

## McHenry County College Website Transparency Follow-Up Discussion with Illinois Policy Institute – November 2013

Institute Contact:

Mr. Costin, Director of Government Reform (Chicago Office)

Illinois Policy Institute (IPI)

Discussion Summary:

- Ms. Haggerty and Mr. Costin went through the ten-point transparency checklist, item by item, to clarify location of information and ask for clarification on various items. Here is a breakdown by category:
  - Category 1 – IPI gave additional points- progress made with adding contact information for elected officials; institute still requires contact information for senior administrative team (Executive Council).
  - Category 2 – MCC does a good job of meeting this expectation; Mr. Costin said this is often the hardest category to meet, but MCC did.
  - Category 3 – IPI gave additional points - good progress made with FOIA information; he still requires MCC to post one-two sentences on the FOIA page stating what the legal turnaround time (five or 30 days) is for a response.
  - Category 4 – IPI gave additional points. They want five years of history; MCC has four; ICCB requires three.
  - Category 5 – IPI gave additional points. Same as for Category 4 (see above).
  - Category 6 – Ms. Haggerty explained that MCC does not have a checkbook database like COD. The IPI said that MCC should show annual expenses by vendor, not just category. This is in the Finance area's bailiwick to determine how to present this information.
  - Category 7 – While MCC links to all of this information on ICCB's site (official reporting info), he said it is not good enough. MCC has to house this information on its own site, not link elsewhere.
  - Category 8 – IPI gave additional points for [www.mchenry.edu/bid](http://www.mchenry.edu/bid) page and related information. IPI still wants to show the actual contract details for every current and past project.
  - Category 9 – He said there should be a webpage that lists all of the memberships to which MCC belongs, with a statement saying:  
*"MCC does not directly contract with others to lobby, however MCC does have a membership with the following organizations that may be lobbying on its behalf."* with the list.
  - Category 10 – IPI gave additional points. The only item they want added is the actual amount or percentage by year that a taxpayer pays to MCC from property taxes.
- **Based on the discussion of each category, the IPI gave additional points in a variety of categories, raising MCC's score from a 32 to a 44.**
- During the discussion, Mr. Costin indicated that their experience was in working with municipalities, not community colleges. When asked for some community college examples of how some of the above is being applied, he said overall community colleges do not receive high scores, but Elgin Community College seemed to have one of the higher scores (in the 60s).
- Ms. Haggerty requested clarity on why there is the same measurement system in place for municipalities, school districts and community college districts when each government entity is bound by differing mandates and regulations. Mr. Costin responded that their focus is to streamline the evaluation process- they do not want to develop multiple tools.
- Ms. Haggerty also requested background on the data that informed the creation of the IPI's checklist. Mr. Costin's response was:

*"We created the checklist in house with the consultation of a number of other groups including the Sunshine Review. There's no data that drove it during the creation process. The overall purpose of the checklist is to increase public participation in government, and to give taxpayers and account of how their tax dollars are being spent."*