

BRISTOL

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2023

1. Call to Order

The four hundred and fifth regular meeting of the Bristol Community College Board of Trustees was held on Wednesday, August 23, 2023, in person at the Colonel Blackinton Inn located at 203 N. Main Street, Attleboro, Massachusetts. The meeting was called to order at 8:59 a.m.

Trustees present: Jeffrey Karam, Vice Chair; Valentina Videva Dufresne, Secretary; Renee Clark; Pamela Gauvin; Joseph Ferreira; James Mathes; John Morris; and Todd McGhee.

Trustees absent: Joan Medeiros, Chair, Frank Baptista; and Lynn Motta.

2. Chair's Remarks

On behalf of Joan Medeiros, Chair, our Vice Chair, Jeffrey Karam welcomed all to the meeting. He noted he was filling in as Chair Medeiros was facing medical concerns and was currently hospitalized. He invited all Trustees to sign a card being passed around for Chair Medeiros.

Vice Chair Karam officially welcomed our new Student Trustee, John Morris, and thanked him for his service, leadership, and congratulated him on his recent recognition in *GI Jobs Magazine*. Vice Chair Karam invited Trustee Morris to say a few words and introduce himself.

After Trustee Morris' remarks, Vice Chair Karam asked the other Trustees to introduce themselves as well.

Vice Chair Karam then shared the tradition of providing a college pin to new Trustees. He then shared a pin with our two newest Trustees, John Morris and Joseph Ferreira. Vice Chair Karam then invited any other Trustee who never received a pin or may have lost their own, to take one of the pins and invited all to wear it proudly while representing the college.

3. Consent Agenda

Vice Chair Karam asked if any Consent Agenda items needed to be moved to the regular agenda. There were no items to move. He then read the Consent Agenda Items listed:

- Consideration of Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting for June 1, 2023
- Report of Personnel Actions August 2023
- Report of Workforce and Community Education Contracts August 2023

Vice Chair Karam asked for a motion to approve said items. A motion was made by Trustee Clark to approve the Consent Agenda items and was seconded by Trustee Videva Dufresne. The motion was approved.

4. Policy Review

Vice Chair Karam asked Steve Kenyon, Vice President, Administration and Finance, and Chief of Police & Preparedness, Mark Nataly to provide an overview of the proposed Rifle Policy.

VP Kenyon began by reminding Trustees they have a draft of the proposed Rifle Policy in their board materials. He shared that this draft was prepared for Board of Trustee review and thanked Trustee McGee for helping to craft this proposed policy. VP Kenyon stated the goal of this policy is to add a piece of equipment to the continuum of force that our Bristol Police Officers have in their inventory. VP Kenyon shared that with an expected response time of 3-5 minutes from the Fall River Police Department, this piece of equipment is an important tool to maintain at the college. He went on to share that before being implemented, our campus police officers will have all the required training and regular training thereafter.

VP Kenyon introduced the Bristol Community College Chief of Police and Preparedness, Mark Nataly, stating he is also here to help answer any questions Trustees may have. VP Kenyon invited any questions regarding the proposed Rifle Policy.

Trustee Videva Dufresne asked if de-escalation techniques and resources would also be included in police officer training. VP Kenyon and Chief Nataly shared de-escalation training would remain an important component of police officer training, and the rifle equipment would only be utilized as a last resort response for a volatile situation where eminent harm is evident, and campus police officers are clearly outgunned without long-range equipment.

Trustee McGhee shared his belief that this equipment, and all related police training, is absolutely essential for Bristol based on the quick escalation of violence and the necessary diffusion to save lives.

VP Kenyon asked if there were any other questions or discussion necessary. Hearing none, Vice Chair Karam requested a motion to approve the Rifle Policy. A motion was made by Trustee McGhee to approve the Rifle Policy presented. This was seconded by Trustee Clark. The motion was approved.

5. President's Report

- President's Goals

President Douglas reviewed status of the 2022-2023 Key Goals:

- Strategy #1: Academic Innovation; Objectives 1-5 complete
- Strategy #2: Equity and Student Success; Objectives initiated 1-4 initiated, while many are complete most some will carry over into 2024 including those goals centered on equity and wholistic admissions. With a first focus on nursing holistic admissions and then ultimately, across all disciplines. She shared Bristol is the only community college in Massachusetts to utilize this admissions process.
- Strategy #3: Organizational Excellence; Objectives 1, 2, 4 complete; Objectives 3 (aligning services) and 5 (tech portal) in progress.
- Strategy #4: Partnerships: Objectives 1, 2, 4 complete; Objective 3 aligning grant seeking process with Strategic Plan incomplete and will continue into 2023-2024.
- President Douglas briefly reviewed the 2023-2024 Key Goals; she stated they will be presented at the next (October) board meeting. She encouraged Trustees to review and digest these goals before the October meeting.

- Community Partnership Highlights (Fabric Festival) were provided by *Joyce Brennan*, Vice President, Marketing and Communications. Joyce provided a brief overview into this new partnership – The Fabric Arts Festival. The Fabric Arts Festival is a celebration of art, music, community, and the city of Fall River. Visit www.fabricfallriver.com for details for events and collaborations on October 5-14 in Fall River, New Bedford, and Providence.

- Trustee Talking Points

- NOWI Update - *Jen Menard*, Vice President, Economic and Business Development

We have been busy achieving certification for the health and safety training programs, including the facility, instructors, and curriculum. As required, we engaged with a third-party organization to audit the Global Wind Organization (GWO) program and have successfully achieved certification on 7 unique trainings. We will continue to expand our offerings, implementing more train-the trainer programs and a 2nd audit that is scheduled in February for additional modules including basic technical training.

There are new constraints for transportation to the wind projects due to the impacts to mammals such as the right whale, and this has prioritized the associated training being added at the NOWI. As a result of these changes, the offshore wind workforce needs helicopter underwater escape training or HUET, which triggered planning and development of these at the NOWI—sooner than originally planned.

The NOWI is also broadening its offerings through virtual reality and will offer "a day in the life" which allows participants to experience a common day for a wind technician. Other modules such as Slinger are being identified as possible expansion opportunities should we add them to the training portfolio.

We are also looking at other opportunities to provide critical services such as partnering with an organization to provide medical certifications that are needed and required by the industry, providing a convenient location, and attracting possible clients.

The NOWI facility is almost ready for occupancy, and we are working with the college to support the opening of the facility, such as with Jo-Ann Pelletier for IT needs and Steve Kenyon for remaining construction related items.

- MassReconnect – *Kate O'Hara*, Vice President, Student and Enrollment Services

We have been engaged in program planning since May 2023 and we have developed a triage team to help get students enrolled. Many pre-planned events so we were poised to hit the ground running once the budget was approved.

There has been a concerted social marketing push. Our admissions numbers are up and the number of registered students who had previously stopped out has also increased. There are over 600 students registered through MassReconnect as of August 22nd and we expect that number to grow.

The triage team in place including Admissions, Financial Aid, Registrar, and the enrollment for Flex Start enrollment options (September 19), makes Bristol very competitive.

The most important detail for MassReconnect students to do first is complete the FAFSA even before applying for admission. Our college website has an extensive MassReconnect FAQ and is a helpful resource for all.

- Transitions to College – *Jen Menard*, Vice President, Economic and Business Development

The Adult Education area includes a fantastic program, Transition to College, which provides adult education students with a highly supported entrance to the college. The program is funded through three grant programs that support students through their first year in college, while providing high intensity and highly personalized advising and career development.

The program director, Heather Harrison, has taken this small program and tripled the size and the funding while demonstrating high numbers of completions as well as retention and completion of their academic journey at Bristol. This program reflects a diverse student population from the HiSET and GED programs as well as from the English Speakers of Other Languages or ESOL programs.

- Financial Update – *Steve Kenyon*, Vice President, Administration and Finance

Steve began with some recent items of note in the area of College finances including our annual audits are underway including the independent audit and the A133 audit of all our federal funds. Steve shared he was happy to report we are just finishing up the last HEERF project and we spent all \$36M.

He noted with FY23 behind us, our financial performance was as expected, with no surprises to what he has been reporting throughout the fiscal year. Steve shared our balance sheet remains very strong and we have a positive change in net position for the year of about \$1M before making entries for the related state pension and other post-employment benefits. He noted cash is the only area that took a predictable hit in FY23 because of the timing of the NOWI payments hitting almost all in FY23 and the financing process not being completed until FY24.

Steve shared the financing for NOWI is finally complete and we should receive our funds in September. He noted that unfortunately, the appraisal did not come in as high as we would have liked so the Foundation received a \$6.1M loan from the four participating local banks. He mentioned it was five but Mechanics dropped off this week. Steve shared total construction costs for NOWI were over the \$12M original financing goal. In addition, he stated the college also has a \$3M line of credit should cash flow become an issue which is not expect at all.

Switching to the FY24 budget, Steve shared the Governor signed the fiscal year 2024 budget on August 9th and it is a historic budget for the Community Colleges. Steve stated that as the Trustees have seen in communications from the President, the state budget included \$20M for MassReconnect. Steve noted this will certainly have a positive impact on both our current students and driving enrollment growth. Our portion is at least \$1.7M.

Also included in the budget is our operating appropriation. Bristol's state appropriation increased 4.7% for FY24. That compares to a system average of 3.1%. That extra 1.6% is a big difference when you are talking about a \$27.3M appropriation. It is an increase of \$1.2M. Bristol, because of the advocacy of the President with our local delegation, has risen up past several schools in state funding per student FTE. We were in last place 6 or 7 years ago, and have now moved up several spots closer to the middle.

There are many other line items that the Community Colleges did well in overall funding but we do not know the institutional level detail yet.

Lastly, we are still waiting for a supplemental budget to fund the labor contract increases. We are hoping that gets resolved in the next month or two.

If no questions, Steve shared he would like to provide the report of the June 1 Finance/Budget Committee in Trustee Motta's absence.

6. Report of the Finance/Budget Committee – *Steve Kenyon* for Trustee Lynn Motta

VP Kenyon shared the Committee reviewed and approved the third quarter Trust Fund report. They next reviewed the report on reserves and made some directives to management about several of the CDs we have in our portfolio. The Committee reviewed the YTD budget status report prepared by management.

An item of note was that as of that meeting last meeting (June 1st) we had a savings in salaries of \$1.6M for the year.

About half the meeting was set aside for our annual review of the investment portfolio with a representative from Fidelity Investments. Scott Quatromoni has been our investment advisor for close to 15 years and has been a great resource for us with excellent customer service. He reviewed some of the more significant trades done during the year and why. We reviewed our performance report in detail. We also discussed the regular rebalancing of our portfolio done by Fidelity throughout the year.

The committee then reviewed the President's quarterly expense report and approved.

Lastly, and very importantly, the Committee approved a fee increase of \$11 per credit which I would like to recommend for approval by the full board at this meeting. Our current tuition and fees are \$220 per credit. The fee increase will be effective for the Spring semester. Normally we do fee increases for the fall semester but the state was prepared to fund the colleges via a fee stabilization program so we wouldn't need to do fee increases but that fell apart early in the state budget process leaving us to do an increase for spring.

It is management's position that now is a good time to increase fees. Pell has increased an unprecedented amount for FY24 and is now at \$7,395. A \$500 increase which is almost double the increase in fees of \$264 for a full-time student. We expect another \$500 increase in Pell next year.

For students 25 and over that qualify for MassReconnect program there will be no out of pocket for them even if not Financial Aid eligible. Not increasing fees is leaving a lot of federal and state funds on the table.

Bristol has historically been one of the least expensive of the 15 Massachusetts community colleges. Usually 14 or 15th. With all the aid available and MassReconnect, it is no longer necessary to struggle to stay at the bottom of that list. The likelihood of MassReconnect expanding to a younger population or free community college is real. This means colleges charging more get more of the state reconnect funding while holding those students harmless.

Other schools are increasing as well and we will likely end up 13th or 14th even with the \$11 increase. The 5-6 schools who have already voted increases are all doing about \$10 per credit. Some of the high cost schools are doing \$5-6 per credit.

Our goal is to put Bristol in the middle of the 15 community colleges and take advantage of the F/A that it is out there for our students. That will free up more Foundation money to help those students who might not receive money from these programs.

This increase will generate about \$900K per year but only half that in FY24 with the spring implementation.

I would like to try to answer any questions you have about the recommended increase. I did make a full presentation to the Finance Committee on this topic that I could make available to the Board.

Hearing no questions, Steve asked for a motion to approve the report of the June 1st Finance/Budget Committee including the \$11 fee increase effective for Spring 2024 semester.

A motion was made by Trustee McGhee to approve the report of the Finance/Budget Committee report including the \$11/credit fee increase for spring semester. The motion was seconded by Trustee Ferreira. The motion was approved.

7. Report Nominating and Governance Committee – *Trustee Todd McGhee* in Trustee Baptista’s absence

In the absence of Nominating and Governance Committee Chair, Frank Baptista, Trustee McGhee provided a brief summary of the Nominating and Governance Committee report from May 1, 2023.

The Committee noted that guidelines approved by the Board of Trustees in 2009 which recommended a one-year term for officers with up to three consecutive terms to be served with no specified progression. Trustee Karam has served one term as Vice Chair. Trustee Dufresne has served two consecutive terms as Secretary.

There was a brief discussion of remaining eligibility for both positions and the possibility to re-nominate each Trustee for their current roles. Trustee McGhee shared approval of Committee’s recommendations to re-nominate Trustee Jeff Karam and Trustee Valentina Videva Dufresne.

Trustee McGhee asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to accept the re-nominations of Trustees Videva Dufresne and Karam. Trustee Mathes made a motion to accept the re-nominations of both Trustees. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gauvin. The motion was approved.

8. Report of Human Resources Committee – Trustee Valentina Videva Dufresne

The Board of Trustees Human Resources Committee met on Wednesday, May 31, 2023, which was just prior to the full board meeting on June 1st. While a brief committee report was made at the last board meeting, the draft of the President’s evaluation letter was not available for Board approval.

Trustee Videva Dufresne shared the Committee’s draft letter was now available and asked the Board if they had reviewed it, as it had been made available to all in the meeting materials for today. She highlighted the President’s outstanding work including a focus on equity and alignment of her annual goals with Strategic Plan.

Trustee Videva Dufresne stated the Committee recommended maximum allowable compensation including both merit and bonus recompence.

Trustee Videva Dufresne asked if there were any questions, or if discussion was necessary. Hearing none, she requested a motion to approve the evaluation letter including the compensation recommendations. Trustee Mathes made a motion to approve the President’s evaluation letter as presented. This motion was seconded by Trustee Clark. The motion was approved.

9. Old Business - none

10. New Business - none

11. Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Vice Chair Jeff Karam called for a motion to adjourn the Board meeting portion of the Board Retreat. Trustee Mathes made a motion to adjourn. Trustee McGhee seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:09 a.m.