

**MASSASOIT COMMUNITY COLLEGE
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 2025
Virtual
6:03 p.m.**

APPROVED
June 18, 2025

Attendees: Tom Carroll, Bonnie Blackler, Eshita Chakrabarti, Jim Dunphy, Kacey Hilton-Gilleo, Carl Kowalski, Laura Lawson, Kate Welch

Absent: Eval Silvera

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

Roll Call:

Chair Carroll - yes
Trustee Blackler – yes
Trustee Chakrabarti – yes
Vice Chair Dunphy – yes
Trustee Hilton-Gilleo – yes
Trustee Kowalski - yes
Trustee Lawson - yes
Trustee Welch – yes

Chairman's Report

Chair Carroll thanked the staff and faculty who worked on Commencement. He is incredibly proud that we had a wonderful experience for our students. The speeches given by Trustee Silvera and Trustee Hilton-Gilleo were tremendous. The Evening of Champions event was well attended. The alumni and student speakers were impactful.

President's Report

President Mitchell reported that May was a busy and exciting month of pinnings, ceremonies, finals, grading, and Commencement. Executive orders out of Washington continue to be vague. We continue to follow the Pell grant program which is reinventing who is eligible based on credits. We will continue to work with the Senate through MACC and reinstate Pell. There is a plan to eliminate the TRIO program which assists 700 underserved students at Massasoit. TRIO will be funded at least through the 2025/2026 academic year by our Operating Budget. The 2025/2026 spending plan will be presented at the June board meeting. We will be asking for a 2% increase, which is about \$4 credit which will bring us to \$228 a credit hour. We received a Basics needs grant of \$114,000 from the Department of Higher Education. President Mitchell welcomed the incoming local MPA Robin Peery and Andrea Frank. He thanked Angelina Avedano for her two-year term. He introduced Donna Wright, Interim Dean of Liberal Studies and the Arts. Along with President Kennedy, Berkshire Community College, President Mitchell will testify on the BRIGHT ACT in front of the Joint Committee on Higher Education at the State House. The BRIGHT act is the Governor's desire to create \$2.8 billion dollars of capital and deferred maintenance dollars for higher public education. We will be hosting the Metro South Chamber of Commerce Athena Awards. This year's keynote speaker is Lieutenant Governor Driscoll. President Mitchell will attend the NJCAA in Charlotte, North Carolina to accept an award on behalf of Mr. Jim Craig. Mr. Craig played his first year of collegiate hockey at Massasoit. Our first alumni meeting will be held on Friday, June 20. On July 16 there will be a groundbreaking ceremony for the Science building. We will hold a board retreat on Friday, August 8.

Student Trustee Report

Trustee Hilton-Gilleo reported that the Student Advisory Council met on May 20, to complete elections for next year's representatives. The next voting student member will be Thales de Souza, originally from Cape Cod Community, transferring to Bunker Hill Community College. We will also have two other segmental advisors who are student reps as well. We welcome Daniel Pestana, who has been elected as the 2025/2026 Student Trustee. The student engagement platform hopes for a soft launch in August.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Vice Chair Dunphy and seconded by Trustee Welch to approve items 1, 2, 3 and 4 on the Consent Agenda.

Roll Call:

Chair Carroll - yes
Trustee Blackler – yes
Trustee Chakrabarti – yes
Vice Chair Dunphy – yes
Trustee Hilton-Gilleo – yes
Trustee Kowalski - yes
Trustee Lawson - yes
Trustee Welch – yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Strategic Plan Update by Dr. Rita Jones Hyde, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs

Dr. Rita Jones Hyde reported that this will be a brief update. A much larger presentation will be prepared for the Fall with updates in every category. Under the first goal of the Strategic Plan, equitable enrollment and student support, our objective is to dismantle barriers for enrollment with the aim of achieving diverse, sustainable enrollment. In pursuit of that objective, we have partnered with AACRAO Consulting. This partnership consists of 2 distinct phases. The first was our discovery phase which was an employee led discovery process inventory that was completed in the Fall of 2024. The second phase, which is underway now, is working closely with both functional and technical AACRAO resources. We self-identified and improved the processes and integrations. The aim right now is to implement the customer relationship management system. We continue to increase our ESOL offerings. We are piloting an English as a second language, 098101 course pairing. We are eliminating or deactivating our standalone developmental courses. As part of this process, we're piloting the 098101 English course that's a paired co-rec course for students that come out of our English language sequence for credit for the academic ESOL program. We've hired an Associate Director for ESOL for community education that will start in early June. For our second goal, academic renewal and innovation, the academic realignment is complete. In January, the final two departments History and Government and Social Science were moved to the division of Liberal Studies and the Arts. We are in the final stages of the search for the Dean of Behavioral Science, Public Service and Education, two new faculty members in the Business department and the Associate Dean of STEM. We are in the early stages of the search for the Associate Dean for General Education. We continue to strengthen our relationship with Bridgewater State University discussing reverse transfer support for BSU dismissed students and students completing their associate's degree before they transfer and better align our educational program. For Goal 3 - reimagining college identity number, we continue to offer additional courses in Canton including Liberal Studies and the Arts, Criminal Justice and lab courses. The Middleborough site is underway, and we are focusing on Liberal Studies and the Arts, Criminal Justice, and Education. We will offer early college classes to students at Middleborough High School. For Goal 4 - equitable engagement and community belonging, we completed the search for the Chief Diversity Officer, and we're in the final stages of hiring for that position. For Goal 4 - organizational employee excellence, we are planning professional development workshops for our new, full-time and part-time faculty. As enrollment increases, we will increase the number of faculty and update the onboarding process. We will continue the campus open forums in the Fall of 2025 and Spring of 2026. NECHE committees have been meeting and will turn in their description, appraisal and projection by May

30. Dr. Jones Hyde will work with Amanda Donovan, Executive Director of Grants and Angela Medeiros, Executive Director of Institutional Research, to prepare the first draft.

Recommendation that the Board of Trustees approve a college credit card for William O'Neill, Vice President of Administration/CFO, and for Dr. Rita Jones Hyde, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, as outlined in the College Trust Fund Guidelines (vote needed)

President Mitchell reported that credit cards are primarily used for divisional travel plans and in the past were approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President of Administration and Finance. The President will review monthly purchases for approval.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Dunphy and seconded by Trustee Chakrabarti to approve a college credit card for William O'Neill, Vice President of Administration/CFO, and for Dr. Rita Jones Hyde, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, as outlined in the College Trust Fund Guidelines.

Roll Call:

Chair Carroll - yes
Trustee Blackler – yes
Trustee Chakrabarti – yes
Vice Chair Dunphy – yes
Trustee Hilton-Gilleo – yes
Trustee Kowalski - yes
Trustee Lawson - yes
Trustee Welch – yes

The motion passed unanimously

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

Margaret Gazzara Hess, Vice President of Human Resources, discussed how the focus of the process improvement project has been to enhance the onboarding experience for new employees, in alignment with Goal V and Strategy 3 of the College's Strategic Plan. As part of this initiative, Human Resources has been tasked with implementing enhancements that support the College's growth and development objectives. Kim Sylvia, Associate Director Human Resources, along with her colleagues conducted a survey last fall among new employees to gather valuable feedback. This survey highlighted both the strengths of our current onboarding process and areas for improvement, particularly regarding department-specific onboarding. Using these insights, we developed a series of targeted initiatives to ensure that new employees feel welcomed, informed, and well-prepared to contribute to the College's success from day one while providing hiring managers with the necessary tools and support. The initiatives touch on all aspects from pre-boarding activities and processes through long term or continuous onboarding. Three key enhancements are the College-wide consistent Onboarding Program, Department Specific Onboarding or Orientation and the introduction of a peer mentor program, which will provide additional support and training, while fostering camaraderie among team members. These initiatives are designed to enhance employee satisfaction, improve retention, and promote a cohesive organizational culture. Additionally, they provide hiring managers with consistent tools and guidance to deliver high-quality onboarding experience across all divisions of the College. Jaclyn McNamara, Human Resources Senior Generalist/Talent Management discussed the new employee guide which is a recent enhancement to the onboarding experience. This will be a key resource, designed to support new employees and provide a successful, consistent and streamlined onboarding process. In conclusion, the HR Team has made substantial progress in improving the onboarding experience, directly supporting the College's strategic goals. By implementing key enhancements such as the peer mentor program, consistent on-boarding and tailored department-specific orientation, we aim to create a supportive environment where new employees feel engaged, valued, and prepared to contribute to the College's continued growth. We are confident that these changes will positively impact on employee engagement, retention, and the long-term strength of our institution.

Public Comments: None

A motion was made by Trustee Welch and seconded by Vice Chair Dunphy to adjourn the meeting at 6:59 p.m.

Roll Call:

Chair Carroll - yes
Trustee Blackler – yes
Trustee Chakrabarti – yes
Vice Chair Dunphy – yes
Trustee Hilton-Gilleo – yes
Trustee Kowalski - yes
Trustee Lawson - yes
Trustee Welch – yes