



Muskegon Community College

BOARD OF TRUSTEES BOARD RETREAT MINUTES August 27, 2020 – 9:30 a.m. Zoom Meeting

Present: Chair Osborn, Vice Chair Mullally, Trustee Frye, Trustee Moore, Trustee Crandall, Trustee Oakes and Trustee Portenga

Chair Osborn called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m.

- I. **President's Evaluation** – MCC operates under a policy governance structure where the President and the Board jointly set priorities for the organization. These are Ends Policies, which are specific goals for the CEO, as well as Executive Limitations, which outline what the CEO cannot do.

Dr. Nesbary presented his self-evaluation. Insuring that our evaluative tools match up between the Board Ends Policies, President's evaluation, Strategic Plan, and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) evaluative criteria has been one of the big goals. While it is not a formal part of the evaluation, nor a formal Ends Policy, Dr. Nesbary included "Health and Wellness of the Community", as most of what we have been doing recently has been focused on that topic.

Trustee Crandall gave the following feedback:

- Going forward, he would like to see result evaluation instead of process evaluation.
- Regarding opinion surveys, an internal opinion is different from asking the community how well they believe we are doing in preparing students for success, or asking the students whether they believe they have been prepared adequately for success. He is more interested in understanding the exact impact of what we are doing.
- Regarding economic surveys, he would like to see a comparison of where we were in 2014 to where we were in 2017 and whether we are increasing or decreasing our economic impact in the community. We had an unusual period with significant rapid capital improvement and as that winds down it would be helpful to see what we are doing aside from capital improvement that is impacting the economy and the community.

Trustee Portenga questioned graduation rates. The HLC report stated MCC's graduation rate as 16.5 percent and Dr. Nesbary reports it at 20 percent. Dr. Nesbary responded that 20 percent is the most recent information he received from Eduardo Bedoya, Institutional Research for MCC. When Dr. Ed Breitenbach and Hollie Benson join the meeting, they can explain what year the 16.5 percent references, as there are various methods and time-periods for measuring the graduation rate.

As a measureable outcome (page 8), a cost reduction plan was proposed rather than implemented. The Board is really pleased with the cost saving efforts implemented by Administration over the last two years to balance the budget, it would be helpful to understand and have additional detail on how these were achieved. The Board would like to understand exactly how much savings are achieved on particular projects they approve and/or initiate such

as the printer/copiers, energy improvements, etc. If the Board takes action on a specific purchase or a specific policy, reporting those specific outcomes would be helpful. Dr. Nesbary will ask that Ken Long provide this detail in his financial reports to the Board such as how much was saved with early retirements, furloughs, switching printer/copier services, etc.

Dr. Crandall recognized Chair Osborn and Arn Boezaart for all that has been done to improve the Foundation and the great work engaging with the major Capital Improvement projects that are now behind us. In reviewing the "Resource Development" progress, there are a lot of "to be determined" and "did not meet goal". It is much more difficult to raise money for ongoing support, endowments, etc. and will require a significant effort by the FMCC Board and Administration to improve that entire process to get us where we need to be. He also stated that we have some longstanding support in members of the community that have not contributed to our Foundation in a few years because we have not made the appropriate ask. He stated, "This is the one part of our entire operation over the last year or so, that is an area that needs more emphasis and more support from the Administration, so we can be more successful in resource development." Chair Osborn agreed stating, "It's something we need to work on marketing and bringing somewhat internal, so everyone understands we all have to work toward this goal. If people see our faculty, staff, and everyone else involved in this internally, it's easier to get it external."

Trustee Portenga stated he has always been interested in management/employee relations, which involves calm and inspirational leadership and was surprised recently when the faculty were asked for concessions and the vote was so close. He has heard of some faculty giving indications of some tensions and would like to know Dr. Nesbary's response to this. Dr. Nesbary responded that he agrees there is some tension. Regarding the vote on concessions, he does not believe faculty were being given good information on the gravity of the situation by their internal leadership. A lot of the tension came from us pushing faculty to convert from face-to-face teaching to online teaching and some comes from not listening when information is communicated. Chair Osborn added that maybe we need to bring that leadership in to help them understand where we are going in this whole new situation. It may be time to over communicate to a certain extent, to give them the leadership they feel confident in going into these new venues.

Contract Renewal and Compensation – The Board will need to review the president's contract and remuneration.

- A new evaluation tool will be created. Each trustee will rate on a scale of 1-5 how well the President met the specific Ends Policies, report on the president's personal evaluation, and make comments. In addition to how the last three years have gone, so much has happened/changed this year and the Board will need to reflect on moving forward.
- Evaluations will be forwarded to the Chair and the Board will come back together to review the results and make a final evaluation, make any compensation adjustments, and anything else that needs to be decided to complete the evaluation process.
- The Board clarified the last time the president had an increase in his pay was 2017. The President stated he would agree not to take a pay increase for this year, along with everyone else.

2. Higher Learning Commission (HLC) [Re-Accreditation](#)

- Dr. Ed Breitenbach and Hollie Benson discussed the HLC re-accreditation process and reviewed the Assurance Argument document the reviewers will use for their visit. Criterion 2 is the section addressing the Board and their role in the institution.
- Dr. Breitenbach has been on two visits to other colleges as an HLC peer reviewer and discussed questions the reviewers might ask. With COVID, there will only be one peer reviewer on campus part of the day, a faculty member and peer reviewer from Grand Valley State University. The additional five or so team members will have virtual visits.
- The HLC visit schedule is being finalized. Dr. Breitenbach asked that the Board coordinate a one-hour virtual meeting with the visiting team on October 5 or 6, with at least half of the Trustees. Reviewers will also meet with a group of students, faculty, staff and community members.
- Dr. Nesbary noted the most recent three-year IPEDS graduation rates he received from Eduardo Bedoya were 20 percent. In the HLC report, it is listed as 16 percent, which came from the Strategic Plan progress report. The correct percentage of 19+ percent was verified and will be corrected in the HLC reporting.
- The time to make improvements is now, so the evidence may be included in the Assurance Argument. There is a survey in the [Assurance Argument document](#) on the Board MyMCC page for feedback. The leadership team will review information on September 1, and get everything integrated before the lock date of September 7. Since September 7 is Labor Day, the team's goal is to complete and lock the document on September 4.
- A [student video](#) explaining the HLC accreditation process was viewed.
- The loss of accreditation for Early Childhood Education, which was noted in the HLC document, was discussed. This is a voluntary accreditation separate from the HLC accreditation and is not required for the program to continue, for students to transfer to four-year institutions, etc. MCC is working to reinstate this voluntary accreditation and the first opportunity to re-apply will be in the fall of 2021.

3. [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Presentation](#) by Ed Garner and Dr. Pamela Smith

- Dr. Nesbary, Ed and Dr. Smith met early this year and discussed what is and is not happening in our area related to DEI. They agree we need an organization with the capacity and willingness to move this initiative forward and want to get the Board's support before moving ahead.
- Ed shared three organizations in the last day that are launching individual efforts. He noted that collectively, there is no organization doing programming for the community around this particular effort. With everything going on around the world, people are more ready than ever to face this issue and the time is right to introduce a more robust program to serve our community. They believe there is no better place than Muskegon Community College because of MCC's reputation, it is a known entity in the community, is non-biased and non-political, therefore, MCC would be the perfect location to host this program.
- Dr. Smith shared there has been some work done around DEI at MCC under Trynette Lottie-Harps direction, but this is a proposal to take us a bit further.
- Dr. Smith shared her conceptual framework document called the [Cornerstones of DEI](#), which are seen as the components that would take the college to another level. This framework addresses DEI from both an internal and an external perspective. Under the

cornerstone of Cultural Awareness would be training and train the trainers. MCC would develop a training model, bring together or train some trainers that would then be able to go out and provide the service to organizations.

- There are many organizations asking who is providing this service. MCC could become the expert in this area, and it could become a revenue builder for the college. Dr. Smith and Ed Garner are excited about leading with their expertise in this area and reaching out to other experts, bringing together a group of experts to develop the model presented today.
- Dr. Nesbary addressed how this position would be paid for – Trynette’s position will be open for the rest of the year and faculty member Kevin Kyser is providing direction on a part-time basis in the interim. MCC will fill the position at some point and either repurpose it, or decide that the highest and best use for a number of other positions on campus, especially now, would be DEI.
- Chair Osborn finds this exciting and agrees that MCC is the place for this to be.
- Trustee Crandall noted the Board discussed the possibility of creating an Institute of DEI four or five years ago that would help coordinate the entire community. There are many activities going on around the community and he believes we need a much grander vision than just replacing the void that Trynette’s position created. The activities and incidents over the last year have made this absolutely critical. It is one of the most important things affecting our country and our community and we need to find a way to finance it. He likes the cornerstone approach, noting it is a specific program and has a lot of merit to it and he supports the college supporting that. He believes the vision ought to be even broader, not only instituting an educational program, but also trying to bring together all the ongoing activities around the community impacting DEI and creating a community-wide strategy all can participate in. He believes with a broader approach, we would create that critical mass to will make it more successful and make an impact in the community. He is very supportive of the suggestions and recommends thinking broader and more inclusive in approaching this stating, “We need a bigger goal than just instituting one program.”
- Ed Garner responded, “Dr. Crandall is absolutely right, this is bigger than just a training program and there are a number of efforts around town.” He sees this developing into a centralized hub for all things operating under this space. The other programs are all separate and there is no connection between them all, MCC would be that connection.
- A concern was shared about funding this new expense if it is not directly related to student coursework and getting them on the path to degree attainment. Trustee Crandall shared that the budget of an organization reflects their beliefs. Right now, this issue is so critical and has so much interest and support around the country and there are going to be funding opportunities to do something like this. If we move forward and develop it, there will be grant opportunities and special funding opportunities for this type of a program. The events over the past six months with Corona and other issues around Black Lives Matter, those are issues that have moved high up on the agenda of needs for the community and it would be appropriate for the college to take an active role and find a way to finance those to the extent possible. Chair Osborn agreed. Trustee Portenga stated, “We absolutely need the program, we should move ahead with the program” and believes the programs MCC has offered in the past have been effective in the community.
- Dr. Smith shared in the months leading up to quarantine, she received a number of calls from individuals, one as small as twelve employees, who approached her prior to the pandemic and quarantine wanting to address these very issues. It is part of what is going on around us today and is almost expected that we have a strategy. This would be seen as an

umbrella with many different components under it. We move with the times and address the issues of the community and we will be around for a very long time.

- Ed Garner recommended starting out by doing some surveying of the business community and others to see what types of things they are looking for and what they need. Many companies feel an obligation to do something around this effort, but many do not have the capacity in-house to fully develop a program and need resources they can easily tap into to address this. Many are grappling with it and do not know where to start, but feel they need to address it in some form or manner.
- Dr. Nesbary sees this as a core component of our operating budget for the foreseeable future.

Trustee Frye thanked the presenters for their information and hopes we move fairly quickly on this.

4. **Updated Policy Manual Language** – Trustee Crandall moved that the dates in policy 2.04 be more generic and less specific so the Board has some flexibility, correct the numbering and bring the edited language back at the September Board meeting for approval; second. Vote unanimous; motion carried.

2.04 Agenda Planning

To accomplish its job products with a governance style consistent with Board policies, the Board will follow an annual agenda that (a) completes a re-exploration of Ends policies annually and (b) continually improves Board performance through Board education, enriched input, and deliberation.

1. The cycle will conclude each year on the last day of **March December** so that administrative planning and budgeting can be based on accomplishing a one-year segment of the Board's most recent statement of long-term Ends.
2. The cycle will start with the Board's development of its agenda for the next year.
 - a. Consultations with selected groups in the ownership, or other methods of gaining ownership input, will be determined and arranged in the first quarter of the fiscal year, to be held during the balance of the year.
 - b. Governance education and education related to Ends determination (presentations by futurists, demographers, advocacy groups, staff, and so on) will be arranged in the first quarter of the fiscal year, to be held during the balance of the year.
3. Throughout the year, the Board will attend to consent agenda items as expeditiously as possible.
4. Presidential monitoring will be on the agenda if reports have been received since the previous meeting, if plans must be made for direct inspection monitoring, or if arrangements for third-party monitoring must be prepared.
5. The President's remuneration will be decided during the month of May August after a review of monitoring reports received in the last year.

5. Other

- Trustee Portenga discussed the survey for the Lakeshore Fitness Center (LFC).
 - Roger Rapoport and Gary Neal want to conduct a community survey. MCC and the Board did not authorize the survey, but did agree to review it and take it into consideration.
 - Trustee Portenga spoke with Gary Neal yesterday, who wants to facilitate this survey. Due to privacy issues, etc., we cannot provide them with the membership list for the survey. Balducci, the company hired to conduct the survey, would like the member's email addresses for sending the surveys. Balducci suggested MCC's IT department could send the survey to the membership, who could then return it to the surveyor (Balducci). Trustee Portenga asked whether we could do this. He supports conducting their survey thorough our IT Department if possible.
 - Trustee Crandall agrees that we should do anything in our power to help make this successful, as long as there isn't a great expense to MCC. They have raised a lot of money and the information gained from this survey will be beneficial to the Board as they look to the future and what will be done with this property and MCC should help facilitate this.
 - If MCC agrees to this, the very first paragraph needs to read: Muskegon Community College is forwarding this survey and your private information has not been given to third parties, and MCC is not involved in the survey itself, but rather the conduit. MCC is not the custodians of, or responsible for, information you may submit by completing the survey. Your response to the surveyor will identify your information and give consent to your information being provided. All questions should be directed to: email@...com MCC's attorney will review the above language that will preface the survey. IT will be asked to set up the email in a way that the person sending the survey does not receive questions/responses, but rather Balducci, the surveyor.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:23 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Secretary Nancy Frye.

/csd