

**MASSASOIT COMMUNITY COLLEGE
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
WEDNESDAY, February 18, 2026
Louison Board Room
Brockton, MA**

**Approved
March 18, 2026**

Attendees: Chair Tom Carroll, Vice Chair Dunphy, Eshita Chakrabarti, Carl Kowalski, David Offutt, Kate Welch

Remote: Laura Lawson, Eval Silvera

Absent: Bonnie Blackler, Daniel Pestana

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Chair Carroll - yes

Vice Chair Dunphy – yes

Trustee Chakrabarti – yes

Trustee Kowalski - yes

Trustee Lawson - yes

Trustee Offutt – yes

Trustee Silvera – yes

Trustee Welch – yes

Chairman's Report

Chair Carroll thanked everyone for being here tonight and called the meeting to order. He complimented the work that was done at the last meeting where we honored Dr. Gerard Burke as President Emeritus, and Mr. Robert Bowers and Mr. Roland Blanchette each as Professor Emeritus. It was an incredible walk down memory lane for folks to tell their stories of the rich history of Massasoit. Special thanks to everyone who helped put that together.

When President Mitchell was appointed interim president, the board asked him to build a strong administrative team. Ms. Kendra Butters joined us in January as the Vice President of External Relations, and most recently President Mitchell appointed Dr. Rita Jones-Hyde as Vice President of Academic Affairs and Mr. Joseph Harris as Vice President of Student Services and Enrollment Management. Ms. Angelina Medeiros was appointed as Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Effectiveness; Ms. Jennifer Holbrook was promoted to Director of Presidential Operations and Ms. Cori Foy was promoted to Executive Assistant to the President. All these appointments are well deserved, and I thank each of you for all you do for Massasoit.

Trustee Welch, Trustee Kowalski and Vice President Butters joined President Bill Mitchell in Washington D.C. at the Association of Community College Trustees National Legislative Summit. Chair Carroll asked them to share what they learned at the summit. Trustee Welch stated that on day 1, there were a lot of lectures and preparations for Day 2. On Day 2, we broke up into groups and went to see Congressman Keating. The point of the whole summit was to tell our congressmen what we need as community colleges, together nationwide. Trustee Kowalski stated that they were given instructions and talking points by which we would tell our senators and representatives what we needed as community colleges. We talked about the need for the Pell grant to remain high on the list of funding. Massasoit is a place for second chances. There are many people that go to this college who were told that they couldn't go to college, that it wasn't important.

Chair Carroll stated that on February 13, 2026, Massasoit hosted our legislative delegation. When we bring our local delegation to campus and they hear all the great things happening at Massasoit, it is a wonderful opportunity. Free community college has been a game changer and as a result, it is going to change communities, but there needs to be continued investment in our faculty. There is an approved study sitting at the Department of Higher Education that can hopefully be moved along so that we can make the necessary adjustments that have to happen with faculty. Our enrollment is up 2400 students, so we need the faculty and we need the support.

President's Report

President Mitchell thanked Trustee Welch and Trustee Kowalski for their advocacy for Massasoit at the Legislative Summit. He also thanked the facilities team for the remarkable job they did during the recent snowstorm. They worked numerous hours to ensure the campus was ready and safe for folks to come back. Our Massasoit Community College Police Department continues to excel. They just completed their audit by Mass Post and passed without any issues, and we want to recognize our police department when they do wonderful things. At the recent legislative breakfast, we had 14 elected officials here, 5 senators and 9 representatives, surpassing last year's numbers. We've removed the financial barrier for students with investment in free community college, and now we must support these students. In Massachusetts, community colleges are finally being recognized as driving this economy forward. Vice President Jones-Hyde met with Bridgewater State University and came up with a draft of a strategic plan. They plan to establish a non-credit paraprofessional training opportunity that involves the SEMA paraprofessionals. We're going to assess and refine the educational pathways from Brockton High School to Massasoit and then to Bridgewater State University in a few areas: early childhood education, elementary education and possibly secondary education. They are also exploring opportunities related to public health on the South Shore, micro-credentialing, radiology tech, respiratory, phlebotomy and EKG. As an update on NECHE, we had a wonderful site visit with our NECHE chair, Dr. Cheryl Lesser. She met with both NECHE co-chairs and cabinet. She loves our Student Center and talked about it several times. She commented about how friendly we are as a campus, how she visited the Canton campus to look at the vet tech program, and how she was able to meet us and President Mitchell to get some priorities of the college.

Mr. Joseph Harris, Vice President of Student Services and Enrollment gave an update on enrollment. We have slightly more than 6100 students enrolled in about 52,100 total credit hours for Spring 2026 semester, an increase of more than 5% and 10% respectively over the same time last year. We've made some significant changes to enrollment, specifically the admissions process over the past year. Three data points to highlight:

- We saw increases in our yield rate for every single week this cycle
- The number of repeat visitors to Student Central declined by 25%
- Applications for Nursing, Rad Tech etc. were due by February 1st. As of today, February 18th for the first time, every single application has been received, processed and entered Banner before March 1st.

President Mitchell stated that the college is discussing our 60th anniversary plans. Ms. Cori Foy, Executive Assistant, shared that she, along with co-chairs Ms. Ameer Sinnott, Title IV & Compliance Officer, Ms. Jennifer Holbrook, Director of Presidential Operations and several faculty and staff, including President Emeritus Wall and Professor Emeritus Anania are planning several events starting off with a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Science Building. A full calendar of events and dates will be posted this May.

President Mitchell asked Vice President of Administration and Finance CFO, William O'Neill, to talk about the Q2 results. Vice President O'Neill stated that the operating revenue and expenses are right where we expect them to be, both are within the prior year trends, and we are in a good place with our state appropriation line item for revenue. Our receivables this year are greater compared to last year. When you look at our receivables as it relates to free community college, a lot of it is tied to the affidavits, the paperwork needed to feed the system and trigger the transfer of funds. Mr. Todd Hughes of Student Financial Services carved almost half a million dollars out of the receivable in about 9 days for folks to do MASFA, FAFSA and other affidavits needed. We have a position that has been posted that is going to focus on outreach and helping students as they come in to accomplish the administrative burden that is part of Mass Educate, part of free community college.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Trustee Dunphy and seconded by Trustee Chakrabarti to approve the consent agenda.

Roll Call:

Chair Carroll - yes

Vice Chair Dunphy – yes

Trustee Chakrabarti – yes

Trustee Kowalski - yes

Trustee Lawson - yes

Trustee Offutt – yes

Trustee Silvera – yes

Trustee Welch – yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Annual investment update by CORIENT

Mr. Robert Quinn, from Corient introduced his colleague Mr. Greg DiMazio and provided an update on the college's investments. He stated that we focus on long-term growth of corporate earnings and last year was much better than expected. We've been able to add to our reserves in 2021 and 2022. It is a conservative portfolio, built to protect against the downside risk in the market. We are not concentrated in any one area as a means of reducing risk. Today, with artificial intelligence, we are already at 55%. Trustee Offutt commented that with AI being favorable, do you anticipate any challenges with our portfolio? Mr. Quinn responded that there are always challenges but what our concern is focusing on each quarter, each year and being diligent in monitoring. Trustee Offutt followed up by asking, if we are two times better on our return, are you saying that is directly connected to your skill? Mr. Quinn responded that just being long-term focused had a higher-than-average allocation.

Human Resources Onboarding Presentation by Margaret Gazzara Hess, Vice President of Human Resources, Kim Sylvia Associate Director and Jaclyn McNamara Senior Generalist/Talent Management

Vice President Margaret Gazzara Hess and her talent acquisition team provided an update on the onboarding process. Kimberly Sylvia, Associate Director of Human Resources and Jaclyn McNamara, Senior HR Generalist, talked about the data-driven approach they are using to ensure continuous long-term improvement. An overview of Onboarding Initiatives included, Onboarding Enhancements, Peer Mentor Program Updates and 30-Day Survey Results. All resources have been posted to the MyMassasoit portal. The Hiring Manager Toolkit ensures that all managers have access to these resources, and the toolkit is also included in the portal. It includes the Hiring Manager checklist, the Staff guide and the Job Aid for managers. Ms. McNamara talked about the New Employee Guide and how user-friendly it is, and about Job Aid, which focuses on a clear framework for customizing the guide and a roadmap for maintaining and updating. Next, it will be focused on the launch of the unified HR IT training. None of this is possible without collaboration across all divisions. Vice President of External Relations, Kendra Butters, confirmed that her onboarding experience was seamless. Trustee Offutt stated how impressed he was with the presentation and thanked the staff for their hard work. Trustee Carroll also stated how impressed he was with the presentation and asked if they measured retention rate, turnover rate and how these interventions will help us to retain our staff. Vice President Margaret Gazzara Hess responded that we do measure turnover rate, breaking it out by AFSCME, NUP's etc. and stated that we have seen an uptick in people retiring and our overall turnover rate is 12% across the board. Chair Carroll then asked if HR was able to benchmark those numbers against the other community colleges? Vice President Gazzara Hess responded that they have not shared that with us.

Recommendation that the Board of Trustees approve an expenditure of \$64,755 for the purchase of one (01) hydraulic training system for the Diesel Technology program at the Canton Campus, by Katie Ruggieri, Dean STEM and Matthew Waterman, Associate Academic Dean of STEM (vote needed).

Associate Dean Waterman stated that in the Fall, Mr. Aaron Rovaldi, Assistant Professor, talked about the amazing things that truck and heavy Equipment is doing and that requesting this equipment is to help further their mission. They are requesting the purchase of updated instructional equipment to prepare students for current industry standards

and workforce expectations, specifically modern heavy equipment hydraulic systems training. We have settled on the FTPI hydraulic training system because it provides comprehensive, industry-aligned training to help students in system operations, troubleshooting and diagnostics. Dean Ruggieri stated it would align with two goals in our strategic plan, Academic Renewal and Innovation and Reimagining our College Identity. It would reinforce Massasoit as a regional leader in workforce development. It is an expensive piece of equipment (\$64,755) which has been included in this year's budget. It is movable to different classrooms, it includes lifetime support, a permanent print license for instructional materials and access to e-learning content.

Trustee Silvera asked if the equipment is scalable if enrollment increases? Dean Ruggieri responded that it is scalable and that within their budgeted amount, they were able to purchase a single sided trainer with the option to add on to those modules in future growth. Trustee Silvera also asked if there is a 2-year or 3-year warranty plan in case something breaks down. Associate Dean Waterman responded that the lifetime support includes maintaining the equipment.

A motion was made by Trustee Kowalski and seconded by Trustee Offutt to approve an expenditure of \$64,755 for the purchase of one (01) hydraulic training system for the Diesel Technology program.

Roll Call:

Chair Carroll - yes
Vice Chair Dunphy – yes
Trustee Chakrabarti – yes
Trustee Kowalski - yes
Trustee Lawson - yes
Trustee Offutt – yes
Trustee Silvera – yes
Trustee Welch – yes

The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Trustee Dunphy and seconded by Trustee Welch to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Roll Call:

Chair Carroll - yes
Vice Chair Dunphy – yes
Trustee Chakrabarti – yes
Trustee Kowalski - yes
Trustee Lawson - yes
Trustee Offutt – yes
Trustee Silvera – yes
Trustee Welch – yes

Recording Secretary – Cori Foy
Chair – Tom Carroll