



**Minutes of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD OF TRUSTEES ANNUAL MEETING
Thursday, September 14, 2017
Fitzpatrick Room, Murdock Hall 208**

The following Trustees were present:

Susan Gold, Chair
JD Chesloff, Vice Chair
John Barrett III
Mohan Boodram
Lisa Chamberlain
Buffy Lord
Denise Marshall
Rob Reilly
Kathleen Therrien
Stephanie Collins, Student Trustee

Others present:

James F. Birge, President
Denise Richardello, Executive Vice President
Cynthia Brown, Vice President of Academic Affairs
Larry Behan, Vice President of Administration & Finance
Cathy Holbrook, Vice President of Student Affairs
Molly Fannon Williams, Interim Vice President of Institutional Advancement
Bernadette Alden, Director of Marketing & Communication
Monica Joslin, Dean of Academic Affairs
Theresa O'Bryant, Associate Dean of Students
Gina Puc, Director of Admission

Chair Gold called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. and welcomed 2017-2018 Student Trustee, Stephanie Collins, to her first meeting.

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 4:00 p.m. at Murdock Hall on September 14, 2017 with Board Chair Gold presiding.

Approval of Minutes: May 25, 2017 Board of Trustees meeting

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the May 25, 2017, meeting of the Board and all actions contained therein.

Report on the Minutes of the September 11, 2017 Fiscal Affairs Committee Meeting

Trustee Marshall reported on behalf of the Committee. She noted that the committee is bringing forward one action item for consideration this evening.

The Committee reviewed the 4th quarter report and noted that the FY 18 budget deficit is \$42,325 which is down from the original projection of just over \$1.5 million. The committee will discuss transfers between fund accounts as part of its ongoing business and new budgeting software will allow for more robust reporting.

The Committee reviewed the revised FY 2018 budget. The projected deficit in the budget approved at the May 2017 BOT meeting was \$647,717. The revised budget as presented in this meeting shows a break-even year end position. This break-even was achieved via an approved increase in student fees of \$135 per semester, managing open positions on payroll, and a draw from the reserve fund of \$300,000. The revised budget does include the Chief Diversity Officer and Compliance Officer positions.

The Committee also received an update from VP Behan on the Campus Center pool project as well as Facilities and IT updates. It was also shared that due to a change in policy and advance communication with students, there were only four students who arrived for move-in day who had not made a payment, or made arrangements for payment. This is a significant decrease as previously the number had been closer to 40.

Trustee Marshall thanked Bonnie Howland and her staff in Student Accounts for their good work and thanked VP Behan and his team for their ongoing strategic and comprehensive approach to the budget deficit.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the September 11, 2017 meeting of the Fiscal Affairs Committee and all actions contained therein.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was.

VOTED To approve the revised Fiscal Year 2018 budget

Chairperson's report

Chair Gold shared that Opening Breakfast and Convocation were both wonderful events. She thanked those Trustees who were able to attend and reminded them of upcoming events this fall including Reunion/Homecoming and the fall speaker series.

As this is the first meeting of the academic year Chair Gold reminded the Board of the annual forms that must be completed which include the Disclosure Questionnaire and Confidentiality Agreement.

As the Board does each year, an ad hoc committee has been assembled to discuss Honorary Degree recipients for 2018. Trustees Chamberlain, Chesloff, and Marshall are serving this year along with Chair Gold. If any Trustees would like to put forward suggestions of potential Honorary Degree recipients, they are welcome to do so by emailing the Board Chair and President Birge.

President's Report

President Birge noted that MCLA has two students who are studying abroad at the University of the U.S. Virgin Islands which was devastated by hurricane Irma. Both students are safe and will take online courses this semester that are being offered by UVI. He also noted that two recent MCLA Alums are currently working as interns at Walt Disney World in Orlando and they have checked in and are safe as well.

He then highlighted some of the information shared at opening breakfast including accomplishments of Faculty colleagues, DownStreet Art's ten-year anniversary, the receipt of a Mellon Foundation planning grant to establish the Berkshire Humanities Council, and grants received from the Department of Higher Education in support of the STEM network and the expansion of Dual Enrollment programs with Berkshire County High Schools. Additionally, since the approval of the new majors in June for Health Sciences and Community Health Education, there are 20 students who have transferred into the Health Sciences program.

President Birge provided an update on Fall enrollment and shared information regarding a summer partnership with MASS MoCA in which the College rented space in its residence halls to artists and visitors to Solid Sound. This brought additional revenue to the College and will continue in the future.

He then shared information on the College's continuing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives which included a workshop on Intergroup Dialogue for faculty and staff; working with a consultant on inclusive pedagogy workshops for faculty as well as front line staff; the establishment of at least one "all gender" restroom in the majority of campus buildings; and

Information Technology's extensive work to create a form allowing students, faculty, and staff to designate a preferred name or pronoun. Additionally, two faculty members, Frances Jones-Sneed and Kerri Nicoll, have received an Alternate Professional Responsibility, or APR, for the academic year to focus on DEI in preparation for the arrival of a Chief Diversity Officer in the spring.

President Birge also provided an update on MSCA negotiations and noted that faculty are currently working without contract and, as such, are "working to rule." He thanked MCLA faculty for remaining committed to delivering academic content and continuing some additional work in terms of Admission during these budget negotiations.

Presentation of MCLA Strategic Plan

President Birge provided an update on the College's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan: [*Think Differently: Learning and Teaching for a Changing World*](#) and preparations to implement this new plan.

President Birge reviewed the College's continued commitments, the areas in which it plans to further distinguish itself, as well as the eight goals that emerged from the planning process. He noted that this has been a very inclusive process which has resulted in campus constituents feeling a sense of ownership over these goals.

The Board then discussed implementation of the plan, how to effectively measure the success of each goal, and benchmarks along the way. Metrics are currently being established. President Birge shared that various individuals and/or groups will be responsible for overseeing each of the goals with the Executive Staff team acting as the primary drivers and providers of oversight.

The Trustees inquired about Board expectations, how active and engaged they should be in order to best serve as stewards of the institution, and the process for keeping them informed as it is crucial that the Trustees remain invested in the outcomes.

President Birge will provide a Strategic Planning update at all Board meetings and this will be the primary topic at the winter Board Retreat.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED to adjourn the meeting at 4:59 p.m.