Treasurer
Charles Kimberling, Director of Facilities
Curt King, Chief Information Officer
Thomas Bernard, Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Trustee Clemmer.

MCLA Mission Statement Update

President Grant and Vice President Brown provided an update on the process to revise the MCLA mission statement. The update is being advanced in parallel with MCLA's accreditation self-study efforts, and there is close alignment between the mission statement and the MCLA strategic plan.

Vice President Brown led a small team of faculty, staff, and students in drafting the new mission statement. Several campus groups – including the President's Council, accreditation self-study steering committee, the Student Government Association, faculty chairs and the student affairs division leadership team – provided comment on the development of the mission statement. The statement was presented to and endorsed by the All College Committee. The trustees had the

opportunity to review an earlier draft of the statement at their February retreat. The Academic Affairs Committee of the Board will present it to the Board of Trustees for acceptance at the March 21st meeting of the Board.

Committee members discussed the statement and commented that it was a clear and concise representation of MCLA and the values of the College. Committee members commented favorably on the mission statement, and the way the values reflected MCLA's goals and aspirations.

President Grant thanked Vice President Brown and the members of the working group for their efforts in developing the new mission statement.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To support the recommendation of the Academic Affairs Committee that the Board of Trustees approve MCLA's new mission statement.

FY 2014 Budget and Student Fees

Vice President Stakenas informed the committee that budget planning is underway for Fiscal Year 2014 with all departments currently developing their budget requests. The Governor has proposed an increase in funding to support an investment in transportation, early childhood education, and higher education. This is encouraging and the House and Senate will now take up the Governor's proposal and budget. Staff has been counseled to focus their budget requests on essential expenses.

While the College continues to budget conservatively, we expect that an increase in student fees will be part of MCLA's FY 2014 budget plan. The committee reviewed current and projected fees at the state university campuses. With any fee increase, the goal will be to ensure that MCLA remains affordable to the maximum number of students, and that the funds raised through these fees be put into projects and programs that benefit and support students. A formal fee recommendation will be presented at the next meeting of the committee.

Ashland Street Project Update

The committee received an update from Facilities director Chuck Kimberling on the planning for the new facilities building on Ashland Street. Design work is underway, and efforts are being made to identify additional cost savings in the design proposal.

Vice President Stakenas and Treasurer Desmarais will provide an update on project costs and borrowing options at the next meeting of the committee. Committee members were asked to consider the possibility of a special meeting to review costs and borrowing should it be necessary to keep the project on schedule.

Center for Science and Innovation Update

Construction of the Center for Science and Innovation is ongoing; with the expectation that MCLA will be able to occupy the building by September 1st. President Grant informed the committee of a recommendation to establish an operating fund for the building, including campus funds as well as funds raised through the MCLA capital campaign.

Campus Master Plan

Vice President Stakenas reported that as part of the campus master planning process, MCLA will work with Sightlines, an organization that specializes in higher education facilities. Vice President Stakenas informed the committee there would be a \$30,000 charge associated with this service. Several campuses in the state university system currently use Sightlines services, and aligning MCLA's work with these efforts will help keep MCLA's information consistent with other institutions when making the case to the state for deferred maintenance funding.

Telephone System Upgrade

CIO Curt King presented an overview of the proposal to migrate MCLA to a voice over IP (VOIP) telephone system. The current college phone system has not been upgraded since 2004 and is not currently supported by the manufacturer. The new phone system will provide expanded functionality, including features that will enhance campus safety and security.

The committee discussed the options of purchasing the new system outright or entering into a five-year lease with the vendor. Curt King will continue to negotiate with the vendor around these options. In either scenario, there is significant cost savings associated with executing a contract with the vendor by the end of March 2013.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To recommend that the Board of Trustees authorize President Grant to commit \$767,000 in college funds to the purchase or lease of voice over IP phone system.

A133 Federal Financial Aid Audit

Under a new state policy, the responsibility to audit campus federal financial aid accounts falls to the auditor engaged by the campus. In fall 2012, O'Connor and Drew conducted this audit for MCLA. Treasurer Desmarais reported that the audit results were unqualified, but the auditors identified three minor findings; changes to correct these findings have already been implemented.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: Recommend that the Board of Trustees accept MCLA's A133 Federal Financial Aid Audit.

2nd Quarter FY 2013 Report

Treasurer Desmarais provided the Committee with the FY 2013 Second Quarter Report. Revenue ran slightly below projections for the quarter, but he projects revenue will trend positive by the close of the fiscal year. Second quarter revenues were attributable in part to lower enrollment for the spring semester. President Grant pointed to the work being done through Admissions, the Center for Student Success and Engagement (CSSE), and the Student Success and Retention Task Force to focus on enrollment growth and student retention.

Other Business

Vice President Stakenas provided a list of anticipated campus projects for Fiscal Year 2014.

President Grant thanked Vice President Stakenas, Treasurer Desmarais, Facilities Director Kimberling, and CIO King for their work, and for the focus and attention they bring to their respective areas of responsibility.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:26 a.m.