

Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Wednesday, June 21, 2017
6:00 p.m. in the Louison Board Room, Brockton Campus

Attendees:, Bonnie Blackler, Christopher Blunt, Thomas Carroll, Eshita Chakrabarti, Deborah Enos, Pamerson Ifill, David Offutt, Anthony Simonelli, Ann Sullivan, Valerie Sullivan

Absent: TJ Lacey

Call to order

Chair Ifill called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Chairman's Report

Chair Ifill welcomed everyone and noted that the AFSCME unit was well represented at the meeting. He acknowledged correspondence between Sheila Kearns, AFSCME chief steward Unit I / parliamentarian, Raelyn Lincoln, assistant to the President, and Chair Ifill where the unit requested to be added to the June meeting agenda. Chair Ifill said that the Board is not insensitive to the unit's request, however; the bylaws require members of the Massasoit community who wish to have items placed on an agenda under "other business" must submit the request in writing to the Chair at least ten (10) days before the meeting. He noted that the unit has been invited to join the regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting in August.

Chair Ifill commended the entire faculty and staff for their excellent work with Commencement on June 2. He noted that Trustee Blunt was among the graduates and will attend Northeastern in the fall. He said that Trustee Blunt's service to the Board has been exemplary and thanked him for his contributions. He introduced Ida O'Donnell, Director of the Multicultural Office, and thanked her for her 35 years of service to the college and fervent dedication the students. During Commissioner Santiago's visit to the college in February the Commissioner advised that a focus area for growth is international students. Chair Ifill asked how Massasoit can build an institution that attracts international students and thus improves enrollment. President Wall advised that there is a white paper about the development of the multicultural center available to the Board. Chair Ifill welcomed the paper and added that the Board is looking for tangible results and hopes to see the center come to fruition.

Chair Ifill shared that Raelyn Lincoln, assistant to the president, will be moving on to new opportunities. He thanked her on behalf of the entire Board for her level of commitment and engagement to the institution and noted that she is a zealous advocate of all things Massasoit. She will be missed.

President's Report

President Wall advised that Massasoit is collaborating with the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, Bridgewater State University, Brockton High School, and Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School in the 100 males to college program. The kickoff event was held at Brockton High School on June 17 and was a success. Additionally, Massasoit has entered into a special relationship with Bridgewater State University called MCC2BSU; a new initiative that guarantees dual admission into targeted undergraduate programs at Bridgewater State University to Massasoit Community College students.

Student Trustee's Report

Trustee Blunt thanked the Board, the Administration, and Dr. Wall for a rich and rewarding experience and for the forum in which to lend the student voice in the student trustee's report.

Approval of the Minutes of the May 10, 2017 Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Board of Trustees.

A motion was made by Trustee Offutt and seconded by Trustee Chakrabarti to approve the minutes of the May 10, 2017 Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Board of Trustees. The motion passed unanimously.

Presentation and request for approval of appointing William Mitchell, Vice President for Administration/CFO, as Interim President with a salary commensurate with the position and consistent with established Massachusetts Department of Higher Education guidelines by Chair Pamerson Ifill. (vote needed)

Chair Ifill noted that in addition to convening the Presidential Search, one of the items the Board is tasked with is appointing an interim president to cover the vacancy until a new president is selected. Paramount to the decision making process is determining the needs of the college and mirroring those needs with the strengths and qualifications of the interim candidate. Some colleges have looked externally for candidates but most often in the commonwealth internal candidates are selected. He said that given the current fiscal position of the college that the recommendation of William A. Mitchell is the most appropriate choice given his qualifications, proven business background, and fiscal management of educational institutions in the commonwealth.

Trustee Blackler raised the question of whether Sr. Vice President Palantzas was considered for the role of Interim President. Trustee Simonelli said that one of the critical things to understand when we look at Massasoit is that it is not just the Brockton campus, by moving Sr. Vice President Palantzas from the Canton campus it disrupts two campuses. Given the fiscal challenges and transitional time, providing continuity and stability to the institution was a principal factor in the decision. Trustee Sullivan questioned if the executive committee considered if this appointment would overburden Vice President Mitchell as both the CFO and Interim President. Vice Chair Carroll said that the point is well taken, however; after having the opportunity to serve on the finance committee and work closely with members of Vice President Mitchell's team, Vice President Mitchell has built a solid team that is fully capable of handling the workload during the interim period. Trustee V. Sullivan stressed that while the college is faced with significant fiscal challenges, we cannot cut our way to success; the institution needs to remain focused on providing the academic and support services to our students.

Roll Call Vote for Interim President:

Chair Ifill - yes

Trustee Blackler - no

Trustee Blunt - yes

Trustee Carroll - yes

Trustee Chakrabarti - yes

Trustee Enos - yes

Trustee Offutt - yes

Trustee Simonelli - yes

Trustee A. Sullivan - yes

Trustee V. Sullivan - yes

The motion to approve and appoint William A. Mitchell, Vice President for Administration/CFO, as Interim President with a salary commensurate with the position and consistent with established Massachusetts department of Higher Education guidelines was approved with one dissention.

Presentation of the College Administration's disposition of an incident involving a former assistant baseball coach and a student by President Charles Wall and relevant administrators.

Chair Ifill noted that there was an incident that happened several months ago and stressed that whenever there is an incident or accident that it is incumbent upon the Board to understand the nature of such events, the manner in which they are investigated, how a resolution is reached, and how the Board receives the information.

President Wall asked Vice President Tracy to discuss the incident and advised that the discussion would stress the investigation process rather than discussing individuals so as to remain compliant with FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) and other confidentiality-related regulations. He advised that it is often a judgement call whether or not to inform the Board of certain incidences and, in retrospect, he would have informed the Board that this particular event was likely to get press coverage; further, the account that was told in the press is not the way the incident took place.

Vice President Tracey gave an account of the off campus event timeline and the process the college follows for investigating such occurrences. He reiterated that a disposition on student conduct, with which this event pertains, is protected under FERPA and will not be discussed in an open meeting. The chronology detailed when administrators met with faculty and the student, outcomes from those meetings, and when the press inquired and subsequently ran the story.

Trustee Simonelli said that he understands that there are events that occur on campus that do not necessarily need to be reported to the Board; however, when the Board is made aware of events via the press it is concerning. He said that

unfortunately, the press did not paint Massasoit in a good light and wanted to understand the process by which the administration guarantees an objective investigation. Vice President Tracy advised that it depends on the nature of the incident. For example, if it is an incident involving a student, the Dean of Students would be involved in the investigation. Executive Director Hess added that the college has a process where written reports are gathered from a complainant and a respondent. Based on the nature of the complaint/incident and what member(s) of the college community is/are involved, the appropriate administrators/members of the college community investigate; it could be the Student Rights and Responsibilities Officer, Chief Diversity Officer, Human Resources, etc., and if necessary legal council is involved. She stated that in this particular case the Dean of Students and the Athletic Director were involved because it was a student athlete issue, and Human Resources was involved because it was also an employee issue.

There was discussion among several Trustees who wanted further clarity on the policies and procedures for incident investigation and reporting. The Board requested a copy of the incident report to be discussed at the Board retreat in July. In addition, the Board requested a briefing on the college incident reporting processes. Chair Ifill said he was appreciative of the discussion and looks forward to reviewing the process and incident report in July.

Presentation of steps taken and strategies underway for development of the FY2018 budget in light of the projected revenue shortfall, by President Charles Wall and the Senior Leadership Team.

Chair Ifill said that the Board was presented with a plan to address the budget shortfall at the retreat in March. He stressed that there needs to be a broad-based plan that addresses how we will get out of this deficit and the entire college community needs to understand the plan.

Trustee A. Sullivan asked if there was any documentation provided in tonight's Board package that speaks to the plan or any progress that has been made since the March meeting. President Wall said there was nothing provided in the package but the college is prepared to speak to the issues. He added that the state appropriation is pending, however; the sense is that it will fall more in line with what the Governor and the House have proposed. President Wall is hopeful that the state will fund collective bargaining for the second and third years but the bulk of our funding comes from tuition and fees. Enrollment is crucial and the college is projecting a -5.2% reduction in student headcount for FY18. He noted that there is a likelihood of retrenchments needed to balance the budget in addition to a fee increase proposal, which he is reluctant to bring to the Board; if there are retrenchments there are timing obligations that need to be considered.

Chair Ifill asked where the administration is in terms of the plan that was presented to the Board in March and what actions have been completed to date. He stated that the college community needs to be fully apprised of the plans in place and stressed the need for transparency. Vice President Mitchell addressed the Board and stressed that the plan that was presented in March was a collaborative effort between the senior leadership team and not a budget that was dictated by the CFO. The senior team crafted the plan so as to minimize any impact to our students. He advised that cutting our way out of this shortfall is not an option and thoughtful, targeted, strategic planning is key to managing the deficit.

Vice President Mitchell said that the institution is very labor intensive, nearly 75% of the budget. When the senior management team looks at areas to reduce the budget naturally we look at the job vacancies. He stressed that the college is not instituting a hiring freeze but rather being very strategic on the vacancies that are filled. He advised that the FY17 budget was balanced on vacancies and the college is looking at these vacancies again for FY18. Trustee V. Sullivan asked what the savings was based on not filling positions. Vice President Mitchell said it was approximately \$1.3 million. Trustee V. Sullivan followed up with a question of these vacancies impacting student success. Vice Presidents McCarthy and Mitchell stressed that the senior team was very strategic in not filling vacancies to ensure students would not be impacted.

Chair Ifill asked what is the amount of the deficit. Vice President Mitchell advised that it is \$5 million. Trustee V. Sullivan asked what current initiatives are underway to address the enrollment shortfall. Vice President Mitchell said that there are multiple fronts that are working together to address the gap including focus on retaining as well as attracting students. Other initiatives underway to address the deficit are reductions in adjunct faculty as our enrollment has declined which is expected to yield meaningful savings into the spring semester. Vice President McCarthy advised that the student/professor ratio has dropped to as low as 12 to 1 in some cases which warrants a reduction in adjunct faculty. She added that a healthy ratio is 20/22 to 1.

Vice President Mitchell said that as the budget was being reviewed some noticeable one-time expenses over \$100,000 were in FY17 that would not be in the FY18 budget including NEASC reaccreditation and 50th anniversary expenses. He

added that outsourcing is being considered to help address the shortfall and until we go through the process we will not know the dollar amount that would impact the budget. He said that the Pacheco Law is a very good process and if there is no savings to be realized by outsourcing that it would not be done. The last item to address the budget gap is retrenchments. He advised that we are beyond the period where we would recognize the full impact of the savings in FY18.

Trustee Enos asked to what extent these initiatives are closing the gap. Vice President Mitchell said that with these plans in place there is still \$1.2 million short. Trustee Enos suggested and Chair Ifill and Vice Chair Carroll agreed that a data-driven dashboard would be helpful to the Board and the college community to quickly identify how these initiatives are working to close the budget gap. They would like to see a report that outlines the progress at the August meeting.

Chair Ifill advised that the Board would not go into executive session.

A motion was made by Trustee Blunt and seconded by Vice Chair Carroll to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Prepared by:



Lydia Camara
Staff Associate, President's Office



Anthony Simonelli
Secretary, Board of Trustees