

**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, May 14, 2024**  
**MINUTES**

**Call to Order**

The Rock Valley College (RVC) Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting convened on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, in the Performing Arts Room (PAR, Room 0214) in the Educational Resource Center (ERC). Chairperson Robert Trojan called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

**Roll Call**

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

Ms. Gloria Cardenas Cudia	Mr. Paul Gorski
Mr. Richard Kennedy	Mr. Robert Trojan
Ms. Kristen Simpson	Mr. Juan Nogueta, RVC Student Trustee
Mr. John Nelson; joined at 5:21 p.m.	

The following Trustee was absent at roll call: Ms. Crystal Soltow

Also present: Dr. Howard J. Spearman, President; Mr. Keith Barnes, Vice President of Equity and Inclusion; Dr. Patrick Peyer, Vice President of Student Affairs; Ms. Heather Snider, Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Communications; Dr. Hansen Stewart, Vice President of Career and Technical Education and Workforce Development; Mr. Rick Jenks, Vice President of Operations; Dr. Amanda Smith, Vice President of Academic Affairs; Ms. Ellen Olson, Vice President of Finance; Ms. Ann Kerwitz, Assistant to the President; Ms. Betsabe Saucedo, Assistant to the President; Ms. Tracy Luethje, Executive Assistant to the Vice President of Operations; Attorney Christopher Gorman, Robbins Schwartz.

**Board Member Attendance by Means Other Than Physical Presence**

Trustee Kennedy made a motion, seconded by Trustee Cardenas Cudia, to allow Trustee Crystal Soltow to participate in the meeting via teleconference. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote. Trustee Soltow entered the meeting via telephone at 5:16 p.m.

**Communications and Petitions**

There were no communications and petitions to recognize.

**Recognition of Visitors**

Dr. Patrick Peyer, vice president of student affairs, introduced Mr. Nico Mikos. Mr. Mikos is the Student Trustee-Elect for 2024-2025.

**Review of Minutes**

There were no comments on the minutes from the April 9, 2024, Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting.

**General Presentations**

**1. Student Voter Registration**

Dr. Howard Spearman, president of Rock Valley College, introduced Ms. Jasmine Nathan, president of the Student Government Association, and Mr. Juan Nogueta, Student Trustee, who presented the Civic

Engagement Program. Ms. Nathan stated that the Student Government Association has partnered with the League of Women Voters to help students register for voter registration. Mr. Noguera explained that the Student Government Association wanted to do more, so the association is developing a program to encourage student civic engagement every year. The Civic Engagement Program will be developed throughout the summer of 2024 and piloted in the fall of 2024 through the “All In” Campus Democracy Challenge. The All In Campus Democracy Challenge provides institutions of higher education and their students with guidance and resources to promote nonpartisan voter registration and voting. Ms. Nathan stated that All In will allow RVC to understand and collect student voting habits and data from the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE). Ms. Nathan said the campus-wide initiative will be collaboratively led by a committee of students, staff, and faculty through signature events, in-classroom activities, and marketing. Ms. Nathan and Mr. Noguera finished with a timeline of events from May 2024 through November 2024.

Trustee Nelson inquired if the Board of Trustees needed to take any action on the program. Ms. Nathan stated the presentation was for informational purposes for the Board of Trustees. Discussion ensued.

## **2. Downtown West Campus Update**

The Downtown West Campus Update was presented by Mr. Richard Jenks, vice president of operations, and Mr. Greg Klader, vice president for pre-construction with Ringland-Johnson Construction. Mr. Jenks reminded the Board of Trustees that at the Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting on April 9, 2024, information was shared that the new Downtown West campus has two construction options: a single-building design or a two-building design. Mr. Kader explained that the design team had preliminary cost estimates for moving the utilities and the price difference between the one-building and two-building designs. Mr. Klader added that the one-building design and the utilities' move would also push the construction back at least 12 months.

Based on the costs and the potential length of time it will take to vacate the utilities from South Rockton Avenue, the administration and the design team recommend the two-building design, which would involve vacating vehicular traffic on South Rockton Avenue but leave an easement for the utilities and bury existing utilities on South Rockton Avenue between Green Street and Chestnut Street. The administration will update the Board of Trustees at the July 9, 2024, Committee of the Whole meeting or have a special meeting. Discussion ensued.

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

#### **1. Enrollment Update**

Ms. Heather Snider, vice president of institutional effectiveness and communications, presented the Enrollment Update. Ms. Snider stated the College is at 89% to goal for Summer II and 55% to goal for Fall. In Summer II and Fall, the College is 57% to goal and 56% to the stretch goal.

#### **2. Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement (IGA): 2024-2025 IDOT Highway Construction Careers Training**

Dr. Stewart presented the IGA Highway Construction Careers Training Program (HCCTP) presentation. Dr. Stewart stated that the IGA is between the Illinois Department of Transportation and RVC. Under the Agreement, the College shall administer the HCCTP, teaching highway construction industry “trade and life” skills to selected trainees who reflect the characteristics of the under-represented population of the Federal Highway Administration On-the-Job Training (OJR) Program. The program takes place at ten community colleges in Illinois, including college-approved work-site locations.

Dr. Stewart briefly discussed the number of students who have/are participating in the HCCTP program and what the program goals are under the HCCTP guidelines. Discussion ensued.

### 3. The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Teaching and Learning

Dr. Hansen Stewart, vice president of career and technical education and workforce development, and Dr. Amanda Smith, vice president of academic affairs, presented The Impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on Teaching and Learning presentation. Dr. Smith stated that AI is advancing quickly and is having a greater influence on higher education. Dr. Smith stated that utilizing AI has advantages and potential risks. Dr. Smith gave examples of generative AI applications in higher education, such as chatbots for student support, AI-generated educational content, and automated essay grading. Dr. Smith gave examples of the positive benefits of AI and how RVC has implemented Generative AI at RVC.

Dr. Stewart discussed the potential risks of using Generative AI and gave several examples, such as data security, plagiarism, and academic misconduct. Discussion ensued.

### 4. Quarterly FY2024 Strategic Plan Update

Ms. Heather Snider, vice president of institutional effectiveness and communications, presented the Quarterly FY2024 Strategic Plan Update. She explained that she would focus on Pillar II, Exceptional Educational Opportunities. Ms. Snider stated that goal one is to ensure high-quality and relevant certificate, degree, and co-curricular programs. Goal two is to improve student readiness, academic success, and sense of belonging. Ms. Snider gave two examples of successes that RVC has accomplished, such as new and revised programs and courses and student worker learning outcomes. Another successful example that Ms. Snider gave was the creation and evaluation of best practices for student success, such as the Caring Campus Initiative, Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Assessment Academy, and Fix Your Content workshops. Ms. Snider gave several examples of new courses and programs offered at RVC, along with co-curricular programs like Student Worker Learning Outcomes.

### 5. Downtown West: Adult Learning Programs

Dr. Smith presented the Downtown West: Adult Learning Programs presentation. Dr. Smith explained that adults aged 25 and older living in the tri-county region have lower educational attainment than both the state and nationally. She stated that adult learners between the ages of 25 and 49 are projected to grow by 18% from 2022 – 2028. Dr. Smith stated that for both of those reasons, the College will prioritize serving adult learners at the Downtown West campus. RVC will focus on three programs, Adult Education, Refugee and Immigrant Services, and Early Childhood Education. Dr. Smith gave the enrollment numbers for all three programs from FY2020 through FY2024 for Adult Education, FY2021 through FY2024 (FY2024 is an anticipated enrollment) for Refugee and Immigrant Services, and FY2021 through FY2024 for Early Childhood Education. Discussion ensued

## Finance Discussion: Board Liaison Trustee Trojan

### 1. Purchase Report

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

#### ***Purchase Report A – FY2024 Amendments:***

#### A. Cell Phones – (Cell Phone Chargeback – Business Services)

1. Verizon Wireless	St. Louis, MO	\$ 1,000.00 (1)*
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#### B. Car Rental Services – (Participant Travel – Athletics)

2. Enterprise Rent-A-Car Midwest	Rockford, IL	\$ 5,000.00 (2)*
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#### C. Software – (Marketing – Website Services Software Support)

3. Modern Campus	Camarillo, CA	\$ 2,000.00 (3)*
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#### D. Contractual Services – (Other Contractual Services – Purchasing Card)

4. American Express	Carson, CA	\$ 100,000.00 (4)*
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E. Architect and Engineer – (Other Contractual Services – ATC Phase 2)  
 5. Ollmann Ernest Martin Architects Belvidere, IL \$ 2,366.12 (5)\*  
 Discussion ensued on Purchase Report A, Item C from Trustees Nelson and Gorski.

**Purchase Report B – FY2024 Purchases:**

A. Camera System and Software – (Capital PHS Funds – RVC Police Department)  
 1. Axon Enterprises, Inc. Scottsdale, AZ \$ 159,641.69 (1)\*  
 Utility Associates, Inc. Decatur, GA \$ 167,600.00  
 Discussion ensued on Purchase Report B, Item A from Trustee Gorski.

**Purchase Report C – FY2025 Purchases:**

A. Printing & Mailing – (Print/Copy Commercial Services – CCE and Continuing Education)  
 1. KK Stevens Astoria, IL \$ 80,604.65 (1)\*  
 Not to Exceed  
 Worlds Printing and Specialists Co. Chicago, IL \$ 107,764.80  
 Indiana Printing & Publishing Indiana, PA \$ 109,342.20

B. Travel Expenses – (Participant Travel – TRiO and Upward Bound)  
 2. Gerber Tours Mineola, NY \$ 43,000.00 (2)\*  
 Not to Exceed

C. Production Contract – (Other Contractual Services – Starlight Theatre)  
 3. TBD New York, NY \$ 25,000.00 (3)\*  
 Not to Exceed

D. Production Contract – (Other contractual Services – Starlight Theatre)  
 4. TBD New York, NY \$ 25,000.00 (4)\*  
 Not to Exceed

E. Production Contract – (Other Contractual Services – Starlight Theatre)  
 5. TBD New York, NY \$ 25,000.00 (5)\*  
 Not to Exceed

F. Production Contract – (Other Contractual Services – Starlight Theatre)  
 6. TBD New York, NY \$ 25,000.00 (6)\*  
 Not to Exceed

G. Production Contract – (Other Contractual Services – Starlight Theatre)  
 7. TBD New York, NY \$ 12,000.00 (7)\*  
 Not to Exceed

H. Maintenance Software Fees – (Education Fund – IT Administration Maintenance Services  
 Software Support)  
 8. Ellucian Malvern, PA \$ (8)\*

Fiscal Year 2025	Yearly Fee	\$1,262,791.00
Fiscal Year 2026	Yearly Fee	\$1,284,279.00
Fiscal Year 2027	Yearly Fee	\$ 691,060.00
Fiscal Year 2028	Yearly Fee	\$ 725,613.00
Fiscal Year 2029	Yearly Fee	\$ 761,893.00

Discussion ensued on Purchase Report C, Items B, and H from Trustees Nelson, Gorski, and Trojan.

## 2. Third Quarter Purchase Order Report FY2024

Ms. Olson presented the Third Quarter Purchase Order Report for FY2024 for purchases between \$10,000 - \$25,000. Ms. Olson stated there were three blanket purchase orders, three blanket purchase order amendments, five new purchase orders, and no purchase order amendments.

## 3. Cash and Investment Report

Ms. Olson presented the Cash and Investment Report through April 30, 2024. Total operating cash is \$39,050,008. Total operating cash and investments are \$86,332,941. Total capital funds are \$12,124,823. Since March 31, 2024, the change in capital funds is <\$19,193>. The operating cash and investments change since March 31, 2024, is <\$503,147>. Ms. Olson stated that the total operating cash and investment funds were 80.43% of the FY2024 operating budget.

## 4. Third Quarter Vital Signs FY2024

Ms. Olson presented the Third Quarter Vital Signs for FY2024. Ms. Olson stated that as of March 31, 2024, Fund 01 Operating Fund Revenues were \$37,616,634. Fund 02 Operating Fund Revenue was \$25,169,836. The total Operating Revenue Funds were 42,786,470. RVC was running 80.36% of its budget.

Ms. Olson explained that Fund 01's Operating Expenses were \$27,326,063.68, Fund 02's Operating Expenses were \$4,169,835.58, and the total operating expenses were \$32,495,899. RVC is running at 64.72% of the FY2024 budget. All figures above are as of March 31, 2024, and exclude SURS on behalf.

Ms. Olson discussed payroll and healthcare costs, explaining that while healthcare costs are down, she anticipates they will steadily increase due to physician, hospital, and medical care costs. Discussion ensued.

## 5. Bonding Overview

Ms. Olson presented the Bonding Overview presentation. Ms. Olson explained with the Classroom II (CLII) remodel, Health Sciences Center (HSC) third-floor build-out, adding a second elevator, and the Downtown West construction, it is anticipated that RVC will need to finance approximately \$69,070,083. Ms. Olson discussed the estimated cash outflow projection, the downtown project financing considerations, a suggested timeline for the Series 2024 Working Cash Bonds, and a preliminary timeline for the Debt Certificates-to-Funding Bonds issued in 2025. Ms. Olson stated that RVC would be going to the Board of Trustees for a new or amended Board Resolution to increase reimbursement for capital expenditures for the Downtown West project and a possible Board Resolution for reimbursement of the amount potentially required to fund the required CDB Escrow Trust Account prior to Working Fund Bonds issuance. Discussion ensued.

### Operations Discussion: Board Liaison Trustee Kennedy

#### 1. Personnel Report

Mr. Jenks, vice president of operations, presented the Personnel Report. Mr. Jenks stated that there were no appointments and two departures. Ms. Krista Benassi, a Biology Professor, is resigning effective August 6, 2024, and Ms. Elizabeth Pearl Kinney, a Chemistry Professor, is resigning effective May 19, 2024. Discussion ensued.

## **2. Quarterly Human Resources Personnel Report for FY2024**

Mr. Jenks presented the quarterly Human Resources Personnel Report for FY2024. Mr. Jenks stated that the number of new hires for the first quarter of FY2024 was 12, the second quarter was 17, and the third quarter was 16. Departures for the first quarter of FY2024 were nine, the second quarter was 13, and the third quarter was 10. Mr. Jenks said that RVC is averaging approximately 12% turnover annually. Discussion ensued

## **3. Equity Plan Update**

Mr. Keith Barnes, vice president of equity and inclusion, presented the RVC Equity Plan Revision Update. Mr. Barnes stated that in June 2022, Governor Pritzker signed into law House Bill (HB) 5464, an amendment to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Act that requires all public institutions of higher education in Illinois to develop and submit to the IBHE an equity plan and practices to increase the access, retention, completion, and student loan repayment rates of minorities, rural students, adult students, women, and individuals with disabilities who are traditional underrepresented in education programs and activities. Mr. Barnes stated the first official Equity Plan submission will be due on May 31, 2024, to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). RVC convened a second round of forums with key RVC stakeholders in the spring of 2024 to revise the current Equity Plan the College adopted in February 2023. Mr. Barnes discussed some of the recommendations that RVC received from the ICCB for revisions to RVC's Equity Plan.

## **4. Classroom Building II (CLII) Update**

Mr. Jenks gave a verbal update regarding the CLII update. Mr. Jenks stated after RVC received direction from the Board on the CLII project that includes the Blackbox Theatre, RVC was able to then submit an architect scope of work to the Capital Development Board (CDB). CDB has advised that they have received that scope of work, and they are working with RVC to finalize the plans. CDB is anticipating that RVC will have its trust fund in place by September 2024. Mr. Jenks stated that CDB has told RVC that RVC has to spend \$85,425 on Art in Architecture. Mr. Jenks said that instead of \$17,000,000 towards the CLII remodel, CDB is giving RVC \$17,085,000. The \$85,000 is from the state, so RVC will need to add \$425 to its cost. Discussion ensued.

## **5. Change Order Update**

Mr. Jenks presented the Change Order Update for the power shed construction. Mr. Jenks stated that RVC has multiple projects going this summer, including the power shed upgrade, which is a power building located by Building E. Mr. Jenks stated that part of the power shed feeds power to Building F and Building E. During the course of the investigations for construction, there were code issues in Building F that needed to be addressed by a qualified electrician, and the electrician was able to determine a pathway to rectify those violations. The cost is an additional \$3,164. The contingency for the power shed is at \$27,366.

Mr. Jenks stated that because numerous projects are underway on the RVC Campus, he would bring change orders associated with each project so the Board can see what changes are being made and answer any questions they may have.

## **6. Rock Valley College Events Calendar**

Mr. Jenks presented the RVC on-campus events calendar for May 2024 and highlighted several events.

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

#### **Unfinished Business:**

Dr. Spearman reminded the Trustees to respond as to what Completion Ceremonies they will be attending.

He stated he spoke to the Trustees at a previous meeting about the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and whether or not they would alter their schedule to meet with Trustees on October 15 rather than October 14.



Dr. Spearman stated that HLC said they were comfortable with RVC maintaining the October 14-15, 2024 date. Dr. Spearman asked the Board of Trustees to save the date for 8:00 a.m. on October 15, 2024 to meet with the HLC site visit team.

Dr. Spearman reminded the Board of Trustees to follow up on Ms. Kerwitz's email about who would be attending the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) awards banquet.

Trustee Trojan stated that there were still outstanding board policy changes on which Trustees Nelson and Gorski were going to make their recommendations from the April 23, 2024, Regular Board Meeting, Trustee Trojan has not received those recommendations. Trustee Trojan asked that Trustees Nelson and Gorski get the information in as soon as possible. Trustee Trojan would like it done before the 90-day timeline is up. Discussion ensued.

**New Business:**

There was no new business to discuss.

**Adjourn to Closed Session**

At 7:25 p.m., Trustee Kennedy made a motion, seconded by Trustee Cardenas Cudia, 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) Litigation has been filed, is pending, or probable per Section 2 (c) (11), all in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act.

**Reconvene Open Session**

At 8:02 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Nelson, seconded by Trustee Cardenas Cudia, 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.

**Next Regular Board of Trustees Meeting**

The next Regular Board of Trustees Meeting will be held on May 28, 2024, at 5:15 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Performing Arts Room (PAR, Room 0214) in the Educational Resource Center (ERC) on the main campus.

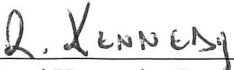
**Next Committee of the Whole Meeting**

The next Committee of the Whole Meeting will be held on June 11, 2024, at 5:15 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Performing Arts Room (PAR, Room 0214) in the Educational Resource Center (ERC) on the main campus.

**Adjourn**

At 8:03 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Cardenas Cudia, seconded by Trustee Nelson, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Submitted by: Tracy L. Luethje

  
Richard Kennedy, Secretary

  
Robert Trojan, Chairperson