

MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
OF McHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE

A Zoom virtual meeting of the Committee of the Whole was held on Tuesday, April 7, 2020. Vice Chair Walsh called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. When Secretary Allen called the roll, the following were present:

Mr. Rendon
Ms. Siddons
Mr. Smith
Ms. Speros
Ms. Walsh
Ms. Hoban
Mr. Allen

Dr. Gabbard was present. Attorney Samuel Cavnar was present as legal counsel. Trustee Evertsen was absent.

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February 18, 2020 Committee of the Whole meeting were accepted as presented.

OPEN FOR RECOGNITION OF VISITORS AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

As this board meeting was held virtually, Vice Chair Walsh reported that the public and media had been invited to attend and were provided a link to this meeting. She went on to state that the College issued notice to anyone desiring to address the Board. MCC's website provided instruction that public comments be submitted electronically prior to the meeting. It was noted there were no public comments this evening.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON COVID-19 CRISIS

Dr. Gabbard opened by thanking the Board Trustees for holding this meeting via Zoom, noting their unwavering support for College administrators' navigation of uncharted waters created by the current COVID-19 pandemic. He then highlighted some of the information within the President's Report that was provided to Trustees. The College reacted to national COVID-19 reports swiftly, becoming proactive in planning for how the virus and an impending state-wide "Stay at Home" order could affect our students. Planning immediately began in early March to ensure that MCC processes could transition to online learning, should it become necessary. Faculty assessed their knowledge and capabilities related to online instruction, with staff and additional resources dedicated to providing swift training for instructors. Technology needs were met quickly to prepare instructors and students to engage in online instruction and learning. Student Services leadership began to plan for supporting various student needs

while operating remotely, and the Marketing and Communications team began creating and disseminating thoughtful, timely, and concise communication to the Board, the public, students, and employees consistently since early March. National news and government mandates changed daily, and MCC moved forward to transition to all online learning after the extended spring break ended. The IT Department provided support to instructors and students by creating remote learning classrooms and providing for their technology needs, while simultaneously assisting the Human Resources department with the transition of employees to remote working capabilities.

The call to employees willing to transition to roles of the Student Navigator was met with great enthusiasm. Remote work assignments were designated, and training was provided to the Navigators so they would be able to effectively assist students through the online learning process. Human Resources swiftly re-assigned roles and responsibilities, working with IT staff to transition 293 employees to working from home, so that when classes resumed on March 30 the College was poised to support students, and College operations could continue without interruption.

Dr. Gabbard shared that the College has learned so much through this process, and is ready and adaptive to what has and may continue to come its way. MCC administrators understand the current economy may result in higher demand for courses, and for re-training of adult learners in career and technology skills. The College is well-positioned to offer great support to our faculty, and a positive and quality learning experience to our students. MCC administrators continue to move forward with the budgeting process, knowing that state payments to the College may likely be delayed.

Dr. Gabbard also reported the decision to keep the Spring 2020 Commencement ceremony on May 16 as originally scheduled, in order to appropriately recognize our students. The event will be held virtually out of regard for health and safety. Details will be forthcoming once determined.

FEBRUARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Mr. Tenuta provided a summary of February's financials statements, reporting that since February the College has lost substantial revenue due to the COVID-19 crisis and those losses will continue to go up as a result of event cancellations and payroll costs. Capital outlay during the campus shutdown continues as the College moves ahead with construction projects, and the next couple months' financial reports will reflect these costs. There is also a possibility that the College's allocation of local real estate tax revenue may be deferred, and in addition, state reimbursement payments to the College will likely be delayed. Mr. Tenuta noted cash flow could be affected, but reiterated to the Board that MCC has the reserves should need arise. In the interim, he is working with the College's investment firm to convert some long-term investments to short-term. Mr. Tenuta shared that the funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act should provide some relief across the country, with federal funds earmarked for community colleges. Initial reports indicate MCC may receive \$2.1 million; half of which would be spent directly on student needs and the other half used without restriction, likely for College operating costs.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/SUMMARY COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Trustee Hoban was impressed and so thankful for the planning and preparation that has gone into providing online instruction, and with the transition of employees working remotely, changing roles, and serving the students.

Trustee Speros echoed Ms. Hoban's sentiments about how administration executed online instruction and employees working remotely.

Trustee Smith offered sincere compliments to Dr. Gabbard and his administration for their extraordinary efforts during this time, and as challenges continue. He shared his wish for all to be well and safe.

Trustee Siddons shared her feeling that the plans being executed currently at McHenry County College are "best in class" and she supports the efforts wholeheartedly.

Trustee Allen shared his pride in the College, stating we are hitting the right target – serving the students – with its efforts. He noted that administrator's proactive approach, while initially seeming to be so soon after initial national COVID reports began, was indeed the way to go. He feels Dr. Gabbard and his leadership team laid out a strong framework and have carried it out.

Student Trustee Rendon stated that as a student, he is satisfied with the online classes and noted attending a Student Government meeting on April 6 via Zoom, during which other students shared positive comments about how organized the online learning transition has been.

Vice Chair Walsh gave kudos to all, beginning with the administration team that met those first days in March and started the whole process. She added that the Student Navigator idea is fantastic, and feels the College will learn a lot from this and will continue to build upon that while holding to the mission that student success be our focus.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Mary Cornett, Recording Secretary

Thomas E. Allen, Board Secretary