

MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
OF McHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE

A Zoom virtual meeting of the Committee of the Whole was held on Tuesday, May 19, 2020. Vice Chair Walsh called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. When Secretary Allen called the roll, the following were present:

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

Dr. Gabbard was present. Attorney Samuel Cavnar was present as legal counsel.

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of the April 7, 2020 Committee of the Whole meeting were accepted as amended; correction requested by Ms. Speros.

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 a link is provided on the MCC website. She went on to state that the College issues notice to anyone desiring to address the Board. MCC's website also provides instruction that public comments be submitted electronically prior to the meeting. It was noted there were no public comments this evening.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Gabbard opened with an update on COVID-19, and how the College is moving forward with instruction as a result of the Governor's stay-at-home order. MCC summer classes began May 18, and the College continues to utilize Student Navigators to help support online instruction. Following government safety guidelines, leadership is planning contingencies for fall semester by preparing for diverse instruction modes. In addition to face-to-face and online learning, additional options of *blended* and *flexible blended* are being considered so that the College may offer modes that allow for as much or as little time with instructors as desired to best fit any students' needs. By the end of June, more specific planning will occur to prepare for implementation of the different instruction modes.

In keeping with the governor's *Restore Illinois* plan and a phased re-entry back to campus, MCC's COVID-19 Response Team, which was formed in early March, will meet at the beginning of June to continue

plans. The focus will be on a safe re-entry – for employees, faculty and students – coupled with the providing the best opportunities for students to learn.

Dr. Gabbard then gave a brief update on the Cares Act funding for students, noting that with the initial funding rollout, the Department of Education put forth stipulations and guidelines which have made Colleges proceed with caution in terms of distribution. In short, out of 4,000 students who received information from MCC prompting them to complete a brief application, approximately 1,500 responses were received. Of those, 826 completed a FAFSA as required by the DOE guidelines, and were identified to qualify for aid funding. The College is set to begin distribution of just over \$500,000 of the \$1.2 million to be used directly for student needs. Dr. Gabbard's hope is there will be changes to the DOE's restrictions and the College will then be able to continue to assess and identify need, and distribute the remaining funds to students as soon as possible.

On the topic of enrollment, Dr. Gabbard noted MCC is up in both headcount and credit hours for summer semester. He also shared student enrollment numbers for fall which look very promising, and noted that the Office of Admissions is converting applications to enrollment at a very nice rate. When comparing our summer and fall enrollment numbers, peer colleges are reporting much higher decreases. Dr. Gabbard is confident that MCC is positioned well to continue offering great value to its students, and is committed to efficiently help students move to the next step in their education, or on to their work path.

Dr. Gabbard then discussed a draft proposal for the Board to consider offering a voluntary early retirement incentive (VERI) to certain full-time faculty, depending on tier levels according to years of service. He feels this may be something to consider as the College looks for savings wherever possible, adding that the model is similar to one proposed in 2017. Discussion ensued, and the Trustees voiced no objection should administration want to offer such a proposal

DISCUSSION OF BOARD RETREAT

Dr. Gabbard proposed that a Board Retreat be scheduled to review our Strategic Plan and the strategies and tactics we might consider as the College moves forward, especially given the COVID-19 pandemic. A Board Retreat may be planned ahead of the June Committee of the Whole meeting.

PRELIMINARY APRIL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Mr. Tenuta recapped a year-end forecast summary which shows a lower deficit than budgeted, mainly due to benefits. As the COVID-19 stay-at-home order continues, the College is seeing significantly less benefits paid out as employees are not going to doctors or hospitals as frequently, resulting in substantial savings at this time. Other expense areas under budget are Contract Services, Travel and Utilities. Mr. Tenuta continued to recap the financial statements, and Trustees thanked him for the new format in which information is shared with them, which includes a concise, written summary. Overall, Mr. Tenuta stated we are tracking well with the budget.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/SUMMARY COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Siddons was extremely pleased with MCC's virtual commencement ceremony held on May 16. She was honored to have displayed an *MCC Graduates Congratulations* sign in her yard, which gained some

attention of passing traffic. She also attended an ICCTA Board meeting last week, and noted 75-80% of the colleges represented on the call reported dire enrollment numbers, so she is pleased that MCC's projections look good. She then thanked the administration for the effort put forth to develop the proposed budget discussed earlier this evening.

Chair Smith echoed Ms. Siddons' sentiments about MCC's virtual commencement, stating he loved several special elements – especially the graduates' personalized photos and quotes. He then mentioned seeing the MCC advertisement in the newspaper and was pleased how that looked. Chair Smith then asked whether the College is comfortable moving into fall semester with the ways in which we might deliver instruction, and whether we have confidence in our supply chains for things we will need, such as PPE/personal protective equipment. Dr. Gabbard answered that he is confident in both areas, reiterating that Mike Clesceri is persistently pursuing PPE for the College.

Mr. Allen also enjoyed the MCC virtual commencement, remarking that he enjoys Dr. Gabbard's speeches. He has heard from several families who watched the ceremony and now have decided to send students to MCC.

Ms. Speros concurred with Ms. Siddons' comments on the virtual commencement ceremony, adding all the personal touches made it so great and the speed with which it flowed was perfect. She also remarked that both the budget presentation and the president's report this evening were well done.

Vice Chair Walsh agreed with Chair Smith's remarks about the selection of photos of students and their personalized quotes on the commencement video. She also saw the College's ad in the newspaper and thinks it looks great. She then thanked the College administrators for the excellent budget presentation tonight. In addition, Ms. Walsh mentioned attending a Trustee Roundtable discussion last Friday, adding that on the call many Trustees voiced concern over CTE programs and how and when their students' skills would be assessed as required for the programs. Dr. Chris Gray then relayed MCC's plan for assessing students' skills in a safe and appropriate manner as allowed by state regulation, and also in a manner that will minimize holding up the progress of any student moving forward in classes and/or into the workplace.

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:16 p.m., Vice Chair Smith motioned to move into Closed Session under Illinois Open Meetings Act 120/2(c), noting Exception #1, Personnel. Ms. Siddons seconded. The roll was called, and all were in favor. After all logged into the closed session meeting link, the closed session began.

At 7:41 p.m., there being no further discussion, Vice Chair Walsh moved to come out of Closed Session, seconded by Ms. Siddons. A voice vote was taken and all were in favor. Closed Session adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

After the Closed Session, Trustees resumed the Open meeting. Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Mary Cornett, Recording Secretary

Thomas E. Allen, Board Secretary