



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**  
December 14, 2023  
Murdock Hall, Room 208  
375 Church Street, North Adams, MA  
Microsoft Teams Audio/Video Conference

**Trustees in attendance:**

Mohan Boodram  
Brenda Burdick  
John Barrett III\*  
Paige Dufur\*  
Frederick Keator\*  
Karen Kowalczyk  
Denise Marshall  
Jean Clarke-Mitchell  
Kathleen Therrien\*

**Trustees Absent:**

Franklyn Reynolds  
Robert Reilly

**MCLA Staff in attendance:**

James F. Birge, President  
Lisa Lescarbeau, Clerk  
Gina Puc, Chief of Staff  
Barbara Chaput, Executive Director of Human Resources\*  
Joseph DaSilva, Vice President for Administration and Finance  
Richard Glejzer, Provost  
Bernadette Alden, Director of Marketing and Communications  
Robert Ziomek, Vice President for Institutional Advancement  
Jeannette Smith, VP of Student of Affairs

**Others in attendance:**

Daniel Colonno, MCLA Chief of Police  
Shaun Heimann, Francis Investment Services, Inc.

\*Denotes remote participation

As allowed by executive order of the Governor of Massachusetts, in compliance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30 and 15A, Section 9, and with a quorum present in-person and via audio/video conference, the Board of Trustees of Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts met on December 14, 2023, with Board Chair Burdick presiding.

For recording purposes only, the Trustees met for a Board Professional Development session prior to this Board of Trustees meeting. Trustees learned about the nursing and hockey program development. Attending in person were Trustees Barrett, Boodram, Burdick, Clarke-Mitchell, Kowalczyk, and Marshall. Attending remote were Trustees Keator and Therrien. Absent from this session were Trustees Reilly, Reynolds, and Dufur.

Chair Burdick called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Chair Burdick reviewed the items in the consent agenda as presented, and asked if there were items in the meeting materials that members wish to be removed and discussed individually.

Hearing none, Chair Burdick then asked for corrections to the minutes as provided from the prior meetings listed on the agenda as item 2a, and other reports listed as item 2b. Hearing no corrections, upon motion duly made and seconded, following a roll-call vote, it was unanimously:

**VOTED:** to approve the consent agenda as presented.

## **Committee Actions**

### *Faculty Sabbaticals*

The Academic Affairs Committee met on December 12, 2023, and discussed the sabbatical applications.

Trustee Keator reviewed the AY 2024-2025 sabbatical applications submitted by faculty members who have completed six years of full-time service to the College:

**Dr. Travis Beaver**, Associate Professor of Sociology, Spring 2025  
**Dr. Caren Beilin**, Professor of English and Communications, AY 2024-2025  
**Dr. Michael Birch**, Professor of English and Communications, Spring 2025  
**Dr. Hannah Haynes**, Associate Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies, Spring 2025  
**Dr. Elizabeth Hartung**, Professor of Mathematics, Spring 2025  
**Dr. Mohamad Junaid**, Associate Professor of Anthropology Spring 2025  
**Dr. James Moriarty**, Associate Professor of Business Administration, Fall 2024  
**Dr. Jerome Socolof**, Associate Professor of Arts Management, Fall 2024  
**Dr. Nicholas Stroud**, Professor of Education, Spring 2025

Upon motion duly made and seconded, with no further discussion and upon roll call vote, it was:

**VOTED:** to approve all sabbatical applications as recommended by the Academic Affairs Committee.

### *Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Technology*

Trustee Keator reviewed the request from administration to change the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences with a concentration in radiologic technology, to a Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Technology. VP Glejzer provided additional background on program development from a teach-out program to its current status as a minor.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, with no further discussion, following a roll call vote it was:

**VOTED:** to approve the College's application to the MA Department of Higher Education for a change from a minor concentration in the Health Sciences to a major for the Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Technology.

### **Quarterly Investment Report**

Shaun Heimann of Francis Investment Services reported on the College's quarterly performance of the investment portfolio.

Mr. Heimann provided a review of the College's investment portfolio as of November 20, 2023. Trustees were provided the portfolio reports with the meeting materials. The portfolio was inceptioned on May 30 with a \$10M transfer. On May 31, the purchase of treasury securities began with the first \$1M monthly investment with all purchases staggered over 10 months. Each week, an index fund purchase is authorized by the College with a goal of investing on average \$1M per month. The portfolio split target is 60% domestic equity, 10% non-United State equity, and 30% fixed income.

Mr. Heimann reviewed the Allocation View – Asset Class Type report showing the asset mix of the portfolio with 32% in equities. As the treasury purchases mature, the funds will be invested into the portfolio with a target of 60% in equities. The proceeds of the treasuries upon maturity are also invested.

Mr. Heimann reviewed the Portfolio Estimated Income report estimating a full year's income at \$135K. This estimate does not include market movement either upward or downward. As treasuries mature, they will be invested into this portfolio, and once fully invested, the plan will be rebalanced to maintain the asset allocation as established by MCLA's Investment Policy.

Mr. Heimann reviewed the MCLA Purchases report noting that the first purchase began in July 2023. This report shows the weekly transactions that occur upon verbal approval by the College.

For documentation purposes, a verbal approval by an identified representative of the College is acceptable to complete the transaction as per the College's Investment Policy, which also provides the guidelines in which the funds are invested.

### **Clery Report**

Chief Daniel Colonno presented the College's annual Clery Report (2023 Annual Security and Fire Safety Report) for reporting year 2022 noting that the full report is available at the College's website and was provided to the College community on October 2, 2023. He provided a summary of the reporting requirements and the Clery Act for disclosure of campus security policy and campus crime statistics.

In 2022, there were four reports of sex offenses - forcible: two rape and two fondling, all of which were handled through the Title IX process. There was one incident of aggravated assault, one report of burglary, one report of domestic violence and two reports of stalking. These numbers are the same for both the on campus, and on-campus, residence halls reporting.

There were two reports of hate crimes - intimidation, both related to sexual orientation and both handled through the Title IX process.

There were no arrests on campus. There were ten total disciplinary actions/judicial referrals; five drug law violations and five liquor law violations. There were no fires in any of the College's residential areas and each had two fire drills.

Trustees discussed the impact of increased education and training, ease of reporting, and access to resources, on the number of incidents reported.

Chief Colonno departed the meeting.

### **Fiscal Report**

Trustee Marshall provided an overview of the College's fiscal reporting as presented at the December 4, 2023, meeting of the Fiscal Affairs Committee. Net revenue as of September 30 is \$250K and is largely attributed to open positions. Net revenue for the fiscal year is projected to be \$410K better than budgeted. Use of reserve funds for the fiscal year is projected to be \$2.1M versus \$2.5M as approved by the Board.

Damage from flooding in Venable Hall resulted in repairs expense of \$200K. As the College is self-insured, there is no insurance benefit. The contractor was assessed \$20K for cleanup resulting from the flooding.

Trustee Marshall reviewed the capital repairs projects funds of \$4.5M with a 20% match from the College. Projects to be completed with these funds include HVAC and electrical work in various campus buildings. MCLA is expecting an additional \$1.3M in DCAMM funding which does not have a matching component. These funds have to be utilized by June 30, 2025, for projects that address decarbonization and energy efficiency.

The athletic turf field was funded through an MSCBA bond of \$1.6M at 3.7% over 20 years.

VP DaSilva reviewed potential projects to utilize the \$1.3M including installation of EV charging stations, temporary roof repair on Venable Hall, accessibility ramp, and generator power for the townhouses.

### **President's Report**

Gina Puc presented the President's report on behalf of Dr. Birge who is suffering from laryngitis. Finals end tomorrow, students will be off campus by Saturday, and final grades are due on Monday.

The College has signed a memorandum of understanding between the MCLA PD and NAPD allowing MCLA PD to provide backup to NAPD and to be eligible for traffic detail.

The NECHE accreditation preliminary report was provided to President Birge for factual review. This written report mirrors the public report out provided on November 8. The highlights include retention efforts, academic program review, enrollment stabilization, and an engaged Board of Trustees. As well, the visiting team noted the College has an engaged and collaborative staff, that the library is welcoming and diverse, and enhancements have been made to the revenue stream.

The report noted that the period covered by the strategic plan had ended, and work on the next should begin. This accreditation report sets the stage for the College's work on the strategic plan.

Communications were noted as an area for improvement as information does not always make its way through the community. The website was also highlighted as an area for improvement to serve the internal audience in addition to students who are the audience of the website as it currently operates.

The College's NECHE meeting date is April 18, 2024, where MCLA is presented for continuation of accreditation with a five-year review recommendation.

Additional NECHE information will be shared at the Trustee's retreat in January.

The strategic planning process will begin with a steering committee and follow the process as outlined by the DHE.

Venable Hall has been closed to allow remediation of water damage, roof repairs, and asbestos abatement. Arrangements have been made for programs and offices to continue operations in other locations. The Williams College '62 Center and MASS MoCA will host MCLA's spring theatre productions.

Members of administration attempted to work with the College of St. Rose as they announced their closure. St. Rose has not designated a teach-out partner and efforts are focused internally on retaining students through the end of the academic year. MCLA has received approval from DHE and NECHE to offer pathways in the manner that was done as SVC's teach-out partner. An information session is scheduled for December 19 on campus and a virtual session on January 10. MCLA is running ads targeting the St. Rose market area to attract transfer students.

The three collective bargaining agreements were finalized and signed, and a cost-of-living adjustment held up through negotiations in the MA House and Senate was approved for funding. Employees will receive a 4% adjustment in their December 22 payroll, including 4% retroactive to July 1, 2023.

### **Chair's Report**

Chair Burdick stated that the Trustee's retreat has been scheduled for January 22 and 23 at the Williams Inn and asked that Trustees please RSVP to Clerk Lescarbeau with their attendance.

The semester has seen positive enrollment trends for the incoming class, the launch of the nursing program, and the reintroduction of men's ice hockey and the addition of women's ice hockey programs.

Trustee Dufur offered her perspective on the hockey program, noting that she has attended nearly all the home games and is enjoying the great energy the sport is generating.

MCLA faculty incentive awards were granted at increased amounts as a result of a donor contribution.

The College's reserve draw is trending lower at a projected \$2.1M versus a budgeted \$2.5M. Administration continues to operate in a cost-conscious manner to avoid negatively impacting the student experience.

The Pathways Campaign continues to be operating ahead of targets, and Chair Burdick thanked the Trustees for the support of the campaign both financially and in service.

### **Adjournment**

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 6:32 p.m.