

**Minutes of the MassBay Community College Board of Trustees Meeting – 8:00 am to 10:00 am Tuesday, November 18, 2025, in the Wellesley Alumni Board Room and by Webex**

**Trustees Present In Person:** Ilissa Povich (Chair), Tobey Choate, Mahanaz Jatoi, Rebecca Negreli, Lili Silva, Karen Williams

**Trustees Present by Webex:** Alfonso Hidalgo, Matt Kahn, Sandy Lish, Gary Prado

**Trustees Not Present:** Reyad Shah

Trustee Hidalgo departed the meeting at 9:00 am. Trustees Kahn and Prado departed the meeting at 9:10 am.

**Guests Present:** David Kennedy, Foundation Board member; Diane Schmalensee, Former Chair of the Board

**Staff Present:** Yvonne Anthony, Senior Director of Grants Development; Liz Borg, Capital Campaign Director; Liz Blumberg, Vice President for Student Development; Karen Britton, Executive Director and Liaison to the Board, Office of the President; Lauren Curley, Director of Procurement and Business Operations; Lynne Davis, Dean of Health Sciences; Joe DeLisle, Director of Facilities; Phil DiBlasi, Director of Public Safety; Marcus Edward, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Catherine Gildae, Assistant Dean for Institutional Effectiveness; Courtney Jackson, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost; Nina Keery, Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences; Henry Lopez, Director of End User Services; Mike Lyons, Assistant Vice President and Chief Information Officer; Lisa MacDonald, Associate Dean for Equity Assurance; Sue Maggioni, Assistant Provost; Lynn Moore, Chief Unity Officer; Adam Nelson, Assistant Dean of Athletics and Special Assistant to the President for Community Relations; Jason Prespolis, EDP Systems Analyst; David Podell, President; David Protano, Dean of Automotive Technology and Interim Dean of STEM; Lisa Slavin, Vice President for Enrollment Management; Jeremy Solomon, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Marketing, and Communications; Halye Sugarman, Dean of Business and Professional Studies; Richard Williams, Associate Dean for Student Success and Strategic Initiatives; Venusa Toomey, Assistant Dean of Health Sciences and Framingham Campus Administrator

## **CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair Povich called the meeting to order and declared that a quorum was present.

## **INTRODUCTION OF NEW TRUSTEES REYAD SHAH & KAREN WILLIAMS**

Chair Povich introduced MassBay's two new Trustees.

Reyad Shah, who was not able to attend today's meeting, is the President and CEO of the Metrowest Chamber of Commerce, a lifelong resident of Framingham, and a MassBay alum. Trustee Shah will be joining the Student Success and Academic Affairs Committee.

Karen Williams lives in Worcester and works at Advocates, where she is the Senior Vice President of Government Affairs and New Business Development and also the Executive Sponsor of the Shades of Pride (LGBTQIA+) Employee Resource Group. Trustee Williams will be joining the Finance & Administration Committee. Trustee Williams shared that she is pleased to be on the Board to honor and support the College. She is a product of public education and believes strongly in its mission. Trustee Williams has been located in Massachusetts for many years. She graduated from Boston University and has experience in health and human services executive oversight, policy, and training.

## **HONORING FORMER CHAIR SCHMALENSEE**

Chair Povich thanked Former Chair Schmalensee for her over ten years of service to MassBay as Trustee and Board Chair. Former Chair Schmalensee ran efficient and always open and transparent meetings, giving all

Board members the opportunity to ask questions and share comments. She served on every Board committee and made meaningful contributions to each. She set a respectful tone for all discussions. She and her husband, Dick, have also been incredibly supportive of MassBay on the philanthropic front. Most importantly, in all of the work that former Chair Schmalensee has done on behalf of MassBay, she has prioritized students and their experience. The Board and College have benefitted tremendously from her many contributions. Chair Povich then read a citation honoring Former Chair Schmalensee.

Former Chair Schmalensee shared that her primary focus was always on student success and what might be holding them back, including hunger and transportation. During her term, enrollment has gone up 50%, and students have transferred to high-ranking schools. She did not do this alone. Hiring President Podell was a great decision. Former Chair Schmalensee is proud of what has been, and will continue to be, accomplished at MassBay.

President Podell spoke about the close relationship of a college President and Chair of the Board. He was very fortunate to work with Former Chair Schmalensee, who had good sense, stability, and steadiness, and was a great listener. During her term, MassBay came through some tricky times and had to make some difficult decisions. Former Chair Schmalensee has made an indelible impact on the College. Trustee Khan stated what a great person Former Chair Schmalensee is, and Trustee Lish explained that she masterminded the process and data analysis for the Presidential Evaluation, which is now the model for the Department of Higher Education. Former Chair Schmalensee set the bar very high, and Trustee Lish learned so much serving under her.

## **OCTOBER 28, 2025, MEETING MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Trustee Choate moved to approve the minutes of the October 28, 2025, meeting, and Trustee Negreli seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Jatoi - YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish - YES; Trustee Negreli – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Prado – YES; Trustee Silva – YES; Trustee Williams - ABSTAINED

## **EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

### **\*Board Chair**

Chair Povich reported the following:

-On October 29<sup>th</sup> Chair Povich attended a meeting of the community college Board Chairs run by Nate Mackinnon, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges (MACC). The meeting was focused on what is occurring at the federal and state level related to community colleges. One of the topics covered was the current classification study of the current salaries for community college faculty that is expected to show significant salary inequity. Trustees were encouraged to express support to their legislators to address this salary inequity. Executive Director Mackinnon also encouraged Trustees to express support to their legislators for the state's SUCCESS program funding, which is an important program supporting student retention and completion.

-On November 7, Chair Povich attended the Governance Leadership Institute run by MACC. Trustees Negreli and Silva also attended. The morning programming focused on the role of the Board and the Board's relationship with the President. The afternoon sessions were focused on trends and challenges for community colleges, the Board's role in advocacy, and what makes a high performing board. Executive Director Britton distributed a one-page checklist of Board governance, which is a great summary of the role of a Trustee. This was a very worthwhile program.

## **\*President**

President Podell reported the following:

-A total of 552 guests attended the Open House on Saturday, which is a record for a fall Open House and bodes well for future enrollment. Admissions did a fantastic job. He also thanked Financial Aid, Facilities, IT, the many other offices who facilitated the event, and faculty.

-Registration for spring has begun. It is early, but the numbers look good. MassBay is 30% ahead for spring semester. These numbers will come down, but the College will still be ahead.

-President Podell and Vice President Jackson are attending a meeting with the NECHE Commissioners on Friday. The only real weakness noted by the visiting evaluation team last April was MassBay's evaluation of learning outcomes, which was impacted by COVID. This process has subsequently been improved.

-There has been much concern about students losing their SNAP benefits because of the federal shutdown. A total of 775 students were estimated to be recipients, and as a result, MassBay redirected \$18,000 of funds to food insecurity. In addition, the College received two grants, one for \$12,300 from the state's "Hunger Free Campuses" initiative, and one for \$12,500 from the Community Foundation of Metrowest.

-The Marketing department won two awards from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR). Vice President Solomon reported that awards are given to two-year institutions from District I, ranging as far south as Washington, DC, through Pennsylvania and New York, and as far north as Canada. This year the College received a Bronze Medallion Award for an all-college promotional sticker in the shape of a pirate head on the front, with a comprehensive information graphic on the back. The team earned a Gold Medallion Award for communications before, during, and after the event announcing MassEducate, which featured Governor Healey's remarks and took place in the Library Atrium. Both submissions have been presented for consideration for a Paragon Award, the national NCMPR award. Last year MassBay earned its first-ever Gold Paragon for a custom-made t-shirt highlighting the College's accessibility.

## **\*Student Trustee**

Student Trustee Jatoi reported the following:

-The Fall Open House welcomed prospective students and their families to explore academic programs, meet faculty, connect with student leaders, and get a feeling for campus life. The event highlighted MassBay's warm, supportive environment and focus on helping students succeed. The dedication of student volunteers, faculty, staff, and administration created a vibrant, welcoming atmosphere that left a positive impression.

-In partnership with the Wellesley Health Department, MassBay provided free flu shots to faculty, staff, and students, which make it easy for people to stay healthy during flu season and reflect the College's commitment to community wellness.

-The National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) held a Campus to Career event that helped students build professional confidence. Attendees received guidance on career readiness, résumé building, networking, and different paths in business and accounting, along with opportunities to speak directly with industry professionals.

-Students recently took part in the Community College Student Leadership Academy (CCSLA), an overnight conference with workshops, networking, learning, and socializing. A total of eight Student Government Association (SGA) members attended. One particularly enjoyable session was led by Coordinator of Student Engagement DeJour Hollins, who talked about the difference between how people view themselves and how others experience them. The activities throughout the conference helped strengthen communication, teamwork, and overall leadership skills. MassBay students were also recognized for their contributions. James Munroe,

SGA President, was nominated for the Dean Sullivan Student Leader Award, and Student Trustee Jatoi was honored to be nominated for the Lisa Milso Acts of Kindness Award.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **\*Finance & Administration Committee**

Vice President Edward reported the following:

#### **Finance Items**

##### **-Budget-to-Actual Report, as of September 30, 2025**

The budget to actual report for the first quarter indicates a positive variance of \$110,000. This variance results from revenues exceeding projections. By the end of the first quarter, MassBay has received 38% of its annual budgeted revenues and used 20% of the expense budget, which is consistent with expectations. In terms of energy costs, the new Framingham building was supposed to generate 100% of its own energy. Based on our analysis, the building is not fully net zero. It currently generates about 86% of its own energy. The shortfall is partly due to the temperature setpoint changes that were implemented to make sure the inside temperature was comfortable for employees. Regarding student transportation, current funding is sufficient. The negative variance in this category is due to the timing of expenses: by the end of quarter one this year, MassBay paid three Uber invoices and for four athletic bus rentals, compared to only two Uber invoices during the same period last year.

**MOTION:** Trustee Choate moved to approve the Budget-to-Actual report, and Trustee Negreli seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Jatoi - YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish - YES; Trustee Negreli – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Prado – YES; Trustee Silva – YES; Trustee Williams - YES

##### **-Investments, Cash, & Student Accounts Receivable Comparison**

###### **Investments**

The investment balance as of the end of October was \$33.3 million. Investments gained 1.5% in the month of October. The current investment balance is \$32.9 million, a decrease of \$400,000, or 1.1%, in the month of November thus far.

###### **Cash**

The cash balance as of the end of October was \$12.3 million, an increase of \$2.6 million compared to the prior month. The current cash balance is \$10.5 million. It was noted that the cash balance is high and necessary for operations. MassBay will be spending approximately \$4.5 million on the kitchen and \$415,000 on the auditorium renovations (with the remainder of the auditorium renovation cost met by the state).

###### **Student Accounts Receivable**

The receivable balance as of the end of October was \$3.1 million. Receivables decreased by \$7.7 million compared to the prior month.

##### **-Cash and Investment Position by Month**

The chart shows the cash and investment balances over the last five years. The combined cash and investment balance as of the end of October was \$42.5 million.

### **-Kitchen Renovations Update**

The binder contains an updated timeline for the kitchen renovation project, which is still on schedule to be finished at the end of March. A total of \$387,000 has been spent on the project so far. It was noted MassBay does not have to cover overtime or weekends.

### **-Contracts**

There are two contracts. Mill City Construction has been selected to conduct renovations of the auditorium, amounting to \$1.9 million. This project will be funded jointly by the state and MassBay, commencing in January 2026 and scheduled for completion in April 2026. The College will pay for seating costs, and the state funds all other expenses. The state will fund \$1,455,531 (78%), and MassBay will contribute \$414,978 (22%). The auditorium renovation will focus on accessibility, including a revised floor slope, new ramps for stage access, larger inclusive seating, and upgraded lighting. The second agreement is with High Street IT Solutions, amounting to \$329,400 over a three-year term. High Street will serve as the College's new PeopleSoft partner, succeeding Sierra Cedar.

### **-Reallocation of Soccer Field Funds**

In June 2024, the Board approved the use of \$3 million from reserves to upgrade the soccer field. A subsequent study determined that the project's cost would be approximately four times the amount allocated, resulting in the decision not to proceed with the project at this time. MassBay will be pursuing funding for the soccer field within the context of planning for the new Cybersecurity Education, Health and Wellness Center. Board approval is currently being sought to reallocate the \$3 million to two projects. The first involves renovating the former bookstore space on the Wellesley campus for a new Admissions office. Due to increases in enrollment related to free community college initiatives, additional Admissions space is needed. Turning the bookstore into an e-bookstore presents an opportunity to reallocate its space. The existing bookstore location is suitable in both size and location at the front of the building. Planned kitchen renovations will reduce the current Admissions office space. This renovation will consolidate the Admissions team into a single area, rather than the two smaller spaces now in use. The estimated cost for this project is \$2.2 million.

The second project is the development of a facilities master plan, in partnership with the Division of Capital Management & Maintenance (DCAMM). The Wellesley campus is an older facility with numerous deferred maintenance requirements. The master plan will serve as a guide for addressing these needs. If the BRIGHT Act is enacted, as is likely, it will provide funding for such maintenance, and having a master plan in place will enable MassBay to utilize potential resources efficiently. The estimated cost for the master plan is between \$300,000 and \$400,000.

**MOTION:** Trustee Williams moved to approve the reallocation of \$3million from the soccer field project to the Admissions space renovation and the preparation of a capital master plan, and Trustee Choate seconded.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Jatoi - YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish - YES; Trustee Negreli – YES; Trustee Prado – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Silva – YES; Trustee Williams - YES

### **Personnel Items**

#### **Sabbatical Recommendations**

Vice President Jackson reported that Professors Jeanie Tiejten and Matt Walsh, both in the Humanities and Social Sciences division, have applied for sabbaticals during the spring semester. She noted that faculty are

eligible for sabbaticals every six years.

Professor Tietjen has been at MassBay for over fifteen years. Her last sabbatical was six and a half years ago. She proposes continuing the work of her previous sabbatical to further grow the College's Institute for Trauma, Adversity, and Resilience.

Professor Walsh has been at MassBay for over twenty-one years, and his last sabbatical was eight years ago. He proposes advancing two writing projects: a collection of original works by students and colleagues, and a book-length memoir using the same exercises he uses in his teaching at the College.

**MOTION:** Trustee Williams moved to approve the sabbaticals for Professors Tietjen and Walsh, and Trustee Choate seconded.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Jatoi - YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish - YES; Trustee Negreli – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Prado – YES; Trustee Silva – YES; Trustee Williams - YES

Vice President Edward reported the following:

#### **-Personnel Actions**

In October, MassBay welcomed two new employees, a senior staff assistant for Academic Affairs and an institutional security officer.

#### **-Recruitment**

There are a total of 21 open positions, including seventeen staff positions and four faculty positions.

The following staff positions are at various stages of the recruitment process:

- \*Academic Advisor and Coach
- \*Administrative Assistant for the Health Sciences Division
- \*Assistant Director of Special Events
- \*Career Pathways Grant Director
- \*Computer Science Lab Manager
- \*Electrician
- \*Payroll Practitioner
- \*Research Analyst
- \*Senior Admissions Counselor
- \*Senior Financial Aid Counselor

Updates on the following positions were provided:

- \*The Senior Technical Coordinator of Admissions Operations position has been reposted, and new applications are under review.
- \*No candidates advanced to second-round interviews for the Director of the Academic Achievement Center or Campus Police Officer positions. Both search committees are revisiting their applicant pools.
- \*The Police Captain position was recently reposted after the finalist from the initial search declined the job offer.

\*The offer extended to the second Institutional Security Officer finalist was declined, and the search committee is proceeding to interview additional candidates.

\*A finalist for the Administrative Assistant position in the STEM Division has been identified.

\*An offer has been accepted for the Admissions Counselor position, and the candidate is scheduled to begin in December.

\*The Business, Computer Science, and Cybersecurity faculty positions are at various stages of the recruitment process.

\*An offer has been accepted for the Engineering faculty position, and the candidate is scheduled to begin at the start of the spring semester.

It was noted that for many of the positions, the candidate pool is not increasing, likely due to salaries and in some cases cost of living in the Greater Boston area. It was noted, however, that there are over 240 applicants for the Senior Research position. Assistant Dean Gildae explained that this role has many applicants not only because Institutional Research is a great profession and MassBay is a wonderful place to work, but also because it is a role people can come into from many fields. In addition, many of these related fields are experiencing upheavals in the current employment market. Finalists are currently being identified.

## **SPECIAL REPORT – TITLE IX**

Associate Dean MacDonald gave a presentation entitled *Title IX: Our Campus Policies, Your Role, & Where We Are in 2020*, including the following:

\*Legally Protected Categories

\*What is Title IX?

\*Our Campus Policies

\*Policy on Affirmative Action (PAA)

\*Policy on Affirmative Action (PAA) Sexual Misconduct

\*What does our college need to do?

\*What is a Responsible Employee?

\*We can always talk in hypotheticals...

\*Prevention Efforts

\*Community Partners

\*Partnerships with our local municipalities

\*Additional Points of Consideration

Associate Dean MacDonald stated that she attends academic division meetings and SGA meetings to be certain employees and students have this information. She also explained that when someone who contacts her is unsure if he/she has something to report, she uses the “Time out” rule to clarify what has occurred, and it is important that each case is addressed. It was noted that the fact that there is now more reporting is a good sign because it means that more people know how to report and are comfortable reporting.

## **ENROLLMENT REPORT**

Vice President Slavin reported that the College is two weeks into registration of current students for spring semester and, as President Podell noted previously, 30% ahead of last year. Registration of new students begins tomorrow. She shared slides from the successful Open House, including student clubs, orientation leaders, and various staff members. On the spot admissions and advising sessions on MassTransfer were offered. Free community college is keeping people interested.

## **FOUNDATION REPORT**

Foundation Board member Kennedy reported the following:

\*Fall scholarships are fully disbursed. A total of \$155,900 was awarded, which is 60% greater than last fall, attributed to four new scholarships and larger gifts from existing scholarship donors, allowing MassBay to disburse more awards. A total of 46% of applicants were awarded, which is 242 of 527 students. The average award is \$600. President Podell explained that free community college is not available for everyone because of the criteria to qualify, including having no prior college degree, taking at least six credits, having spent three years in a Massachusetts high school, having a high school diploma or GED, and enrollment in a financial aid-approved program.

\*The Foundation Board is again applying to the Town of Wellesley for a Boston Marathon app bib. The application is due on November 20. The bib will be used to fundraise for the Essential Needs Fund to help students afford life expenses such as housing, food, transportation, and emergencies.

## **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REPORT**

Capital Campaign Director Borg reported that the campaign team continues to lay the foundation for the upcoming campaign for the new Cybersecurity Education, Health and Wellness Center and is finalizing related workforce development materials. The team is looking for stories from alumni/ae regarding Cybersecurity and Athletics. It was noted that the kick-off date for the campaign is still to be determined.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Trustee Silva moved to adjourn the meeting, and Trustee Choate seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Jatoi – YES; Trustee Lish - YES; Trustee Negreli – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Silva – YES; Trustee Williams - YES

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.



12/16/25



12/16/25

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David Podell, President  
MassBay Community College

Date

Ilissa Povich, Chair  
MassBay Board of Trustees

Date