

Roxbury Community College
Board of Trustees
Summary
November 19, 2019
6:00PM

Board of Trustee Members Present: Steven W. Tompkins, Fantasia James, Jeff Greenberg, Amanda Fernandez, Betty Francisco

Absent: Mark Culliton, Israul Marrero, Josiane Martinez, Amanda Schaeffer

Guests: Dr. Carlos E. Santiago, Commissioner, MA Department of Higher Education, Kammica Ellison, President SGA; Michael Gregorka SGA Representative, John McColgan, Chair, Department of Mathematics; David Dilulis, Partner, O'Connor & Drew; Zachary Laflash, Manager, O'Connor & Drew

RCC Cabinet: Valerie Roberson, President; Kimberly Rogers, Vice President Academic Affairs & Student Affairs; Kevin Hepner, Vice-President, Administration and Finance; Patricia West, Chief Human Resources Officer; Cecile Regner, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness; Mishawn Eyene-Davis, Executive Director, Development

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tompkins. A quorum was not present.

MINUTES

No action taken on Resolution to Approve the Minutes of the September 26, 2019 meeting in absence of a quorum.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN

Chair Tompkins introduced MA Commissioner of Higher Education, Dr. Carlos E. Santiago, who presented on the Equity Agenda for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Equity Agenda prioritizes under-served students in the allocation of higher education resources. While Massachusetts is the 'most educated' state in the USA, Massachusetts has one of the largest gaps in high education attainment between white students and students of color. Studies show that these gaps can be traced as far back to pre-natal care, pediatrics, and even in Pre-K. He acknowledged that addressing this is a daunting task but that Roxbury Community College could help serve the rest of the system by sharing its experiences. He commended the RCC leadership team for recognizing the problems and moving to resolve them.

STUDENT TRUSTEE REPORT

Trustee Fantasia James reported accomplishments since the last board meeting. She emphasized the developing partnership with the Student Government Association (SGA). There is a Suggestion Box in library for use by students. Trustee James discussed her advocacy for Open Educational Resources (OER) to reduce the cost of textbooks. She is developing partnerships with other colleges and universities. Trustee James suggested that RCC investigate child care during public school holiday weeks; food insecurity; and suggestions for improving the relationship between faculty and students.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic & Student Affairs

Dr. Kimberly Rogers, Vice President for Academic & Student Affairs introduced the Student Government Association (SGA) leadership.

Kammica Ellison, President summarized Student Advocacy Day on October 23, 2019. Public transportation, affordable housing and food insecurity were among the topics. SGA sponsored a Stress Relief Day; Bookstore survey and meeting with Follett management; Breast Cancer Walk; Homecoming Week; Student/Staff Basketball Shoot-Out among other team-building activities. There are six active student organizations funded by SGA this academic year.

Michael Gregorka, VP SGA elaborated on the issues discussed with legislative staff on Student Advocacy Day including OER, laptop loans. SGA partnered with the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honors Society on the coat drive and canned food drive. SGA members served as hosts/hostesses during the Haynes Family Scholarship event. SGA members participate in the ACUERDO shared governance committees and are able to provide input for college decisions.

The third student was an SGA Representative who spoke about stress relief and referrals for students surrounding mental health issues. She was a speaker at Haynes Family Scholarship event and was proud to represent the student body and ask the community to contribute to the scholarship fund.

Chairman Tompkins asked the SGA representatives to elaborate on the level of engagement of RCC students. He expressed interest in The Brotherhood mentoring group. Chairman Tompkins encouraged the SGA leadership in their roles as ambassadors for RCC and encouraged board members to become involved with student initiatives.

Dr. Rogers added her congratulations to the SGA and introduced Professor John McColgan, Department of Mathematics. Professor McColgan provided an update on the success of the coreq model of instruction and the elimination of developmental math. RCC eliminated developmental math in May 2018 as the result of researching alternative instruction for two years. RCC students moved from 19% successful completion in 2012 to 62% successful completion (grade of C or better) in 2019. Professor McColgan stated that the longitudinal analysis of student persistence and completion will continue, as well as analysis of students who are not eligible for the coreq model. He thanked the Board for its questions and continuing support.

Trustee Greenberg expressed his appreciation for the report and the progress made during his tenure on the board. President Roberson commended the Math faculty on taking the lead in developing a strategy that puts student learning first. Trustee James asked questions about preparation available for the ACCUPLACER. Trustee Francisco asked for more information on students who are not eligible for coreq and pursuing individualized training.

Dr. Rogers informed the board that RCC was participating with CultivatED to develop workforce training for students from areas of disproportionate effect interested in working in the Cannabis Industry. The workforce training program in Building Operators offered in the Center for Smart Building Technology was fully subscribed with 18 students. The Men's Soccer team was relaunched this academic year and ended the season with a 10-3 record.

Chair Tompkins asked about student organizations that were affiliated with the two major national political clubs or with a civic component.

In absence of a quorum, the Resolution for New Program Intent to Offer was tabled until the next board meeting.

Human Resources

Patricia W. West, Chief HR Officer introduced two full-time employees. Nathan Simms Robert Fisher were welcomed by the board.

Finance & Administration

Kevin Hepner, Vice President for Finance & Administration, introduced O'Connor & Drew to present the FY 19 Audited Financial Statement. David Dilulis presented an overview of the FY19 Audited Financial Statement. Zachary Laflash described the student health insurance management comment. VP Hepner provided a historical background on student health insurance. Chairman Tompkins asked O'Connor & Drew to evaluate the college's progress with regard to audited financial statement over the years. Mr. Dilulis was emphatic in stating the forward progress made by RCC in eliminating audit findings. Chairman Tompkins expressed hope that this good news regarding the strength of the financial standing of the college would be heard by a broader community. Chair Tompkins congratulated the college administration for the good work.

Zachary LaFlash presented the clean, unmodified opinion for the FY19 Audited Statement. O'Connor and Drew made the board aware of general issues in higher education on the horizon that may be of interest. President Roberson stated that RCC took action as to reduce the debt and made better than anticipated progress in FY19.

Trustee Greenberg asked about receivables to make sure that the college was reducing past receivables and not incurring new receivables; and at what point old debt is written off. VP Hepner stated that the college was not incurring new receivables.

Trustee Francisco asked a question about an inconsistency in the notes and potential financial penalties for outstanding items from the US DOE program review. President Roberson explained that RCC has resolved all outstanding issues with the exception of two legal actions that remain open.

Absent a quorum the Resolution FY 19 Audited Financial Statements was tabled with a recommendation to call an Executive Committee meeting to pass the resolution to meet reporting deadlines.

VP Hepner reported on the Fall 2019 semester financial reports.

Development

Mishawn Eyene-Davis, Executive Director of Development presented an update on fundraising and grant activity. She expressed thanks to the board for their support of the Haynes Family Scholarship event that raised in excess of \$250,000. Trustee Francisco asked about text-to-give, and employee-giving.

In absence of a quorum, no action was taken on the Resolution: Gifts Received 9.1.19-10.31.19.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Roberson thanked Commissioner Santiago for his presentation. She described her participation with the Massachusetts Trustees Association and discussion of the Equity Agenda. Dr. Roberson was part of a delegation of community college presidents who completed a lobbying visit to Washington, DC regarding the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

Issues that were discussed with the Massachusetts representative in the US House and US Senate included expansion of Pell, dual credit, and aging infrastructure. Trustee Francisco asked about federal grants for minority serving institutions. Dr. Roberson provided some background on the competitive nature of the federal grants and changes in federal regulations.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Tompkins at 8:25PM