

**Roxbury Community College**  
**Board of Trustees**  
*Gerald Chertavian, Chair*  
**Meeting Minutes**  
*September 13, 2016*

**Board of Trustees Members:**

**Present:** Gerald Chertavian, *Chair*; Michael Curry, *Vice Chair*; Glynn Lloyd, *Treasurer*; Mark Culliton, *Secretary*; Jeffrey Greenberg; Josiane Martinez; Jusu Coker; Mayra Leith; Amanda Fernandez, Amanda Schaefer

**Absent:** Steven Tompkins

**Others Present:**

Valerie Roberson, *President* Cecile Regner, *Vice President*; Kevin Hepner, *Vice President*; Lorita Williams, *Vice President*; Patricia West, *HR Chief/Officer*

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and determined that a quorum was present.

**I. Moment of Silence**

President Roberson informed the board of the loss of two faculty members, Professor Anthony Aiya-Oba and Professor Marie Dalexis. The board observed a moment of silence.

**II. Guests**

Vice President Regner first recognized student Trustee Jusu Coker and he introduced the leadership of the Student Government Association.

**III. Approve Minutes, June 21, 2016**

Minutes were approved upon a motion made by Trustee Lloyd and seconded by Trustee Leith.

**IV. Public Comment**

**a. Darnell Williams**

- i.** Mr. Williams began by reminding the board that he had previously been a trustee at Bunker Hill Community College for over 8 years under Governor Jane Swift. He understands the perspective the board must adopt. He also stated that he had 15 years of experience working in human resources. He is a 20 year resident of Roxbury and has been dealing with RCC for many years, in its high moments as well as its low moments and today is the lowest of the low, from his perspective. Keith McDermott has been a steadfast constant at RCC as a mentor, father and coach to many of the athletes currently standing in this room. The Reggie Lewis has been a

safe haven for many seniors. The Reggie Lewis has been open to the community and for 16 years Keith has put on a world class track event televised across the world. He deserves better. He believes the Reggie Lewis needs to be an independent entity, potentially operated by DCR, with the College having the same access.

**b. Mark Leszcyk**

- i.** Mr. Leszcyk began by stating he was not well informed on the reason behind Mr. McDermott's dismissal from the College. He also stated that this is in no way an anti-administration speech, but a pro-Keith McDermott speech. He stated the current administration is and has been extremely supportive of the women's basketball team and RCC Athletics. Keith's impact has been instrumental in the success of the program and he has personally intervened to help many student athletes succeed and gain employment. He once procured a bus at his expense to transport players and Reggie Lewis staffers to Coach Leszcyk's funeral when a relative passed away suddenly. He has received an overwhelming amount of texts, calls and emails from people wanting to know what is going on. He along with the women's basketball team stands in unity that Keith be reinstated.

**c. Steven Keys**

- i.** Mr. Keys began by stating he has known Keith for 34 years. He is still employed by the Reggie Lewis Center and has been associated with the Center for 18 years, formally as the daytime operations manager. He wants to know why Keith was terminated while the assistant director position was also vacant. We are left with no one to run the Center. He can't think of anyone that could run the Center like Keith. He can't understand why this decision was made without any cause. He supports the staff and supports Keith.

**d. Rick Kates**

- i.** Mr. Kates spoke on behalf of the Mass State Track Coaches Association. He is a teacher, coach, AD and serves on a board of trustees. He stated that his group is the one that had the Reggie Lewis Center built, according to their vision. They are concerned the Center is now leaderless, with the indoor season only 10 weeks away. They are very upset with the administration's decision to terminate Mr. McDermott. He is the glue of the operation of the Reggie and has honored the legislative intent expressed in the creation of the Reggie Lewis Center. He is the person responsible for the recent renovations of the facility and the current administration has been slow to act. He accused the President of not contacting anyone in the Baker administration after phase 2 of renovations were placed on hold. They do not think that is a good strategy. They stated a request came from the administration to close the Reggie Lewis during the indoor track season to accommodate college registration. This is completely at odds with the legislative intent used in the creation of the

Center. He reminded the Board that this is a statewide facility, not the RCC gymnasium. They also have concerns about the McIntyre Mooney Foundation, which is under the control of the RCC Foundation Board. Their current concern is that no agreement has been formalized, with the Foundation Board holding \$120,000 for close to a year. The MSTCA believed they had a good agreement and then the President reviewed without involving the Chair of the RCC Foundation Board. In fact, the chairperson emailed to say she knew nothing of a meeting that was scheduled for last evening then recently postponed. The funds donated were meant for the track and field facility, not RCC. Those who have donated have not received any communication on where the money is currently and what kind of loss or gain has occurred. We have been patient, but are now very impatient.

- e. Donna M. Harris-Lewis yielded her time to Diane Wilkerson
- f. Leonard Lee
  - i. Mr. Lee began by stating that he works for the State of Massachusetts. He was in Pittsfield, MA and encountered students who knew about the Reggie Lewis and had great things to say about it. He mentioned that to show the reputation the Reggie Lewis Center has around the state. Having a world class administrator is the key. Keith has touched, moved and inspired people all over the state. He thinks it is a tragedy and an insult to the community that he was dismissed.
- g. Cheryl McDermott
  - i. Mrs. McDermott yielded her time to the Sensational Seniors who spoke on behalf of Mr. McDermott. They asked that he be reinstated and given a raise.
- h. Keith Castle
  - i. Mr. Castle spoke in support of Keith McDermott. He has been around the College since it was on Dudley Street. He met Keith many years ago. He knows Keith has done a fantastic job and has brought Roxbury to the forefront. He said the community doesn't need outside people. He was a former member of RCC Foundation Board. He asked that Keith be reinstated and given a raise. He urged people to take a tour of the Reggie.
- i. Dianne Wilkerson
  - i. Former Senator Wilkerson thanked the Board for allowing her an opportunity to speak. She spoke on her concerns over a perceived shift in the focus and commitment of the College towards the role of the Reggie Lewis and the College. She credited Mel King, Bill Owens and Gloria Fox as the champions of the current RCC along with the hundreds who laid their bodies on the ground to prevent the bulldozing of this community for I-95. Her involvement came later, during the negotiations for the

legislation creating the Reggie Lewis and the community's access to it. Recent actions by the College's administration suggest there is a grave lack of understanding of the history behind the Center and the specific commitments that were made and were never supposed to change regardless of who sat in the President's office or Governor's office. In fact, she was once chastised for holding up the budget for the track while finalizing the agreement between the track and community. She reiterated "here we go again". She said it is unacceptable that the community be billed at the same rate as outside groups and a violation of the original legislation. She doesn't understand why the College would need the Reggie Lewis for classroom space when there are over a 100 classrooms and the college enrollment is down. She said current actions do not honor Reggie Lewis or his memory. She then said no one is entitled to a job for life and that Keith's dismissal is part of internal college management. She does take issue if Keith was dismissed for standing up to the administration for trying to violate the agreements on the proper use of the facility. She has read the Budd Report and believes most of the concerns raised there were corrected. She took issue with NH license plates and white workers doing construction in Lot 1. She claims her granddaughter was in the one week basketball camp taking place in the Reggie in August. She claims that on day 2 of their one week camp they were told they could not enter the track. She brought up concerns raised by Sadiki Kambon over last December's Kwanzaa celebration and stated we should have listened to him. She suggested releasing the oversight and operation of the Reggie Lewis to UMass Boston. She believes DCR cannot effectively manage the facility.

**j. Terrance Williams**

- i.** Mr. Williams stated that everyone here loves Keith. He is a man of integrity and well-loved in the community. He stated that election season is coming up and he asked that Keith be reinstated. He said he would stand out front and protest if necessary.

**k. Cornell Mills**

- i.** Mr. Mills thanked the Board for allowing him to speak. He is there to support Keith McDermott and he has had many personal and professional interactions with Keith and his staff. They have always been accountable and the Center is always immaculate. He volunteers with girls basketball and worked with the week-long girls basketball camp. He said he and Keith came to an agreement and all the proper paperwork was submitted. In the middle of the week, he was told the administration of the College had changed course. The girls showed up to the center and were told they could not enter. In the past, Keith has paid out of his own pocket for events for the community.

**l. City Councilor Tito Jackson**

- i. Councilor Jackson introduced himself to the Board and stated he was there in support of Keith McDermott. He spoke of a time when he worked with Keith to host President Obama at the Reggie Lewis. If he is good enough for a President he is good enough for Roxbury Community College. He is always operated with dignity and respect and accountability to this neighborhood and community. He is beyond reproach with his reputation to this community. Many of the calls he makes to and about the College do not go to Dr. Roberson's office. He calls Keith for what he needs and that is what he relies upon. He is very troubled by the disregard and disrespect shown towards a nearly 19-year employee and how he was treated. That disrespect carries beyond Keith to the entire community. He noted there was no plan for transition. Keith should not be treated this way and he would like to see Keith McDermott reinstated and he will do whatever is in his power to see that happen.

m. State Representative Gloria Fox

- i. Representative Fox stated she was here for a number of reasons. She is very concerned with a number of actions taken by the College. She reminded the Board that she was an organizer back in the day. She loves this campus and knows it has had its ups and downs. She has ensured the state budget has reflected the struggle that the campus has had. She said RCC is a unique institution. She reminded the board that she is one of the longest serving elected officials in the House of Representative and the only woman of color. She apologized for not being here sooner but she was taking care of important matters of state elsewhere, but now there are other important matters to take care of tonight. Rep Fox stated she could filibuster for days if necessary. She paused to ask someone to answer her cell phone. She believed this issue would become a statewide issue in just a minute and she hoped it didn't hamper the funding she secures for the College every year. She prefers having the funding of the College and Reggie Lewis separate. She stated that Keith McDermott was a black man and it was important to have black male role models. She believes that Keith's termination should be undone. She doesn't know what Adrian Walker will write in his column but she hopes he talks about hundreds of people coming out to support Keith. She feels it will reflect badly on the President, as she told you my sister (President Roberson). She feels there will be questions why they can't run this thing, why they can't get it together. The fixing can't be done quietly, but it should be done quickly. As the longest serving member of the Black caucus, she wants to know what the plan is for going forward. She asked if Russell was in the house. She thinks the Speaker of the House is watching what we're doing here. She was concerned the House would see this as a weakness when the Governor starts making 9C cuts. She promised to call the Speaker tonight and tell him her advice was well received but that she didn't know how they'd speak in executive session. She said a member of the Caribbean community would like to speak. When informed no such person was in the

room Rep. Fox said she would speak for the Caribbean community as well. She then asked if everyone had gotten applause. She asked how long executive session would last and when at least the legislators would know what the outcome would be? She wants to know if there is a positive or negative outcome so she can start doing her official thing.

## **V. Board Reports**

### **Academic and Student Affairs (VP Cecile Regner and Dr. Jeffrey Greenberg)**

Trustee Greenberg went over highlights from the academic and student affairs committee hearing from last week. Headcount is up for the fall as compared to the same time last year. This reverses a trend from the last few years and is contrary to the trend throughout the state. We are awaiting final numbers in a few weeks.

HCM2 submissions continue to be clean and the College continues to await word from the federal DOE on a change in the College's heightened cash management status based on our 2013 review.

Vice President Regner noted the enrollment figures in their binders are from Sep 7<sup>th</sup>. The end of Sep is the official census date. We are in the add/drop period right now and we continue to work with faculty to ensure we're keeping our students. The Fall Access session will begin in 4 weeks.

The vice president reviewed two important tuition assistance programs that the College is participating in. Mayor Walsh has a unique tuition assistance program through which DACA students are eligible for tuition assistance. The College continues to complete outreach to Boston public schools. The Mayor's office is also making up the difference for Pell student's unmet need. This is very important for part-time students. The second program is the Commonwealth Commitment program from the Department of Higher Education. It will be transformative for students across the state. Enrollments in these programs are small so far.

There will be 1 sabbatical consideration for later this fall, once the sabbatical committee has made its recommendation.

The contract for the adjunct instructors has expired. Work is being done under the provisions of the old contract. The semester did not begin with work to rule circumstance.

### **Finance and Budget (VP Kevin Hepner and Glenn Lloyd, Trustee)**

Trustee Lloyd asked the trustees to refer to their binders to go the net actuals contained in the Finance Committee report.

VP Hepner began by reviewing the draft financial statement for the period ending June 30<sup>th</sup>. We are in the midst of our annual audit. He finished by presenting a resolution to the Board for their approval for the operating budget for the College for fiscal year 2017.

By a motion made by Trustee Schaefer and seconded by Trustee Greenberg the FY '17 budget resolution was approved unanimously (Attachment 1).

VP Hepner reminded the Board that campus construction has begun.

### **Institutional Advancement** *(VP Lorita Williams and Josiane Martinez)*

Trustee Martinez reviewed the items from last week's advancement committee meeting. The five year fundraising plan was discussed as part of the larger capital campaign for large and small items.

The MA Board of Higher Education has officially approved the RCC Strategic Plan. The next step will be implementation with individual departments.

### **Human Resources** *(HR Director Patricia West and Amanda Fernandez, Trustee)*

Trustee Fernandez began by stating how pleased she was to have taken on the duties of chair of the HR Committee. The three key areas that are being discussed for opportunities for next year include improved recruitment practices, succession planning and continued focus on HR processes.

## **VI. Report of the President**

The President had a few items she wanted to highlight based on the previous committee reports. The first containing academic support is the continued effort to create partnerships to enable our students to transfer successfully or have a richer experience while enrolled here at Roxbury. One such partnership is with UMass Boston where we've aligned our nursing curricula and admission standards so that when a student is enrolled at RCC in nursing they are automatically enrolled at UMass Boston. That program has also been accepted at Emmanuel College.

In addition, we've signed an agreement with UMass Amherst that students are able to take a course here with a faculty member from UMass. This will enable them to have a dual admission that will aid in transfer. A final partnership to highlight is the work we've been doing with a Pre-Release program in Roslindale with students who are incarcerated. The program allows them to take college-level courses before they leave the center. This will help them with completing a degree and obtaining employment.

In terms of construction projects, the President reiterated that the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) oversees hiring on all projects. Nevertheless, the College continues to work with DCAMM to ensure they are engaging local women and minority owned businesses. We are having two special sessions with local businesses to describe the work occurring on campus and determining whether there will be a need that local businesses can fill. The first will be Sep 20<sup>th</sup>. There will be a second session forthcoming.

## **VII. Report of the Chairman**

The Chairman moved that the board enters executive session.

**VIII. Executive Session**

There was a motion made to enter executive session. The chairman wished the general public a good evening and thanked them for their attendance. The time was 7:55

**IX. Adjourn** **9: 21 PM**

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**Attachment 1**

**Roxbury Community College**  
Board of Trustees  
September 13, 2016  
**RESOLUTION**

This resolution is for the approval of the operating College Budget for Fiscal Year 2017, from July 1, 2016 until June 30, 2017.

***WHERE AS,***

- An Annual Review of the budget is prudent to endure compliance with all pertinent Commonwealth legislation and policies; and
- A comprehensive review of expected revenues and expenditures is needed to ensure that the College is operating within a balanced budget; and
- The College administrators will be responsible for evaluating all expenditures and requests and ensuring that the College is operating within this budget; and
- The FY '17 General Appropriations Act of the Commonwealth has been signed by the Governor

***NOW THEREFORE,***

It is resolved by the Roxbury Community College Board of Trustees that the attached budget shall be effective July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017. The President or her designee shall take the necessary steps to implement the budget as voted.

