

**Rock Valley College  
Community College District No. 511  
3301 N. Mulford Road, Rockford, IL 61114**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING  
5:15 p.m. Tuesday, April 11, 2023  
MINUTES**

*On March 31, 2023, Governor Pritzker issued the forty-first Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation for all counties in Illinois. Due to the COVID-19 health pandemic, Howard J. Spearman, Ph.D., president of Rock Valley College, has determined that an in-person meeting is not practical, prudent, or feasible based on the Disaster Proclamation. Under Section 7 (e) (4) of the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS120/7(e)(4)), this meeting will be held without the physical presence of a quorum at the meeting location.*

***Meeting Location:*** Building E, Rock Valley College, 3301 N. Mulford Road, Rockford, IL 61114. Howard J. Spearman, Ph.D., president of Rock Valley College, or his designee as chief administrative officer, will be physically present at the meeting location. ***Trustees/members, citizens, faculty, and staff may attend the meeting via teleconference or videoconference.***

*Access to the Board of Trustees meeting is provided via teleconference online <https://rockvalleycollege-edu.zoom.us/j/99507916249?pwd=MEZ2RGxsNlY2MlQxaWFFdWducFESZz09> or by phone at 312-626-6799 using Meeting ID: 995 0791 6249 Passcode: 397963. The meeting will include an opportunity for public comment. Any public member who would like to make a public comment can submit their public comment via email to [RVC-BoardPC@rockvalleycollege.edu](mailto:RVC-BoardPC@rockvalleycollege.edu) by 3:15 p.m. on April 11, 2023. Public comments submitted via email will be announced during the public comment portion of the meeting.*

**Call to Order**

The Rock Valley College (RVC) Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting was convened remotely by teleconference on Tuesday, April 11, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by Vice-Chairperson Paul Gorski.

**Roll Call**

The following members of the Board of Trustees were present at roll call:

Mr. Robert Trojan	Mr. Ryan Russell, Student Trustee,
Mr. Richard Kennedy	joined the meeting at 5:19 p.m.
Mr. Paul Gorski	
Ms. Lynn Kearney	Ms. Crystal Soltow,
Mr. John Nelson	joined the meeting at 5:34 p.m.

The following Trustee was absent at roll call: Ms. Gloria Cardenas Cudia.

Also present: Dr. Howard Spearman, President; Mr. Rick Jenks, Vice President of Operations; Ms. Ellen Olson, Vice President of Finance; Mr. Jim Handley, Vice President of Human Resources; Dr. Patrick Peyer, Vice President of Student Affairs; Mr. Keith Barnes, Vice President of Equity and Inclusion; Dr. Hansen Stewart, Vice President of Industry Partnerships and Community Engagement; Ms. Heather Snider, Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Communications; Dr. Amanda Smith, Vice President of Liberal Arts & Adult Education; Ms. Ann Kerwitz, Assistant to the President; Ms. Betsabe Saucedo, Interim Assistant to the President; Ms. Tracy Luethje, Assistant to the Vice President of Operations; Attorney Matthew Gardner, Robbins Schwartz.

**Communications and Petitions**

There were no public comments, communications, and/or petitions.

**Recognition of Visitors**

Dr. Spearman recognized Trustee Elect Kristen Simpson and newly elected Student Trustee Juan Noguera.

### **Adjourn to Closed Session**

At 5:17 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Trojan, seconded by Trustee Kearney, to adjourn to closed session to discuss: 1) The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body per Section 2 (c) (5), in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

### **Reconvene Open Session**

At 5:45 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Nelson, seconded by Trustee Kennedy, to adjourn the closed session and reconvene to the open session. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote. No action was taken as a result of the closed session.

### **Review of Minutes**

There were no comments on the minutes from March 14, 2023, Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting.

### **General Presentations**

There were no general presentations.

## **Teaching, Learning & Communications Discussion: Board Liaison Trustee Cudia**

### **1. Enrollment Update**

Ms. Heather Snider, vice president of institutional effectiveness and communications, presented the enrollment update. Ms. Snider stated that Fiscal Year 2023 is currently 2% above the Fiscal Year goal. In addition, Ms. Snider said that RVC is in really good shape, with more summer enrollments coming in. This will be the last Fiscal Year 2023 enrollment report shared with the Board of Trustees.

Ms. Snider stated that Summer II and Fall registration has opened, and enrollments are behind from last year. RVC is aware of some comparison issues with its enrollments because RVC started the enrollment cycle two and a half weeks earlier this year to allow students more time for registration. Ms. Snider explained that what the Trustees see is in comparison from April 2, 2023, to May 2, 2022. Ms. Snider stated that further into the cycle are the comparisons from April 10, 2023, with April 10, 2022, and RVC is ahead in unduplicated headcount and 26% ahead in credit hours. Either way, RVC is 40% to the goal for fall. RVC is working on adjusting the comparison enrollment reports that come out daily so the Trustees can have more of an “apples-to-apples” comparison. Discussion ensued.

### **2. Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Update**

Dr. Lisa Mehlig, executive director of outcomes assessment and Higher Learning Commission (HLC) liaison, presented the HLC update. Dr. Mehlig stated that on April 13 and 14, 2023, a small group of the HLC Steering Committee would participate in a collaboration of a virtual workshop being held by the Higher Learning Commission. The workshop will allow RVC to review some best practices in leveraging the steering committee, writing the assurance argument, and engaging the campus in preparation for the scheduled comprehensive evaluation on October 14 and 15, 2024. Dr. Mehlig stated that part of RVC’s obligation of membership with the Higher Learning Commission is that RVC has to submit the 2023 institutional update by April 8, 2023. RVC submitted the institutional update on March 17, 2023, which was well before the April 8, 2023 deadline. Dr. Mehlig thanked Ms. Ellen Olson and Ms. Sharla Parsons for all their work on the institutional update. Discussion ensued.

### **3. Sabbatical Approvals**

Dr. Amanda Smith, vice president of liberal arts and adult education and chief academic officer, presented the Sabbatical Personnel Report. Dr. Smith stated that Dr. Danielle Hardesty is proposing a year-long sabbatical to research and implement equity-based assessment practices to improve student-centered learning. This includes researching the latest equity-centered assessment trends in higher education and contemporary assessment practices. She will analyze assessments at the curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular levels at Rock Valley College,

creating resources and professional development programming. She will create an interdepartmental dialogue between chairs on assessment, equity, and different approaches to student learning.

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves Dr. Danielle Hardesty's sabbatical leave for one academic year (Fall 2023-Spring 2024), including teaching a standard semester instructional workload (15 credit hour equivalent (CHE)) over two semesters at 100% salary. Discussion ensued.

#### 4. Faculty Tenure Update

Dr. Smith presented the Faculty Tenure Update. Dr. Smith said she is delighted that nursing faculty member Jessica Higgins is earning her tenure this year. Dr. Smith stated that Ms. Higgins has been a tremendous asset to RVC. Dr. Smith noted that there are approximately 20 members that are working toward their tenure. Discussion ensued.

#### 5. Completion Ceremonies Update

Dr. Patrick Peyer, vice president of student affairs, presented the Completion Ceremonies Update. Dr. Peyer reviewed the dates and ceremonies to be held in April and May of 2023. Discussion ensued.

### Finance Discussion: Board Liaison Trustee Trojan/Trustee Soltow

#### 1. Purchase Reports

Ms. Ellen Olson, vice president of finance, presented the purchase reports.

##### *Purchase Report A - FY 2023 Amendments:*

- A. Textbooks – (Instruction Supplies General: Early Childhood Access Consortium (ECACE))
  - 1. Barnes and Noble Rockford, IL \$ 2,290.65\* (1)
- B. Contract Services – (Participant Travel for Athletic Department)
  - 2. Enterprise Rent-A-Car Midwest Rockford, IL \$ 14,000.00\* (2)
- C. Contractual Services – ( Maintenance Services: Plant Operations and Maintenance: Boiler House)
  - 3. Johnson Control Fire Protection Palatine, IL \$ 9,000.00\* (3)
- D. Service – (Telephone Service Charges: IT Telecommunications)
  - 4. Stratus Networks Peoria Heights, IL \$ 16,800.00\* (4)

##### *Purchase Report B - FY 2023 Purchases:*

- A. Contractual Services – (Other Conference & Meeting Expenses: Upward Bound Direct)
  - 1. Nucleus Robotics Los Angeles, CA \$ 15,900.00\* (1)
- B. Equipment – (Operations & Maintenance Fund – POM, Equipment)
  - 2. Mid-State Equipment Columbus, WI \$ 16,250.00\* (2)
  - Cherry Valley Landscape Center Rockford, IL \$ 17,604.00
  - Russo Power Equipment Schiller Park, IL \$ 19,667.00
- C. Food – (Food: College Bridge Program Grant 2023)
  - 3. Schnucks Market Rockford, IL \$ 26,900.00\* (3)
- D. Transportation – (Gas: College Bridge Program Grant 2023)
  - 4. Kelley Williamson Rockford, IL \$ 16,000.00\* (4)

E. Fleet Trucks – (Capital Service Equipment – Fleet Equipment)		
5. Kunes	Elkhorn, WI	\$ 59,678.00* (5)
Kunes	Elkhorn, WI	\$ 60,678.00* (5)
Kunes	Elkhorn, WI	\$ 64,678.00* (5)

Discussion ensued on Purchase Report B, items C, and D. Ms. Olson stated that item F would be added as a redline to Purchase Report B for permit fees for the City of Belvidere for Phase II of the Advanced Technology Center (ATC) in the amount of \$24,155.75. In addition, two more fleet vehicles would be redlined to item E.

**2. All World Machinery Supply – One-Year Tax Abatement**

Ms. Olson presented the All World Machinery Supply One-Year Tax Abatement. Ms. Olson stated that RVC approved a five-year 50 percent (50%) tax abatement on September 23, 2014, for the property being developed by All World Machinery Supply, Inc., located in Roscoe, IL, more specifically identified as property tax index number 04-15-300-020. The abatement was effective for five years. All World Machinery Supply, Inc. has specifically requested a tax abatement for a period of one additional year at fifty percent due to the original tax abatement not affecting all five years of the equalized assessed value (EAV) as developed property. Ms. Olson explained that the estimated abatement amount is \$3,300 to \$3,500 for one year.

The RVC Administration recommends that the Board of Trustees uphold the original purpose of the tax abatement and that the abatement shall not exceed a period of one year in fulfilling the original spirit and intent of the previously approved abatement. Ms. Olson stated that the total tax abatement All World Machinery Supply, Inc. receives pursuant to this tax abatement commencing with the 2023 tax payable in 2024 shall not exceed \$3,500. Discussion ensued.

**3. Cash and Investment**

Ms. Olson presented the Cash and Investment Report through March 31, 2023. Total operating cash is \$31,679,710. Total operating cash and investments are \$76,720,650. Total capital funds are \$11,325,913. Since February 28, 2023, the change in capital funds has been <\$141,140>. Therefore, the change in the operating cash and investments since February 28, 2023, was \$3,185,376. Ms. Olson stated that the total operating cash and investment funds were 72.60% of the Fiscal Year 2023 operating budget. Discussion ensued.

**4. Fiscal Year 2024 Operations Budget (Funds 01 and 02)**

Ms. Olson presented the Fiscal Year 2024 preliminary, tentative budget for RVC. Ms. Olson discussed the Revenue Assumptions, Expenditure Assumptions, the Audit (Fund 11), which is expenses for the College audit, and revenue from property tax. Ms. Olson also discussed Tort (Fund 12), which is the expense for College insurance, FICA, Tort and Athletic Insurance, and the College’s Health Benefit (Fund 18), which covers the College’s medical, dental, life, and other employee benefits, including the wellness center.

Ms. Olson stated that the next steps would be to review the Tentative Budget for all funds at the May 9 Committee of the Whole meeting and to approve it at the May Board of Trustees meeting. The Tentative Fiscal Year 2024 Budget will be available for public inspection after May 23, 2023, for 30 days in the Financial Services office. The Public Hearing will be held along with the approval of the final Fiscal Year 2024 budget at the June 27, 2023, Board of Trustees meeting. Discussion ensued.

**Operations Discussion: Board Liaison Trustee Kearney**

**1. Personnel Report**

Mr. Jim Handley, vice president of human resources, presented the Personnel Report for April 2023. Mr. Handley stated that there is one placeholder for the Director of Community Education, and this would be a redline item on the Personnel Report for the April regular meeting. The College has received an acceptance for the Director of Community Education position from Ms. Autumn Czizek. Ms. Czizek is currently the principal of Stephen Mack Middle School in Rockton, IL. Mr. Handley stated that there might be other redline items for the

April 25, 2023, Personnel Report, including the Director of Financial Aid, the Director of Business Services, and the Director of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Mr. Handley stated that there was one departure, Jesse Wiles. Discussion ensued.

## **2. Board Policy 3:10.030 Access to Personnel Files (Second Reading)**

Mr. Handley presented the second reading of the Board Policy 3:10.030 Access to Personnel Files. Mr. Handley stated that the Illinois Personnel Record Review Act states that an employer shall provide an employee with an inspection opportunity within seven working days after the employee makes the request, or if the employer can reasonably show that such deadline cannot be met, the employer shall have an additional seven days to comply.

Board Policy 3:10.030 currently states that employees may examine items in their personnel file with a 24-hour written notice to the Vice President of Human Resources or designee. The revised Board Policy updates the timeframe for employees to meet with Human Resources and examine items in their personnel file within three working days of their written request to the Vice President of Human Resources or designee. This will allow the Human Resources team time to inspect and ensure that all printed and digital documents are available for an employee's review and comply with the Illinois Personnel Record Review Act requirements.

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves the amendment to Board Policy 3:10.030 to comply with the Illinois Personnel Record Review Act. Discussion ensued.

## **3. Resolution to Purchase Real Property at 311 South Winnebago Street; Rockford, IL**

Mr. Handley presented the Resolution to Purchase Real Property at 311 South Winnebago Street, Rockford, IL, which requires trustees' approval. Included with the Resolution were the Contract for Purchase and Sale, an Addendum to the agreement for purchase, and the Occupancy Rider.

Trustee Kearney stated that the Resolution did not state that the document was attorney-reviewed, and Trustee Trojan agreed. Attorney Gardner confirmed that he wrote the Resolution and has reviewed it.

## **4. Resolution Honoring the Retirement of Rock Valley College Employees**

Mr. Handley presented the Resolution honoring the retirement of RVC employees for the Fiscal Year 2023. Mr. Handley stated that a celebration would be held on May 3, 2023, from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., for the ten employees who have retired from RVC in the last year. The ten retirees are Pauline Box, Jerry Crane, Todd Dailing, Mary Foreman, Bob Hessel, Kathy Jones, Joan Rabe, Cheryl Rinker, Maureen Taylor, and Sara Wenger. Discussion ensued.

## **5. 2023 Summer Flex Days for Full-Time Educational Support Personnel (ESP), Support Staff Association (SSA), Professional Staff Association (PSA), and Administrative Staff**

On April 26, 2022, Board Report #7916 was approved by the Board of Trustees to offer five summer flex days in 2022 for full-time ESP, SSA, PSA, and Administrative Staff. It is again recommended that the Board of Trustees approves offering five eight-hour summer flex days for 2023 to full-time ESP, SSA, PSA, and Administrative Staff. The summer flex days must be used between May 22, 2023, and August 4, 2023, and will be forfeited if not used in this time frame. The days must be used in eight-hour blocks and scheduled through the appropriate supervisor. If a shift is longer than the eight-hour flex day, the time can be supplemented with other paid time (vacation or personal hours) the employee has available. Discussion ensued.

## **6. College Closure – December 26, 27, and 28, 2023**

Mr. Handley presented the College Closure for December 26, 27, and 28, 2023. Mr. Handley stated that Board Policy 2:10.050, Official College Holidays, provides that Rock Valley College will celebrate Christmas Eve Day and New Year's Eve Day each year as a paid holiday for employees.

Christmas Eve Day, Sunday, December 24, 2023, will be observed on Friday, December 22, 2023. New Year's Eve Day, Sunday, December 31, 2023, will be observed on Friday, December 29, 2023, due to the holidays falling on the weekend. The College will be closed on Monday, December 25, 2023, to observe Christmas Day. The campus is scheduled to be open on Tuesday, December 26, 2023; Wednesday, December 27, 2023; and

Thursday, December 28, 2023. As stated in Board Policy 2:10.050, the Board of Trustees reserves the right to designate additional days that the College will be closed.

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves the closure of Rock Valley College on Tuesday, December 26, 2023; Wednesday, December 27, 2023; and Thursday, December 28, 2023, and designate those days as additional paid days off for employees scheduled to work. In addition, members of the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) and Support Staff Association (SSA) who are required to work on any of those days to keep the campus safe and secure will be paid in accordance with their respective collective bargaining agreements, treating compensation for those days as a campus closure day.

## **7. RVC College Events Calendar**

Mr. Handley presented the RVC on-campus events calendar for April and May 2023. Discussion ensued.

### **New Business / Unfinished Business**

Trustee Gorski announced the passing of Ted Biondo, an RVC Trustee from 2004–2013 and Board Chair from 2008 – 2010. Mr. Biondo was laid to rest in Celebration, Florida, on March 23, 2023. Trustee Gorski thanked Mr. Biondo for his contribution to the RVC Community.

Dr. Spearman stated that RVC was informed of new legislation regarding the creation of a Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency. The Committee will study local efficiencies and report any recommendations to the County Boards of the counties in which the unit of local government is located. Community Colleges fit into this category, so that RVC will provide Trustees with an outline and proposal at the May Committee of the Whole meeting. Formation of the Committee must be completed by June 10, 2023. Trustee Nelson asked for a copy of the legislation.

### **Adjourn to Closed Session**

At 7:06 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Trojan, seconded by Trustee Kearney, to adjourn to closed session to discuss: 1) The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting per Section 2 (c) (1); and/or 2) Collective negotiating matters per Section 2 (c) (2); and/or 3) The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body per Section 2 (c) (5); and/or 4) Litigation has been filed, is pending or probable per Section 2 (c) (11), all in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

### **Reconvene Open Session**

At 7:16 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Kearney, seconded by Trustee Trojan, to adjourn the closed session and reconvene to the open session. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote. No action was taken as a result of the closed session.

### **Special Meeting – Review Facilities Master Plan (FMP)**

A special meeting will be held to review the Facilities Master Plan (FMP) on April 17, 2023, at 5:15 p.m. The meeting will be held virtually via teleconference or in person in the Performing Arts Room (PAR, Room 0214) in the Educational Resource Center (ERC) on the main campus when Illinois statute permits.

### **Next Regular Board of Trustees Meeting**

The next Regular Board of Trustees and Reorganization meetings will be held on April 25, 2023, at 5:15 p.m. The meeting will be held in person in the Performing Arts Room (PAR, Room 0214) in the Educational Resource Center (ERC) on the main campus.

**Next Committee of the Whole Meeting**

The next Committee of the Whole meeting will be held on May 9, 2023, at 5:15 p.m. The meeting will be held in person in the Performing Arts Room (PAR, Room 0214) in the Educational Resource Center (ERC) on the main campus.

**Adjourn**

At 7:20 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Kearney, seconded by Trustee Nelson, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote. Trustee Gorski stated that Student Trustee Ryan Russell left the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Submitted by: Tracy L. Luethje

  
Robert Trojan, Secretary

  
Paul Gorski, Vice-Chairperson