

**Highland Community College**  
*Board Retreat*  
*September 8, 2021*  
*Highland Community College Student/Conference Center*  
*Robert J. Rimington Board Room*  
*Freeport, Illinois*

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Mr. Jim Endress, Board Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

***Members Physically Present:*** Mr. Doug Block (departed 12:47 p.m.), Mr. Jim Endress, Mr. Shawn Boldt, Ms. Sarah Kuhlemeier, and, Mr. Craig Knaack

***Members Virtually Present:*** Ms. Pennie Groezinger

***Members Absent:*** Mr. James Rhyne Jr., and, Ms. Hailey Johnson

***Others Physically Present:*** Ms. Chris Kuberski, President; Mr. Pete Fink, Director, ITS; Ms. Terri Grimes, Board Secretary

***Others Virtually Present:*** Ms. Jill Janssen, Vice President/CFO, Administrative Services, Board Treasurer; Mr. Scott Anderson, Vice President, Business, Technology, and Community Programs; Ms. Liz Gerber, Vice President/CSSO, Student Development & Support Services; Dr. David Naze, Vice President/CAO, Academic Services; Mr. Jeff Reinke, Executive Director, HCC Foundation; Mr. Jim Yeager, Instructor; Ms. Leslie Schmidt, Director, Marketing & Community Relations; Mr. Ryan Jensen, Brailsford & Dunlavey; and, Mr. Pete Norman, Director, Athletics & Physical Education

Mr. Endress asked trustees if they were able to hear him and noted that, due to the continuation of the COVID pandemic, the College will continue to Zoom the Board meetings because in-person meetings are not practical or prudent due to the disaster.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Instructor Mr. Jim Yeager made public comments, noting that last week there was a news story that Morningstar Media was part of a significant financial scheme. Mr. Yeager wanted to make sure trustees were aware of this because the College has used Morningstar Media as a vendor. He suggested that the College investigate dealings to make sure that the College was not taken advantage of, noting the Board's fiscal responsibility. Ms. Kuberski reported that Ms. Leslie Schmidt is aware of this and has been addressing this with Morningstar.

## **OPENING REMARKS**

Mr. Endress reported that the ICCTA Executive Committee meeting was held at Black Hawk College East in August and included a tour of part of their campus, including their horse arena, which is believed to be the largest classroom in Illinois. Ms. Kuberski announced that 10<sup>th</sup> day enrollment, which is reported to the State, showed that head count was down 5.7 percent, and credit hours were down 7.6 percent. Yesterday, for the fourth week of the semester, head count was down 0.3 percent and credit hours were down 5.3 percent, which is an improvement of about two percent from 10<sup>th</sup> day numbers. Ms. Kuberski hopes that the College will not see a negative impact as a result of the mandates the Governor's executive order is imposing.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES**

### *Events Center Feasibility Study*

Mr. Pete Norman provided trustees with an update on a potential events center, noting that this is about a student event center that is student driven and will have an impact on recruitment, retention, and diversity. He reminded trustees that athletes are required to be full-time students in order to participate in athletics. Mr. Norman reviewed the progress to-date, noting that the Feasibility Study Committee has met twice. The potential facility could be used for athletics, sports accommodations, and potentially for bringing in community usage. Before designing the facility, a strategic and financial analysis should be done. Mr. Ryan Jensen, a consultant from Brailsford & Dunlavey, explained that, through the feasibility study process, projected annual costs would be determined, as well as revenue streams. His company also has a sister company that operates facilities. Mr. Norman explained that his vision is to have an event center to get people on campus. The College could look at the existing facility and a phased-in plan. Ms. Gerber noted that the committee was wanting to hear from trustees on the scope of the project. Ms. Kuberski explained that the College will need help with the market and financial analysis pieces from Mr. Jensen. A complete study would cost \$75,000 to \$100,000, or a preliminary type assessment would be between \$30,000 and \$40,000. The College could decide what they want in the study and do an RFP. Mr. Norman reviewed the breakdown of in-district and out-of-district athletes, noting that a breakdown from 2018 showed that it is a close 50/50 split. Mr. Block asked about football, and Mr. Norman stated that the College of DuPage is the only community college in Illinois to offer football, and there are a couple community colleges in Iowa. Nursing and Ag have out-of-district students and an event center would do the same thing. The athletic strategic plan projected additional growth through sports, such as soccer and cross country. Mr. Jensen noted that it is hard to tie in enrollment to a facility but it could be tied to the individual sports program and additional students. Ms. Kuhlemeier stated that surrounding schools do not pay taxes and do not have facilities but have partnered with other facilities, and there are ways to provide services without dumping millions of dollars into a facility. It is likely that out-of-district students would be on scholarships. Mr. Norman explained that less than half of the student athletes receive scholarships and some still pay fees even if they are on scholarships. Ms. Gerber suggested looking at the amount coming in from athletes, even if they are on scholarships. Many of the athletes get tuition waivers, and some Kahl money is used (approximately \$16,000 to \$18,000). Mr. Reinke applauded Mr. Norman and the administration for looking at an event center, but noted that the biggest challenge is the Foundation Legacy Campaign, which has raised just short of \$2 million of the \$4 million goal. Many of the donors who would give to the event center are donors now, and the timing of the feasibility study and discussions will overlap the discussions of raising funds for the Legacy Campaign. He noted that there will need to be significant

partnerships to make the event center happen. The cost of the study is needed but this needs to be discussed with potential partners ahead of time. Mr. Reinke stated that the facility would warrant a phased approach. Funds could be generated for the training center and included in the Case for Support. He will schedule a meeting with his board to see how they will handle this on the Foundation side. Ms. Kuberski stated that Mr. Reinke brought his concerns to the Feasibility Study Committee. The YMCA is a natural partner but there were mixed thoughts about timing of other partners. Mr. Endress expressed his belief that we need to have a feasibility study to determine what might work. Ms. Kuberski noted that Greater Freeport Partnership comes to mind, as we do not have anything that would support conferences or concerts in Freeport. Mr. Norman noted the need to keep in mind enrollment, and we do not know how much will need to be raised. Ms. Groezinger stated that education is key and the feasibility study will give the education we need. Without the data, we are “walking in blind.” The more people we get to campus, the more Highland will be recognized as a leader in the region. She noted that this could bring momentum beyond normal contacts. Following discussion, the Feasibility Study Committee was charged with bringing back something to the Board that makes sense.

#### *Foundation Naming Opportunities*

Ms. Kuberski reported that Cabinet looked at the list of potential naming opportunities provided by the Foundation, and the items that were in yellow were office suites that could change or there could be implications of the donor influencing actions, so it was recommended that those locations be eliminated from the list. Also, naming Summerset Theatre could create audience confusion, and the solar array was funded through tax dollars so it cannot be named. Cabinet also believed there were some areas that had more value than what was on the proposed list, and Ms. Kuberski asked trustees if the naming opportunities seem appropriate and the dollar amounts accurate. Mr. Reinke reported that the J. Rosemary Shockey Bookstore was named for a donation of \$25,000, and the Ray and Betty Stamm Health Science Nursing Wing donation was over one million dollars. He noted that he would like to move quickly on the list, as he has eight to 10 donors who are awaiting naming opportunities. Typically naming is in perpetuity. If items should be listed at a higher level or if there is something that is not on the list, that is okay. Mr. Endress asked that Mr. Reinke find out how much was donated to name the Charles Endress classroom. Mr. Knaack asked if there could be a process rather than a dollar amount, for example, it would be discussed with the College President first and then go out and get the donation, and Mr. Reinke stated that there is no process, that it is donor centric. Ms. Groezinger asked that the Foundation consider increasing the lower end amounts. She also noted that, in today’s world, communication can happen in seconds, and it would not slow the process down on any donation. Mr. Reinke stated that if donations are over \$100,000, there would be a naming opportunity. Right now, he is most concerned about donations between \$25,000 and \$50,000. Ms. Kuberski recommended taking the sports complex off the list in light of the feasibility study. A determination needs to be made regarding what opportunities there would be for smaller donations. Ms. Kuberski and her team will revise the list and send the list to Mr. Reinke.

#### *Interact Marketing Campaign*

Ms. Schmidt reviewed the work that had been done to date by Interact, which specializes in branding for community colleges. The new campaign will be built around the slogan, “It’s all here”. A style guide has been received, the Foundation web page will be updated in mid to late September, filming and photography will take place in October, with media buys in November and December. A new viewbook and paper products will also be developed. Ms. Schmidt noted that it typically takes two to three years to see how the campaign is working. Ms. Kuberski stated that this is another way to

resonate that it really is all here, and this speaks to some of the comments in strategic planning that Highland is a well-kept secret. Ms. Kuhlemeier asked if there was an opportunity to do outdoor signage on campus that includes these updated things, such as on the exterior of the campus, and suggested that there could perhaps even be vinyl signs that the community could see. Ms. Kuberski suggested perhaps this could be on the banners around the light poles on campus. Ms. Groezinger noted that vinyl signs would have an impact while being low cost.

At 9:54 a.m., the Chairperson declared a recess; the meeting resumed at 10:02 a.m.

#### *Potential New Positions*

Ms. Kuberski explained that, in the past, positions had been reviewed at the Cabinet level, but in rethinking the role of Cabinet, it was determined that new positions should be reviewed by the President's Direct Reports (PDR).

At this time, we are very reliant on what the Marketing department is doing with public communication, especially the quick ability to communicate during COVID. Ms. Schmidt explained that when she began in 2018, the department was restructured to give the former Graphic Designer position more emphasis on website, social media, and digital advertising. In 2019, the department had 370 projects/tasks, and in 2020, it had grown to 415. Ms. Schmidt reviewed the responsibilities of the proposed new position, noting that on average, most Illinois community colleges have three full-time staff, while Highland currently has two full-time and one part-time. The proposed new position would help the department hit retention efforts even harder. Mr. Block asked what the situation was with working with the Foundation, and Ms. Schmidt replied that she partners with them on things such as the Gala and getting information out on scholarship opportunities. A live TV remote next week will focus on the Gala but they will also film a video for the Gala on how scholarships have made a difference in the lives of three to four students. Ms. Groezinger suggested thinking about adding the things that are needed to the part-time position, and Ms. Schmidt responded that the part-time position is a different type of position because it is responsible for writing content and photography, and is not a project management type position. She noted that it would be an opportunity but she is unsure if it is the right fit currently due to the way the job description is written, noting that she needs someone overseeing the whole process. The skills needed in the two positions are not usually the same skill sets. Ms. Kuhlemeier noted the need to think about what the College needs and how the job description can be filled rather than how the current people can fill the jobs. Ms. Kuberski stated that the new job fills the needs but the part-time Communication Specialist position is still needed. Ms. Gerber noted that much thought has gone into the work flow, and if the position is hired, the College would still not be at the highest staffing level.

Ms. Janssen provided information on the possibility of taking a part-time position in her area and making it full-time with higher level duties. She would like the full-time position to be responsible for the online bill pay system, scholarship processing, tuition waivers and contract billings, the purchasing function, and the Business Enterprise function. This would allow the Manager of Accounting and Coordinator of Accounting to implement higher-level fraud controls and would also remedy the Cashier's office closing when the Cashier is gone. This would also provide segregation of duties in the Cashier's office. Sauk Valley Community College is transitioning to having two people in the Cashier's office, and Illinois Valley Community College has three full-time staff. The cost for making this a full-time position with benefits would be around \$35,000. Ms. Janssen suggested the College

could perhaps look at a credit card processing fee, which would help pay for the increase, and Mr. Endress expressed caution about having a fee for using credit cards. Mr. Block suggested perhaps setting a fee and offering a discount if the bill is paid without a credit card.

Trustees also discussed new job descriptions going to the Board prior to advertising for a new position, and it was agreed that job descriptions for new positions should be presented to trustees prior to advertising for the position, but changes in job descriptions do not need to be reviewed by trustees prior to advertising.

### *Telework Pilot Proposal*

Ms. Kuberski and Ms. Christie Lewis provided information on the telework pilot proposal. Under the proposal, there would be two types of telework: intermittent, which would be for a day or brief period of time, and regular, which at most would be two days per week off campus. Eligible employees would need to meet the criterion and have the approval of their supervisor and the Vice President that oversees the area. A determination has been made regarding what positions would qualify for telework. It was thought best to have a pilot program, so that there is the ability for the program to be tweaked before it is embedded into policy. A lot of community colleges have implemented telework, and this would be an advantage as the College recruits for positions. Ms. Kuhlemeier asked if the College is set up technology-wise for this, such as aspects of security, and Mr. Pete Fink has built safeguards into the program, as long as the employee is using their Highland laptop. Mr. Fink noted that right now there is a cumbersome system to get the employee's phone to ring on their laptop, but he is working out that issue. Ms. Groezinger noted that she wants an on-campus experience for students, and as she did research regarding this proposal, people kept asking why employees were not there and how is that face-to-face for students? She noted that there are not a lot of businesses that pay employees to be off between Christmas and New Year's, and Fridays off in the summer. She stated that we need to be flexible and support intermittent telework, but she wonders if we are student focused if we are going to allow people to work two days from home. Ms. Kuberski reported that positions have been identified that could qualify for remote work, and a consideration was whether there was student interaction or if the position was behind the scenes. There are positions that were deemed extremely important for face-to-face contact. Ms. Kuhlemeier noted that having flexibility and someone who understands has been priceless and an unpaid benefit for her, and the College needs to have flexibility if it wants to keep good people. A recommendation will be presented to trustees for approval at the September regular meeting.

### *Response to the Governor's Executive Order Regarding Vaccination Mandate*

Ms. Kuberski reported that the Governor extended the deadline for implementation of the test or vaccination mandate from September 5 to September 19, and a special Emergency Operations Team (EOT) edition of Campus Connection was held to let faculty and staff know. The EOT has made tremendous progress on collecting vaccination documents for employees and students. There will be an opportunity for weekly tests for students and employees who are not vaccinated and are on campus. A determination needs to be made on how this impacts dual credit students, vendors, and partners such as CDL, the YMCA, and University of Illinois. Ms. Kuberski submitted several questions to the Illinois Community College Board, such as how this affects Lifelong Learning. Currently, the College is taking care of the "low hanging fruit" first. If someone is on campus for more than 15 minutes per week, they must comply. So far, of the 226 employees, 117 have provided documentation, 123 students (of 840 students on campus each week) had uploaded their vaccination information by Tuesday morning, and 100 nursing students had already provided the information due to clinicals. Those who do not provide

documentation will need to test weekly. The College is working with SHIELD Illinois on testing and, at this point, Ms. Kuberski believes it will be up and running by September 20. The testing will be done in H-210, and a courier will be hired to take the samples to Rockford on a daily basis. Dr. Brian Durham, Executive Director of the Illinois Community College Board, has indicated that ICCB will use the SHIELD response time as the date when colleges need to be in compliance because he recognizes that the testing cannot be done if the colleges do not have the tests. Student noncompliance becomes a code of conduct issue, not a security issue, so there is no expectation to secure the doors. A process is being developed for notifying faculty at the point the student is notified that they cannot access campus. SHIELD provides a daily dashboard. Multiple subgroups are working on issues such as IT, testing site, and communication. Ms. Kuberski reported that the EOT has had over 160 meetings and is currently meeting twice a week for an hour. Taking the average salary of EOT members and the number of meetings, the College has dedicated \$121,630 to the process, which equates to \$760.19 per meeting. This is clearly a drain on resources, time, and energy. Dr. Durham told the Illinois community college presidents to expect this to continue at least through the end of the academic year. At this point, testing times have not been determined. The College will need to have people in the room to staff the testing, but they do not need to be a healthcare provider, and it is possible that RSVP volunteers could staff the room. Employees who do not follow the requirements will be under progressive discipline. The College does not require vaccinations, believing it is not in the best interest of students and those we serve. We have maintained six feet social distancing to limit disruptions. ICCB will be putting together an FAQ to answer questions. At this point, Ms. Kuberski is unsure if we need to get proof from trustees, as there has been no direction from ICCB on that at this point. At least three faculty have chosen to take their classes to remote. The Spring schedule is due soon, and Dr. Naze noted that the Spring schedule will mirror what is currently in place with the exception of a few additional face-to-face sections at this point. Ms. Kuberski noted that the College is currently watching enrollment to see if students are dropping and if they are in-person or online. So far, she has not seen anything drastic. She also noted that the College is working with the Stephenson County Health Department to offer vaccination clinics, and 14 vaccinations were given during the Fall student picnic.

#### *Service Agreement with New Horizons Counseling Center*

Ms. Gerber reminded trustees that this is a continuation of the agreement, and the amount and cost will not change but it will be a two-year agreement.

#### **MAIN MOTIONS (ACTION)**

- A. Service Agreement with New Horizons Counseling Center for Student Mental Health Services  
Ms. Groezinger moved and Mr. Knaack seconded the motion to approve the agreement, as presented, between Highland Community College and New Horizons Counseling Center for the provision of student mental health assessments, crisis counseling, consultation, and training at a rate of \$100.00/hour for a minimum of 10 hours per week and a maximum of 15 hours per week while classes are in session during FY22 and FY23. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Endress, Groezinger, Boldt, Kuhlemeier, Knaack, Block  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.



At 11:48 a.m., the Chairperson declared a recess for lunch; the meeting resumed at 12:27 p.m.

## **BOARD UPDATES**

### *Board Retreat Dates*

The Board will meet for their quarterly retreat on the second Wednesday of the month (December 8, March 9, and June 8.) Breakfast will be available at 7:30 a.m., and the meeting will begin at 8:00 a.m.

### *Letters of Support for Termination Date Extension Request for Village of Warren and Village of Stockton*

Mr. Endress reported that the College has always acted favorably on requests such as these. The requests will be presented for approval at the September 28, 2021, regular meeting.

### *Draft of President's Annual Performance Evaluation Form*

Mr. Knaack drafted the proposed President's Evaluation Form as a result of the previous Board discussion. The form is based on what he had previously used and redesigned for other organizations over the years. He recommended that Mr. Endress and Ms. Groezinger, as Board Chair and Vice Chair, decide when the evaluation needs to get done and have the whole Board provide input on the evaluation. This will be reviewed and discussed at the September Board meeting and then the form will be informally adopted.

## **CLOSED SESSION**

Ms. Groezinger moved and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to move into Closed Session for the purposes of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in an educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor in an educational setting, or a volunteer of the public body, or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity; and, collective negotiating matters between the public body or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees, pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, and to return to Open Session for possible action. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Groezinger, Boldt, Kuhlemeier, Knaack, Block, Endress  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

Mr. Endress explained that the public attendees through Zoom would remain in the meeting, with the video and audio muted, while the Board was in Closed Session. Mr. Pete Fink would update the public attendees from the Zoom chat during the Closed Session, as needed, and the video stream and meeting would resume following Closed Session.

At 12:40 p.m., the Chairperson declared the meeting in Closed Session.

Mr. Boldt moved and Mr. Knaack seconded the motion to end the Closed Session. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Boldt, Kuhlemeier, Knaack, Endress, Groezinger  
NAYS: None

At 1:11 p.m., the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the Closed Session ended.

**ACTION, IF NECESSARY**

No action was necessary following the Closed Session.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business

**NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

**DATES OF IMPORTANCE**

The Foundation Golf Outing will be held on Friday, September 10. The Illinois Council of Community College Presidents meeting will be held virtually on Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Mr. Boldt is unable to attend the ICCTA meeting, and Mr. Endress may not be able to attend due to a funeral.

**ADJOURN**

Ms. Groezinger moved and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Kuhlemeier, Knaack, Endress, Groezinger, Boldt  
NAYS: None

At 1:15 p.m., there being no further business, the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



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Terri A. Grimes, Board Secretary  
Illinois Community College District No. 519