



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Thursday, September 20, 2018

Murdock Hall, Room 208

5:00 p.m.

The following trustees were present:

Denise Marshall, Chair
John Barrett III (via telephone)
Moochan Boodram (via telephone)
Brenda Burdick
Lisa Chamberlain
JD Chesloff
Susan Gold
Frederick Keator
Robert Reilly
Katherine Therrien
Eva Weeks, Student Trustee

In attendance:

President James Birge
Bernadette Alden, Director of Marketing Communications
Lawrence Behan, Vice President of Administration and Finance
Catherine Holbrook, Vice President of Student Affairs
Monica Joslin, Dean of Academic Affairs
Lisa Lescarbeau, Clerk
Christopher MacDonald Dennis, Chief Diversity Officer
Gina Puc, Director of Admissions
Emily Williams, Vice President of Academic Affairs
Robert Ziomek, Vice President of Institutional Advancement

Complying with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30 and 15A, Section 9, and with a quorum present, the Board of Trustees of Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts met at 5:00 p.m. at Murdock Hall on May 25, 2018 with Board Chair Marshall presiding.

Chair Marshall called the meeting to order beginning with a welcome introduction of Ms. Eva Weeks.

Approval of Minutes: May 24, 2018 Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the May 24, 2018, meeting of the Board and all actions contained therein.

Executive Committee Chair Report on Meeting of the September 20, 2018

Chair Marshall reported on the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board which met at 3:30 p.m. on September 20, 2018. President Birge provided an overview of staff who have joined MCLA since the Board of Trustees last met in May 2018.

The Committee heard an update on MSCA, APA and AFSCME contract negotiations and their current status in the approval process. President Birge updated the Committee on the additional state appropriations received by MCLA in FY2019, and the Fiscal Affairs Committee actions regarding the additional appropriations.

At the October 25, 2018 meeting of the Executive Committee honorary degree recipients will be discussed and considered for recommendation. A Board Retreat to include updates on the strategic plan, explore ways to improve board development sessions, and board self-evaluations, will be planned for February 2019. Trustees are encouraged to provide suggestions on topics to be included in the retreat.

Fiscal Affairs Committee Chair Report on Meeting of the September 17, 2018

Ms. Gold next read the minutes of the meeting of the Fiscal Affairs Committee of September 17, 2018, a copy of which were provided to all Trustees during this meeting.

The Fiscal Affairs committee heard a report of the financial results for the 4th quarter FY 18 including a summary of income and expense by object code reflecting the 12-month period ending June 30, 2018. Revenue variances related to additional state revenue funding received from DCAMM and delays in construction resulting in a lack of draw on grant revenues were discussed. Surplus in expense lines as a result of effective management of open position and delays in backfilling, as well as over expensed lines primarily in the consulting object class, were reviewed. President Birge directly addressed the variance in consultant services, specifically legal fees resulting from union contract negotiations, redesign fees for two campus projects, and chemical safety needs for the science center.

The Committee heard an update on the operating budget for FY 19 which was approved in the May Board of Trustees meeting. The additional appropriation of \$494,073 was discussed and will be reported as a variance in quarterly fiscal reporting. There were no recommended actions relative to the additional appropriation.

Renovations and classroom space at 66 Allen St. in Pittsfield, MA were discussed. Classes began on September 4 at this location. Space redesign at 66 Allen St. will be completed during winter break and a grand opening event is planned for January 2019.

An update on Campus Center renovations was presented to the Committee. While this project has been delayed by changes in DCAMM's processes, the changes also result in savings of over 30% in estimated total project costs for MCLA. Work will resume in the fall beginning with the Campus Center, followed by the Centennial Room after Commencement in May 2019.

Trustees further discussed the additional appropriations and the timing to apply for the next cycle of funding from DCAMM in FY 20.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the September 17, 2018, meeting of the Fiscal Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees and all actions contained therein.

Enrollment Management Committee Chair Report on Meeting of the September 20, 2018

Ms. Therrien presented the report of the Enrollment Management Committee which met at 2:30 p.m. on September 20, 2018. The Committee was introduced to staff from the Admissions and Financial Aid Departments in attendance to present updates on their respective areas of responsibility.

Census data including geography and ethnicity was presented to the Committee. There were 394 new enrolled students in Fall 2018. Demographics of the students were reviewed noting numbers eligible for Pell grants, first to attend college, athletes and STEM majors. Transfer student data was presented followed by a full enrollment review showing 1,455 students total with 1,283 of those being undergraduates. The Committee discussed MCLA's retention rate for the 2017 cohort, which is 70%, and initiatives in place to improve retention and increase enrollment.

STEM week in Massachusetts is October 22 – 25, 2018. MCLA will host the General Dynamics Engineering Expo on October 24 in the Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation.

DGCE enrollment data was presented to the committee and the classroom space at 66 Allen St., Pittsfield was discussed.

Chairperson's Report

Chair Marshall began the Chairperson's Report by thanking Committee Chairs for serving in that a capacity. Trustees were thanked for their attendance on campus at the Opening Breakfast and Convocation on September 4, 2018. She commented on the event noting her sense of excitement in the room and the feeling that the class was engaged and energized. Chair Marshall encouraged Trustees to attend events on campus to engage with faculty, staff and students.

Lastly, Chair Marshall requested that disclosure and confidentiality agreements, which were provided to Trustees prior to this meeting, be completed and returned to Lisa Lescarbeau.

President's Report

President Birge began his report with continued thanks to all for agreeing to serve in Chairperson roles and as Trustees of this Board. As well, he welcomed Ms. Eva Weeks to her first meeting as Student Trustee and thanked her for serving in this role.

President Birge next introduced newly hired colleagues: Lisa Lescarbeau, Executive Assistant to the President; Paul Petritis, Dean of DGCE; Robert Ziomek, VP of Institutional Advancement; and Dr. Emily Williams, VP of Academic Affairs. He also reintroduced Gina Puc in her new role as Dean of Enrollment and Community Relations.

President Birge then reviewed the Board Retreat proposed for February 2019 to include an update on strategic plan and activities in progress as a result of the plan. He announced to the Trustees that MCLA had obtained the #9 ranking as a public liberal arts college as evaluated by US News and World Report.

President Birge next discussed marketing efforts for MCLA including the rebrand efforts underway with SimpsonScarborough. He commented on the initial survey conducted in the spring and discussed the upcoming follow-up survey allowing respondents to weigh in on two proposed brand concepts. Elizabeth

Johnson of SimpsonScarborough will walk through brand concept with the Trustees at the Board Development session scheduled for October 25, 2018.

Ongoing contract negotiations were discussed next. The AFSCME contract has been settled and is awaiting signature of the Governor. The APA contract was sent to the Office of Employee Relations two weeks ago where it faced opposition based on uniform allowances for campus police departments. Due in large part to the work of the COP, OER relented and recommended approval of the APA contract.

President Birge presented a copy of The Beacon highlighting the news of MCLA ranking by US News and World Report. He commented on the new category, social mobility that contributed to MCLA's increased ranking. This ranking will be helpful with recruiting and increasing visibility, and will be utilized in marketing efforts.

President Birge then reviewed the monthly campus gatherings for faculty and staff with the next one scheduled for October 12 at Gallery 51.

Activities for DEI were reviewed next and Dr. MacDonald-Dennis will provide an update on diversity initiatives later during this meeting. On November 8, MCLA will hold a Day of Dialogue during which time there will be no day or evening classes held to allow participation by all in a series of dialogues around difference. The Public Policy Lecture featuring Ta'Nehisi Coates will end the day's events.

MCLA is establishing focus groups to address being a more supportive and inclusive community. President Birge stated that approximately 30% of incoming students are members of ALANA, and this number continues to increase steadily. Management efforts need to include ways of improving diversity among faculty and staff.

President Birge then announced that as of August 1, 2018 MCLA became a tobacco free campus. Notifications have been sent, signage has been placed around campus, and smoking cessation classes are being offered to faculty, staff and students.

President Birge next presented Ms. Gold with a Bow Tie Pin in recognition of her work as Chair of the Board of Trustees.

President Birge then turned the meeting over to Dr. Williams for an overview of her work within Academic Affairs.

Dr. Williams began with a review of the numerous funding proposals in various stages of development and approval including those from the Melon Foundation for an Institution for the Arts and Humanities, and the Mandela Washington Fellowship for an opportunity for MCLA to host a six-week leadership instituted for a group of African leaders ranging in age from 25 to 45. Two members of faculty are eligible, and have been nominated, for endowment grants for humanities.

In terms of curriculum work, a redesign of core curriculum is in process with a focus on addressing contemporary issues while maintaining traditional values. Work is underway with Marketing to create a faculty speakers bureau to serve as experts in their fields providing a voice on major issues in the community.

Dr. Williams next gave an overview of the Davis Education Fund Grant which provided funding for dual enrollment. With regard to professional development, faculty members are leading the redesign of the core curriculum.

Next, Ms. Puc discussed her role with enrollment management and community relations. Efforts in the area of enrollment are focused on taking a strategic management approach looking at students from the time they first enter the admissions process through their role as alumni, and how we tie together operational systems to improve the student experience. Ms. Puc noted the importance of ensuring that the admissions, financial aid, and marketing divisions are working together as one unit to improve the student experience, and in turn, driving enrollment and retention.

Ms. Puc then discussed the launch and use of financial aid leveraging software, as well as the reorganization of admissions staffing to strengthen operational efforts and transfer recruitment.

With regard to community relations, Ms. Puc discussed this as being an extension of strategic planning work to ensure we are communicating effectively as a campus and striving for organizational effectiveness.

Dr. MacDonald-Dennis then spoke on his role as Chief Diversity Officer and efforts to advance DEI, not only among students, but with faculty and staff as well. Monthly meetings are held with Human Resources staff to discuss how employment searches are conducted, how we think about diversity, and do people of color or other diverse backgrounds want to be members of the MCLA community. He also commented on his role as consultant for candidate searches for open employment positions.

Dr. MacDonald-Dennis reviewed his effort to aid faculty in how to teach from the Ta’Nehisi Coates book, *Between the World and Me*. He stressed the importance of addressing the emotions that accompany the reading.

The Out@MCLA initiative was discussed as was the development of a DEI related web presence.

Chair Marshall next discussed the board development meeting scheduled for October 25 at 4:30 p.m. SimpsonScarborough will present the marketing and rebranding campaign that is in development.

With no other business being brought before the meeting, upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 6:22 pm, all were invited back to Smith House for a reception.