Massachusetts Bay Community College Board of Trustees
Minutes of the February 24, 2015 Board of Trustees’ meeting – Wellesley Hills Campus

Board members present: Lyris Bauduy-Liautaud, Sylvia Beville, Ken Der, Tom Dretler, Tom Peisch, Emmett Price, Pam Richardson, and Katherine Tonelli
Board members absent: John Brown, Jamie Hoag and Dan Juliani

Staff members present: John O’Donnell, President; Elizabeth Blumberg, Dean of Students; Eileen Gerenz, Controller; Linda Grisham, Executive Director, Title III Grant; Kathleen Kirleis, Vice President for Finance & Administrative Services; E. Lee Koh, Director of Marketing and Institutional Communications; Robin Nelson-Bailey, Vice President for Human Resources; Robert O’Connell, Professor, STEM Division; Francesca Purcell, Provost and Chief Academic Officer; Yves Salomon-Fernandez, Vice President for Strategic Planning, Institutional Effectiveness and Grants Development; Mary Shia, Assistant Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Alumni Relations and Executive Director, MassBay Foundation; Steve Sullivan, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services; Christiane Turnheim, Director of Assessment and Adjunct Faculty, eLearning, Social Sciences and Professional Studies Division; and Vivian Ortiz, Executive Assistant to the President

Guests present: Richard Freeland, Commissioner and Jennifer Perkins, Office of Trustee Relations, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

Call to Order and Introductions – After establishing quorum, Chair Richardson called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. The trustees and staff members introduced themselves. Chair Richardson announced that our newest trustee, Jamie Hoag, had notified her that he was ill and was unable to attend the meeting.

Prior Meeting Minutes – Chair Richardson called for the review of the November 25, 2014 meeting minutes (Item 1).

MOTION: Trustee Der made the motion to accept the minutes as presented and Trustee Bauduy-Liautaud seconded. The motion passed, with Vice Chair Peisch abstaining.

Approval of the Consent Agenda – No trustee requested that any items from the Consent Agenda (Item 2) be removed for discussion.

MOTION: Trustee Beville made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Trustee Bauduy-Liautaud seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Foundation Report – The Finance Committee of the Foundation Board is looking at the current process on asset distribution of the investments. Trustee Juliani was hoping to speak more about the topic, but was unable to attend this Board meeting. Chair Richardson explained that her interpretation is that while the Board of Trustees has an interest in all matters at the College, the Foundation Board of Directors operates as its own entity.

VP Shia summarized the following items and events for the Foundation:

- Amount from donations and income for 2014 - $133,858 (up 30% from 2013)
- Deposits for January 2015 (from December 2014 donations) - $56,335
- An online fundraising appeal focused on scholarships for single parents is scheduled for March
- Artist Howie Green donated “Symphony in Rehearsal”, a painting valued at $3,500. The painting is located outside the auditorium in Wellesley Hills, home of the Wellesley Symphony Orchestra.
- The second round of donated artwork from the Art Connection is presently being installed.
- The Jacobs Foundation made a gift of $25K to the Health Sciences Division for scholarships.
- The Jacobs Foundation also donated $20K for the installation of an elevator for use by military veterans. The dedication ceremony is scheduled for Monday, March 2.
- Middlesex Savings Bank has donated $2,500 as the first sponsor for this year’s MassBay 5K Race.
- Planning is underway for the MassBay Antique Auto Show scheduled for Sunday, May 17 in Ashland.
- The Donor Appreciation Scholarship Event is scheduled for Sunday, March 15 in Wellesley Hills.

Trustees Dretler and Price joined the meeting at 8:12 a.m.

**SPRING 2015 ENROLLMENT REPORT** – Enrollment continues on a downtrend. VP Sullivan gave figures for credit classes. Headcount (HC) is down 5.6% from Spring 2014, where the aspirational goal was to increase HC by 5%. Full-time equivalent (FTE) has decreased by 6.9% from last year.

Provost Purcell presented the HC percentages by division:
- STEM – 2.8% decrease
- SSPS – 2.8% decrease
- Humanities – 8% decrease
- Health Sciences – 9.9% decrease
- Noncredit – increased by 16.3% with a small number in HC overall

The FY15 budget includes a loss of 4%. President O’Donnell defined the aspirational goals: 5% increase in HC is to meet the mission and vitality and a 3% increase in FTEs allows the College to keep up financially. The decrease translates to approximately 250 students.

A request was made that the report be presented on paper to ease in the retention of the information.

Discussion turned to expectations for the fall semester and the urgency of having an enrollment plan. A suggestion was made to have the plan presented on July 1.

After disclosing that his company recruits international students to the United States, Trustee Dretler spoke about the suggestion made at the December retreat for the College to use its name and location as an asset to boost enrollment – it is the only community college in the state with Massachusetts in its name.

MassBay had an international program in the past. Support was given to the idea of recruiting international students again, if studied thoroughly to ensure its success. A trustee suggested marketing English classes to international students and others.

President O’Donnell stated that the enrollment plan can be implemented while it is currently being written. The new marketing director and the admissions director, starting next week, will be involved in the process.

The President stated that MassBay’s financial position is in good shape because of financial efficiencies and retrenchments. If students are not being attracted, the College is not fulfilling its mission or helping the College financially.

Trustee Price feels that in order to receive academic support and address program needs, the enrollment plan needs to be in place before students arrive. The plan must include outcomes to ensure the success of students while at MassBay and as they continue on their educational or career path.
The Massachusetts community colleges have experienced decreases in enrollment for the semester, between 3 to 8% down. Chair Richardson suggested the system address this trend line.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE, COMPLIANCE, PERSONNEL & AUDIT COMMITTEE – VP Kirleis summarized the discussion from the February 17, 2015 Committee meeting.

Audit Reports – O’Connor & Drew presented the A-133 audit findings for the federal student funds the College receives.

Of the six findings from the FY13 audit, three were eliminated in FY14. A new finding was added, for a total of four. The most significant of the findings is based on the College not reporting the status of students through the national clearinghouse to the U.S. Department of Education on a timely basis. VP Kirleis noted that there is no materiality in the A-133, i.e. if one instance of non-compliance is found in the sample tested, a finding is given. The College’s A-133 committee continues to work to address the policies and procedures related to the findings.

Vice Chair Peisch concluded that the results are better than last year, but there is still work to be done. Vice Chair Peisch stated that the Board expects that the maximum effort be made to eliminate the findings.

FY15 Budget vs. Actual Budget Comparison Report for December 2014 (Item 3) – Revenue was $235K higher than budgeted, with expenses $399K less than budgeted, resulting in $2.2M in income. VP Kirleis cautioned about the next six months because of the drop in enrollment and the 1.5% cut in the appropriation, i.e. $222K will be remitted to the Commonwealth. The College uses the state appropriation for salaries and benefits. When the appropriation is cut, the College has to cover both the salaries and benefits. Instead of cutting the appropriation, the higher education institutions have been asked to remit the costs of the actual cut to the appropriation (out of non-appropriated funds) to the state. This will result in a savings of about $60K for MassBay.

VP Kirleis stated that, at this point, the College will not need to restructure operations but will not be able to realize the reserves as planned for this year. VP Kirleis does not expect an increase to the amount of the performance funding for this year.

MOTION: Chair Richardson made the motion to accept the December 2014 Budget vs. Actual Comparison Report; Trustee Der seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Organization Structure - In compliance with the by-laws, the President read a statement on restructuring the responsibilities within the leadership team focused on developing both an academic plan and a comprehensive enrollment management plan. The organization structure change and the need to make the change at this time will be communicated to the visiting team before the NEASC study occurs next month.

In response to Trustee Dretler’s question, President O’Donnell answered that articulation agreements will become the responsibility of VP Kirleis.

Also, the academic divisions are being reorganized to have the social science programs moved to the Humanities Division. The two liberal arts divisions, STEM and Humanities, will allow the College to be focused on the most popular transfer degree programs, the Associate in Arts, Associate in Science and Associate in General Studies.

Trustee Price made the observation that enrollment management responsibilities have been moved to fiscal services and that part of academic affairs has been spread throughout partnerships, collaborations, and
finance. Financial aid was moved to Finance to ensure compliance responsibilities are addressed. VP Salomon-Fernandez will facilitate the development of the academic plan with the responsibility of courses and programs remaining with academic affairs.

BY-LAWS COMMITTEE – Vice Chair Peisch spoke of the process to review and revise the By-Laws (Item 4), especially due to the upcoming NEASC evaluation visit and to ensure their alignment with the statutes of the Commonwealth. The proposed changes have been thoroughly vetted by MA Community College General Counsel Ken Tashjy. The plan is to review the by-laws on a regular basis.

MOTION: Vice Chair Peisch made the motion to accept the Massachusetts Community College Board of Trustees’ By-Laws as presented. Chair Richardson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

CAMPUS REPORT
Update on the NEASC Evaluation Visit – VP Salomon-Fernandez gave an update on the upcoming visit. The self-study report was submitted on February 13. After the visit, scheduled for March 29 to April 1, the team will prepare an overview and assessment of the materials submitted and interviews conducted during the visit. The final accreditation determination will be shared with the President in October 2015.

Important dates for trustees:

- Sunday, March 29 – Trustees are invited to a reception and dinner with the NEASC evaluation team, MassBay’s executives, the faculty and staff that put together the self-study report.
- Monday, March 30 – Trustees will meet with the evaluation team. Trustees are expected to be familiar with the report.

The team will conduct interviews with staff, faculty, board members and other stakeholders to evaluate the information provided by the College on the self-study report.

Key statistics and other information will be shared and sessions held to prepare all stakeholders before the visit.

Commissioner Freeland joined the meeting at 8:55 a.m.

VP Salomon-Fernandez presented highlights from the self-study report:

- Overcoming financial challenges as evidenced in the financial audit management letters
- Success in advocating for a new campus
- Progress in assessing student learning outcomes
- Improvements in intercollege communications
- Major investment in the college’s technological infrastructure

The areas where MassBay needs to focus on are:

- Increasing enrollment
- Financial strength of the College
- Aligning student orientation with the needs of all community college students
- Integrating faculty in to the life of the College
- Aligning academic programs with areas of high job growth and four-year schools

The group took a break and reconvened at 9:13 a.m. to meet with Commissioner Freeland.
VISIT FROM THE MA DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION (DHE) COMMISSIONER – Commissioner Freeland thanked the trustees for allowing him to come in for his yearly check-in visit. Dr. Freeland complimented the College's administration and Board of Trustees for the transformation that has occurred at MassBay over the last few years and congratulated the College for completing the self-study for NEASC. The Commissioner thanked the trustees for their dedication and volunteer service to the College.

Dr. Freeland acknowledged that the change in administration has many wondering about what changes may occur in the public higher education system. Secretary of Education Jim Peyser will address the participants at the Vision Project conference later in the week.

The Commissioner feels that Secretary Peyser and Governor Baker appreciate the emphasis placed on performance and accountability of public higher education institutions in the state, as well as a recognition that community colleges have lead the system in making improvements based on performance and accountability.

Part of the Commissioner’s responsibility is to draw attention to the elected officials about the connection between economic prosperity and the work being done at community colleges and all public higher education institutions. He also wants to make sure the story gets traction with Governor Baker. The community colleges are receiving more support now from the employer community today than it has during the Commissioner’s six years in office.

The MA Higher Education Finance Commission issued a report last summer endorsing more investment to the public higher education system in order to have the economy and workforce the state desires. The Commission recommended the state adopt a goal of making Massachusetts one of the top 10 systems in the country in terms of investment and support. An investment of $100M investment is needed for the next five years in order to make that goal.

In the past, community colleges were viewed as a social welfare project. Now, the state is interested in having these institutions and their students succeed.

Dr. Freeland views the new Senate President Rosenberg as the strongest champion of public higher education in the legislature and House Speaker De Leo has been an advocate, especially for community colleges for some time.

The House 1 Budget will be released in about a week.

The search for the new commissioner for the DHE continues, with the goal of having the person in place in June. Chair Richardson reviewed the selection process. Terms for three seats on the 13-member Board of Higher Education are ending as well.

Commissioner Freeland thanked President O’Donnell for his leadership of the College, within the group of community college presidents, and with MassBay's Board of Trustees.

Dr. Freeland commended MassBay for the following achievements:

- One of two leading community colleges to meet student success rates under Achieving the Dream
- Significantly exceeding regional demographics for enrolling students of color
- Leader among the community colleges of success rates for students of color.
- Closing the achievement gap for graduation rates and student success for students of color.

The Commissioner added that while MassBay has accomplished these achievements, the rates have been flat for the last three years. Improvement can be made on the 16% rate of students that successfully transition from developmental math to complete credit bearing courses.
Dr. Freeland recognized the College for relating to its core mission; aligning to the workforce and the needs of the region, as evidenced by the number of STEM and health care degrees generated. Commissioner Freeland noted that while the number remained high, he was “puzzled” by the decrease in health care degrees.

Commissioner Freeland pointed out how MassBay was able to demonstrate to the state that it has taken efficiencies to keep higher education affordable and avoid a fee increase. Dr. Freeland encouraged the Board to continue the conversation on ways to find additional cost savings for the upcoming fiscal year and share that information with the DHE.

Congratulated Dr. O’Donnell on his advocacy work for the Framingham campus.

Vice Chair Peisch asked Commissioner Freeland to comment on the decline in enrollment numbers. The Commissioner asked if MassBay is serving the communities in our service area as strongly as it can. MassBay is exceeding in reaching out to communities of color which is where the statistics show growth in community colleges is coming from. The state needs to keep more of the students that enroll in public higher education. The Commissioner suggested increasing outreach to adult students returning to school to complete degrees and military veterans.

Trustee Der shared his experience with having MassBay students intern at his accounting firm before suggesting the state form a system-wide internship program for community colleges. The suggestion would require leadership from the governor to form a partnership with the employer and higher education communities to develop human capital. The employer community asks for graduates that are workforce ready – something internships can provide.

Trustee Dretler asked if it would be possible to lease the Wellesley Hills campus to another institution in the state, for use for other purposes. Commissioner Freeland deferred to President O’Donnell. The President commented on options – rehab the campus and continue growing, leasing or selling and building another campus – that have been discussed in the planning of the Framingham campus.

Trustee Dretler said that military veterans are marketed to more aggressively by private institutions, which accounts for the low enrollment numbers of that population at the public institutions. Commissioner Freeland spoke about the federal government program that provides vouchers for adult workers to receive training at higher education institutions of their choice. About 80% of those workers choose to attend for-profits institutions. Those institutions market to and are much more accommodating to those students’ needs.

**ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 a.m.