

MORTON COLLEGE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT NO.527

Minutes for the Special Board Meeting/Board Retreat

Saturday, November 23, 2024

Approved

1. Call to Order

The Special Board Meeting/Board Retreat was called to order by Board Chair, Leonard Cannata at 9:20 AM on Saturday, November 23, 2024, at The Westin Michigan Avenue in Huron A – 2^{nd} Floor, 909 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611.

2. <u>Roll Call</u>

Present:

Leonard Cannata, Trustee Jose Collazo, Trustee Susan Grazzini, Trustee Anthony Martinucci, Trustee Oscar Montiel, Trustee Frances F. Reitz, Trustee (arrived at 9:24 a.m.) Gizelle Beltran, Student Trustee

Absent:

Charles Hernandez, Trustee

Also Present:

Dr. Keith D. McLaughlin, President

3. Citizen Comments

None

4. General Discussion of Matters Relating to the Short- and Long-Term Future of the College.

- 4.1. Year-in-Review
- 4.2. Values and Goals
- 4.3. HLC Update
- 4.4. Organizational Design and Development
- 4.5. Strategic Planning & Facilities
- 4.6. Board and Institutional Policies
- 4.7. Board Priorities
- 4.8. Board Development and Governance
- 4.9. 100th Year Anniversary Updates

Dr. McLaughlin started by welcoming everyone and thanked the board for their service. He knows that they are not often recognized for giving their time and energy in a volunteer capacity serving as a member of the board and all the responsibilities that go with it. Over the past year, he has relied on their wise counsel, trusted advice, steady guidance, and insight and support in his role as President. It has been his honor and privilege to lead the institution with 100 years of legacy. 100 years is amazing and to be a part of positioning and preparing the institution to grow and thrive long into the future. Dr. McLaughlin is looking forward to the new year that we are about to embark upon and all that it holds. As a board and as the administration of the college working together, we can face challenges and create a better future, and that is really what we are here to cover today.

Dr. McLaughlin touched on one of the agenda items, the Higher Learning Commission, because we have a focus visit coming up early next year. He thinks it is important to have a discussion today about that and to give an update, review, and reflect on some of the issues that led us to that visit. The Higher Learning Commission is there to advocate and support institutions that are members of that organization. They provide our accreditation and recognition of our accreditation, so he will always operate in the spirit that is what HLC is about.

Dr. McLaughlin stated that we are going to adjust this agenda based on the board's priorities, but it's just to do a flyover of a number of different issues and topics that are covered as the highest priority in the coming months but to remain flexible today.

4.1 Year-in-Review

Dr. McLaughlin asked the board to talk about from what we can recall some positive things that really stand out to them over the year about the institution, about their experience with the board, and how things are generally going. Then we would shift over to the Delta Sign, which is from the Greek alphabet, which represents change. We can look at the next year, in the coming years, and what we would really like to think about planning in terms of change. Board members were actively engaged and provided feedback.

+	Δ
Trust	Rocket Property Development
Transition	Board Evaluation
Board Leadership	Fundraising
Communication	High School Partnership
Team Building	Security - Visibility
Respect	Alum Relations Database
Student Trustee	Theatre
Openness	Student Fundraising
Stakeholder Engagement	
Pride in Facilities/Campus	

4.2 Values and Goals

Dr. McLaughlin mentioned the Core Values that have been around for a very long time. Internally we've been discussing our core values, it has been a very good discussion, and we had an open forum, and we spent some time talking about our values. Currently, our core values are Compassion, Fairness, Respect, Responsibility, and Tolerance. We are taking this seriously and we decided to look at these and talk about whether are there any things that we might change or reflect what we want our core values to be as an institution and then whatever that outcome is we will bring to the board for consideration. After speaking with staff some values that came to mind were Compassion, Equity, Accountability, Innovation, and Excellence.

4.3 HLC Update

Dr. McLaughlin shared that at the last comprehensive visit we had with the Higher Learning Commission, the team at that time recommended that the college be put on probation. It was primarily due to what was perceived as governance issues. From there it went to the next level, The Institutional Actions Council, which was July of 2023, which was a review panel that upheld the recommendation of probation. After a lot of back-and-forth, HLC made the recommendation ultimately to place the college on notice. HLC determined that Morton College met component 2.A. Criterion 2 core component 2.0 that that institution establishes its policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff that is found to be met with some concerns. The board of the institution has a history of interfering with the management's day-to-day operations which doesn't align with HLC expectations. HLC did recognize that we already at that time, in November of last year, we were taking significant and sustainable steps to address those. Dr. McLaughlin believes things have changed significantly and we are moving forward. Dr. McLaughlin also mentioned in 2027 the institution will have a comprehensive 10year visit that will take place. We are already starting to prepare for that visit.

5. Closed Session

Approval to adjourn to Closed Session meeting for discussion under 5ILCS 120 Section 2(11) "to consider when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable r imminent."

Trustee Grazzini made a motion to go into a Closed Session at 11:12 a.m. Trustee Martinucci seconded the motion. Ayes: Trustees, Cannata, Collazo, Martinucci, Montiel, and Reitz Nays: None Motion Carried

Trustee Martinucci made a motion to go back into Open Session at 11:27 a.m. Trustee Collazo seconded the motion. Ayes: Trustees, Cannata, Collazo, Martinucci, Montiel, and Reitz Nays: None Motion Carried

General Discussion Continued.

4.6 Board and Institutional Policies

Dr. McLaughlin spoke about some issues having to deal with personnel, policies, and practices that might be for future consideration in terms of formal action. One of the discussions was negotiating some flexibility that would include working from home whether it's a day, it's occasional, or regular. A discussion ensued between the President and the Board. Dr. McLaughlin stated that one way to approach this is to have a formal recommendation and bring this forward into the new year for consideration.

4.4 Organizational Design and Development

Dr. McLaughlin highlighted some reorg proposals that will be brought forward to the board. Our new Vice President of Academic Affairs, Sheldon Walcher is working on this and trying to create a structure that's much more efficient, effective, and organized around several major areas.

Dr. McLaughlin let the board know he continues to hear from administrative staff that they think there should be some consideration given whether consolidating responsibilities and having people take additional responsibilities, we are talking about nonunion employees, and whether there should be additional compensation associated with that. A discussion ensued between the President and the Board. Dr. McLaughlin mentioned we could do a detailed comprehensive salary study.

4.9 100th Year Anniversary Updates

Dr. McLaughlin concluded the discussion by highlighting the continuing celebration of our 100th anniversary. Our next big event will be in April, which will be the Gala.

6. Adjournment

Trustee Martinucci made a motion to adjourn the Regular Board Meeting at 12:05 p.m. Trustee Collazo seconded the motion. Ayes: Trustees, Cannata, Collazo, Martinucci, Montiel, and Reitz Nays: None Absent: Trustee Hernandez Motion Carried

/s/ Leonard Cannata, Board Chair /s/ Jose Collozo, Secretary