

**METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 17, 2024**

Italicized text is not part of the original conversation.

A meeting of the Board of Governors of the Metropolitan Community College Area was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

In the absence of the Chair, Vice Chair Uhe asked Rita Eyerly to call the roll:

MEMBERS PRESENT

Martha Bruckner
Adam Gotschall, Secretary
Theresa Love-Hug
Linda McDermitt, Assistant Secretary
Zach Reinhardt
Fred Uhe, Vice Chair
Tammy Wright
Jeff “Boomer” Strawn, Faculty Ex Officio
Samuel Pembele Student Ex Officio

MEMBERS ABSENT

Brad Ashby
Kristen DuPree, Treasurer
Phillip Klein
Maureen Monahan, Chair

Also Present: Randy Schmailzl, College President

Agenda Item 1 — Preliminaries

Agenda Item 1d — Announcement of Posted Location of Open Meetings Act

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the Vice Chair reported that a copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act had been posted in the rear of the room.

Agenda Item 1e — Recording of Notice of Public Meeting

The Vice Chair then reported on the recording of the Notice of Public Meeting and stated the following:

- 1. Proof of Publication, pursuant to Policy 10503 of the Board of Governors, in the form of an affidavit of an employee of the Omaha World-Herald, to the effect that notice of this meeting was published in that newspaper on December 6,*

2024, and on the Omaha World-Herald website Omaha.com from December 6 - 12, 2024.

2. *Affidavit of College employee Rita Eyerly, to the effect that a copy of the published Notice of Meeting was transmitted to each member of the Board of Governors in a manner specified by Policy 10503 of the Board of Governors.*

The notice of the meeting stated that an agenda for this meeting, kept continually current, was available for public inspection at the principal office of the Board of Governors, Building No. 30, 30th and Fort Streets, Omaha, Nebraska, by making prior arrangements by calling 531-622-2415.

Without objection, the Vice Chair of the Board ordered that the affidavits be attached to the minutes of the meeting and made a part of the official proceedings of the Board of Governors.

Agenda Item 2 — Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Agenda Item 3 — Awards and Recognition

Agenda Item 3a — Recognition of Outgoing Board Member Brad Ashby

Although Ashby was unable to be in attendance, Uhe read the wording on a plaque that will be sent to him:

“Brad Ashby - With grateful appreciation for dedicated service to the Metropolitan Community College Board of Governors from January 2015-December 2018 and January 2021-December 2024.”

Agenda Item 3b — Diane Donelson Spirit Award

Uhe explained that the Diane Donelson award was created by Board resolution in 2005 in honor of former Board member Diane Donelson. The award was established to recognize employees who demonstrate leadership and the ability to build relationships with a compassionate and positive spirit.

President Schmailzl presented the award to Jordan Pirtle, the 2024 Diane Donelson Spirit Award recipient. Schmailzl shared some kind words, noting that, with over 8500 students in dual enrollment, Jordan is in charge of the third largest higher education institution in Nebraska. He applauded her commitment to always doing the right thing and shared that he is sure Jordan would have received many of Diane Donelson's famous thank-you notes. Jordan expressed her gratitude, recognized her staff and co-workers, and stressed that when people come first, success follows.

Agenda Item 4 — Report Agenda

Agenda Item 4a — Ex Officio Board Members' Reports

Uhe introduced Samuel Pembele as the new student ex officio representative and asked him to report.

Student Ex Officio Representative Report

Pembele read from his written report. Reinhardt welcomed Pembele.

Uhe introduce Jeff “Boomer” Strawn as the newly elected faculty ex officio representative and asked him to report.

Faculty Ex Officio Representative Report

Strawn thanked Zach Pechacek for preparing him for his ex officio service. Strawn stated he serves with about 28 adjunct personnel and has led the fire science program since about 2009. He introduced Nick Gangwish, fire science technology tester, who presented an overview of the fire science program. Boomer added that MCC is the only fire science program in Nebraska. The Fire Academy prepares students to serve in a fire department, typically by earning the Basic Fire Fighter certificate, and often continuing with the associate degree program. He shared details regarding equipment, training and talked about the training facilities at the Applied Technology Center (ATC).

Local fire departments have all agreed to accept certificates offered through MCC. MCC's program has worked to simplify the hiring process for local departments. Students have the option for further training while working.

Reinhardt thanked Gangwish for his presentation and shared about his own hands-on experience with the fire unit. He asked about electric vehicle fires and how students have been trained. Gangwish noted electric vehicles (EV) are discussed in the curriculum and the program will be getting an EV for training in the near future.

McDermitt thanked them and asked how they help their students take care of their health when on duty. Gangwish reported instructors keep their ratio to five students; lots of water breaks in summer; and they are encouraged to bring any concerns to their instructors immediately. Strawn added a medical screening is provided prior to start of the program by the physician contracted with the program.

Wright asked how long it takes to get all the necessary certifications and asked how heavy the uniform is. The Basic Fire Fighter certificate takes 3 months. Additional training is often pursued with employer paying for further training. The equipment is heavy and when fully equipped can add up to nearly 100 pounds.

Uhe asked about continuing education requirements. Strawn answered that hazmat and Emergency Medical Service training often takes the form of continuing education. The minimum age for the program is 18. There are 37 students in the high school career academy this year.

Agenda Item 4b — Chair of the Board's Report

There was no report in Monahan's absence.

Agenda Item 4c — Board Members' Reports

McDermitt thanked culinary staff and others involved for the holiday reception.

Uhe noted that he knew Diane Donelson and had the spirit of an angel, and congratulated Jordan on receiving the award.

Agenda Item 4d — President's Report

LERN Award

The Learning Resources Network (LERN) honored MCC with the international award in the "The Best Ideas of 2025" category for the MCC Salad Program.

Brian O'Malley, dean of culinary and horticulture, and Daphne Cook, director of continuing education, shared that the College has given out 3,000 salads free of charge to students this fall. The lettuce comes from the Freight Farm hydroponic learning lab and the culinary department adds items left from student lessons. In addition to weekly distribution sites at each of the main MCC campuses, there are plans to add distribution sites at the Re-entry Center and the ATC soon. Cook and O'Malley thanked the Board for their support and the central stores staff who are critical to the distribution. Llani Main, student wellness coordinator has been a good partner, as well.

O'Malley said students have reported that they feel cared for and welcomed because of the salads.

Bruckner commended the team on the award and the collaboration and noted she wishes everyone in the four-county area knew about this program. McDermitt thanked O'Malley for his service and inspiration through the years. Wright echoed the sentiments. O'Malley thanked the MCC Foundation for making it possible for MCC to add an extra measure of quality to the salad offerings. Uhe asked who harvests the lettuce and was told it is the freight farm staff.

Cook noted that the team is looking to add breads made in culinary classes to the salad distribution; another way to be more sustainable.

Higher Learning Commission Assurance Update

Schmailzl called on Tom McDonnell, vice president for Academic Affairs, to provide an update on preparations for institutional reaccreditation in the current accreditation cycle. McDonnell explained that accreditation is important to participation in federal financial aid; it also fosters continuous improvement. He shared some history of the process from self-study to assurance. MCC is in the assurance review stage of the cycle which includes a peer review but no site visit for the HLC decision making.

He shared that MCC follows the “open pathway” to accreditation, a formative process that includes a quality improvement initiative as part of the cycle to demonstrate MCC continually seeks to evaluate and improve in fulfillment of the college mission.

Bruckner asked for clarification on year four review decision-making. McDonnell stated that there are levels for each accreditation criterion: met, not met, or met with concerns. HLC offers ideas for improvement as needed. In 2022, the College met all criteria without concerns. The year four assurance update is due July 2027, with a more thorough reaccreditation site visit happening again in 2032.

In response to Wright’s request for clarification, McDonnell noted that MCC is preparing for the year four assurance argument update. This includes updates to the 2022 report, wherein MCC will provide evidence for review by national peers to confirm the College is meeting accreditation criteria as required by HLC. Peer reviewers change from review to review and HLC provides a staff liaison to MCC.

Agenda Item 4e — 2025 Legislative Update

Uhe asked Schmailzl to report. Schmailzl shared an overview of the written report in regard to the biennium budget. He noted it is too early to predict anything but he does expect at least 800 new bills will be introduced in the upcoming session. He encouraged the Board to email or call with questions and noted he will keep the Board updated on legislative issues that impact the College.

Agenda Item 4f — Regular Reports

No questions were asked. No comments were made

Agenda Item 4g — Written Sabbatical Report, Larry Gawel, Photography Instructor

There were no questions on the report provided in the Board material.

Agenda Item 4h — Report on College Advisory Committees – Dr. Tom McDonnell, Vice President for Academic Affairs

McDonnell referred to the annual Advisory Committee report and shared a visual of the many business and community supporters represented on these groups. He noted he asked staff and faculty to share words that represent the value of advisory committees. Words included partnership, opportunity, expertise, relevancy, and collaboration. Advisory committee members assist in evaluating existing programs and proposed new career programs which can be critical to the state’s economic development efforts, help MCC engage with employers, and provide assistance in pursuing cooperative education and training efforts that help MCC staff provide realistic, real-life training for students.

Bruckner noted the 33-page document is an impressive documentation of the value of MCC in the four-county community the College serves.

Uhe asked if there were difficulties finding advisory committee members. McDonnell responded that the community supports the College’s efforts.

Agenda Item 5 — Consent Agenda Items

Items remaining on the consent agenda are 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d, 7e

Agenda Item 6 — Items Removed from Consent Agenda (if any)

No items were removed from the consent agenda.

Agenda Item 7 — Action Agenda

Agenda Item 7a — Consideration of Approval of Minutes of November 19, 2024, Board of Governors Meeting, Board Doc. 8075

Agenda Item 7b — Consideration of Resolution Approving Personnel Appointments, Board Doc. 8076

WHEREAS, per Board Policy 60205, the Board of Governors shall have final approval of all full-time contracts for administrative, support and faculty personnel.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the following appointments and employment contracts be approved and/or ratified by the Board of Governors:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Annual Salary</u>
Credential College Navigator	Jennifer Valentine	01/01/2025	\$ 59,500.00
Manager of IT Support Services	Eric Fietz	01/06/2025	\$ 72,000.00
Media Relations Manager	Brian Ayers	01/01/2025	\$ 67,521.85
Success Navigator	Elizabeth Olsen	01/06/2025	\$ 54,000.00

Credential College Navigator – The Navigator works with area high schools and community agencies to enhance microcredentials enrollment and support the transition to MCC’s Credential College. This position develops relationships and partners with MCC staff, high school counselors, and community partners to orient students, assist with registration, advise placement, and answer questions to promote student learning and success. (Jennifer Valentine)

Manager of IT Support Services – The Manager provides leadership, management, and strategic direction as it relates to technology and its use collegewide. This position works with employees across the College to assure functionality of all technology-enabled classrooms and administrative areas with regards to hardware, software and peripheral devices. The Manager collaborates with Network Server Analysts to solve complex technology issues. (Eric Fietz)

Media Relations Manager – The Manager implements and oversees strategies to enhance the College’s media relations, managing the College’s reputation at large. This position works in tandem with college departments to develop, edit and disseminate cohesive information and serves as the main contact for media outlets. (Brian Ayers)

Success Navigator – The Navigator onboards new students from point of entry at MCC. This position provides proactive, ongoing, individualized support assisting students through the complexities of the College environment. The Navigator works as part of a team to connect students to services and resources to make sure students are on track with their individualized education plan. (Elizabeth Olsen)

Agenda Item 7c — Consideration of Resolution Approving Advisor, Counselor, and Faculty Promotions, Doc. 8077

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Governors of the Metropolitan Community College Area approves the promotions of the following Academic Advisor, Counselor, and Faculty bargaining union members to be effective retroactive to the first day of his or her 2024-25 contract:

	<u>GROUP</u>	<u>CURRENT LEVEL</u>	<u>PROMOTED TO LEVEL</u>
Alison Arant	Group I	Level I	Level II-A
Richelle Christensen	Group II	Level II-A	Level III-A
Andrew Dillon	Group III	Level I	Level II-A
Carri Dyer	Group I	Level II-C	Level III-C
Kris Fulkerson	Group I	Level II-C	Level III-B
William Gentleman	Group III	Level III-D	Level IV-D
Alea Hall	Group I	Level I	Level II-A
Lucas Hartman	Group II	Level I	Level II-A
Andrea Iaccheri	Group I	Level II-A	Level III-A
Kevin Ingalls	Group III	Level I	Level II-D
Kambiz Jamshidi	Group I	Level II-A	Level III-A
Elizabeth Kay	Group I	Level II-C	Level III-A
BonnieJean Kurle	Group I	Level III-A	Level IV-B
Michelle Miller	Group I	Level I	Level II-B
Sara Miller	Group I	Level I	Level II-A
Ryan Newton	Group I	Level III-B	Level IV-B
Leigh Anne Opitz	Group I	Level I	Level II-C
Zachary Pechacek	Group III	Level III-D	Level IV-D

Deanna Peterson	Group II	Level II-A	Level III-A
Chris Pitschmann	Group III	Level III-D	Level IV-D
Brooks Rash	Group III	Level I	Level II-D
Amy Rector	Group I	Level I	Level II-C
Kimberley Rhen	Group II	Level I	Level II-C
Thankam Samuel	Group I	Level III-A	Level IV-B
Joseph Sherwin	Group I	Level III-C	Level IV-B
Sarah Staroska	Group I	Level II-C	Level III-C
Melissa Tayles	Group I	Level II-C	Level III-C

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Governors commends these individuals for their continued professional development while employed at the College.

Agenda Item 7d — Consideration of Resolution Approving Contractor to Provide Sarpy Campus Center Grading and Excavation, Board Doc. 8078

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Governors of the Metropolitan Community College Area hereby accepts the proposal to perform grading and excavation work at the site of the College's future Sarpy County Campus submitted by Graham Construction in the amount of \$2,313,314.70, and authorizes the College President to negotiate, sign, and implement such Agreement with Graham Construction in an amount not to exceed \$2,544,646.10, plus associated fees, as the President, in consultation with College legal counsel, may deem appropriate and in the best interest of the College.

Agenda Item 7e — Consideration of Resolution Approving Acceptance of Grant Funding from the U.S. Department of Justice Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act Program, Board Doc. 8079

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Justice provides grants to eligible institutions to develop mental health programming for law enforcement professionals and support staff; and,

WHEREAS, the College successfully submitted a proposal to the U.S. Department of Justice and was approved to receive grant funds in the amount of \$193,206 over the period from October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2026; and,

WHEREAS, the College desires to accept the grant award of \$193,206.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by this Board that it accepts the full grant amount of \$193,206, to be realized during the period spanning from October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2026; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Board authorizes the President to execute said grant Agreement, with such modifications, changes, and amendments as the President, in consultation with College legal counsel, may deem appropriate and in the best interests of the College, to take any and all actions necessary to accept the grant funds,

and to ensure implementation in accordance with the approved proposal and guidelines of the U.S. Department of Justice.

MOTION: Reinhardt moved to approve the consent agenda; Gottschall seconded the motion.

Martha Bruckner, yes
Adam Gottschall, yes
Theresa Love-Hug, yes
Linda McDermitt, yes
Zach Reinhardt, yes
Fred Uhe, yes
Tammy Wright, yes

Motion carried.

Agenda Item 8 — Adjournment

MOTION: Reinhardt moved to adjourn the meeting; Gottschall seconded the motion.

Adam Gottschall, yes
Theresa Love-Hug, yes
Linda McDermitt, yes
Zach Reinhardt, yes
Fred Uhe, yes
Tammy Wright, yes
Martha Bruckner, yes

Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Adam Gottschall, Secretary, Board of Governors

Date

**AFFIDAVIT OF TRANSMISSION OF NOTICE OF
MEETING OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF
METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA**

STATE OF NEBRASKA)
) SS
COUNTY OF DOUGLAS)

Rita Eyerly, being first duly sworn upon oath deposes and states as follows:

1. That pursuant to direction received from the Chair of the Board of Governors of the Metropolitan Community College Area, I caused the following Notice to wit:

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Governors of the Metropolitan Community College Area will meet on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, commencing at 6:30 o'clock P.M. at the Fort Omaha Campus, 32nd & Sorensen Parkway, in the Mule Barn, Building 21, Room 112, Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska, which meeting will be open to the public. An agenda for such meeting, kept continually current, is readily available for public inspection at the principal office of said Board of Governors, 30th & Fort Streets, Building 30, Omaha, Nebraska, during normal business hours.

Maureen Monahan
Chair, Board of Governors

PUBLISH on Friday, December 6, 2024

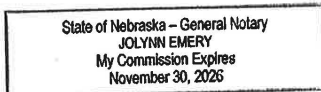
to be published in *Omaha World-Herald* on December 6, 2024; and that the order to said newspaper was made by electronic transmission on December 2, 2024.

1. That on December 4, a copy of such Notice was addressed and sent by e-mail or, if so requested, by personal delivery to each member of the Board of Governors.

Further affiant sayeth not.

Rita Eyerly

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me this 5th day of December, 2024



Jolynn Emery

Notary Public



AFFIDAVIT

State of New Jersey, County of Hudson, ss:

I, Rachel Cozart, being of lawful age, being duly sworn upon oath, hereby depose and say that I am agent of Column Software, PBC, duly appointed and authorized agent of the Publisher of Omaha World Herald, a legal daily newspaper printed and published in the counties of Douglas and Cass and State of Nebraska, and of general circulation in the Counties of Douglas, and Sarpy and State of Nebraska, and that the attached printed notice was published in said newspaper on the dates stated below and that said newspaper is a legal newspaper under the statutes of the State of Nebraska.

PUBLICATION DATES:
Dec. 6, 2024

NOTICE NAME: Dec 2024 Board meeting

PUBLICATION FEE: \$40.20

Rachel Cozart

(Signed) _____

VERIFICATION

State of New Jersey
County of Hudson

SHANNEA H HOLMES
NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
My Commission Expires August 1, 2026

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me on this: 12/09/2024

Shannea H Holmes

Notary Public

Notarized remotely online using communication technology via Proof.

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Maureen Monahan
Chair, Board of Governors
2024, (12) 6 - Fridays, ZNEZ