

SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT NO. 519
Counties of Stephenson, Ogle, Jo Daviess and Carroll

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

A special meeting of the Board of Illinois Community College District No. 519 was called to order by Mr. Jim Endress, Chairperson, at 3:02 p.m. on January 10, 2023, in the Robert J. Rimington Board Room (room H-228) in the Highland Community College Student/Conference Center, 2998 West Pearl City Road, Freeport, Illinois in said district.

The following members were physically present: Mr. Doug Block, Mr. Jim Endress, Mr. Shawn Boldt (arrived 4:10 p.m.), Mr. James Rhyne Jr., Ms. Sarah Kuhlemeier, Mr. Craig Knaack, and Ms. Chloe Smith

The following members attended virtually: None

The following members were absent: Ms. Groezinger

Others physically present: Ms. Chris Kuberski, President; Mr. Pete Fink, Director, ITS; and 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; Mr. Jim Phillips, Interim Vice President/CAO, Academic Services; Ms. Liz Gerber, Vice President/CSSO, Student Development & Support Services; Mr. Pete Norman, Director, Athletics and Physical Education; Ms. Karen Brown, Director, Human Resources; Mr. Dan Dick, Executive Director, HCC Foundation; Ms. Vicki Warthen, Director of Marketing & Annual Giving, HCC Foundation; Ms. Karla Giuffre, Faculty; Ms. Jodi Rogers, Athletics Office Coordinator; Mr. Chance Sharp, Student Success Coach; Ms. Jeniece Smith, Director, Marketing & Community Relations; Mr. Colton Havens, Community Member; Ms. Dawn Reed, YMCA; Ms. Stephanie Diehl, YMCA; Dr. Andy Dvorak, Retired Faculty; Mr. Aaron Greene, YMCA; and, Mr. Roger Fegan, Community Member

Illinois continues to be under a disaster proclamation related to public health, and an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This meeting was properly noticed and is accessible to the public over Zoom. Mr. Endress asked if trustees who were attending virtually were able to hear.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Kuberski explained that the anticipated Closed Session later in the meeting will not be needed because the potential employee has not yet been approved by the Department of Education, despite many contacts with the Department. Ms. Kuberski hopes to have an action item in time for the January regular Board meeting.

Mr. Rhyne moved and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to approve the agenda, as amended, removing items V- Closed Session and VI – Action, If Necessary. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Endress, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Knaack, Block, Smith
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

DISCUSSION OF FEASIBILITY OF AND POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR AN ATHLETICS, LEARNING, AND EVENT CENTER

Trustees continued the discussion from the December 20, 2022, quarterly Board retreat on the feasibility of and options for an athletics, learning, and event center with each trustee expressing his or her opinion on the potential facility. Ms. Kuhlmeier stated that she has an internal conflict spending a large amount of money without an educational component. Right now, the focus is on community service and athletics, and those components work together with education, but we have to have an educational component. If the College is investing in this, the investment needs to have a return for the College, not just financially, but also in people investing back, such as doing service in the community. For example, if the College investigates a Physical Therapist Assistant program, we could train the students here. There are jobs in the area so they could get a job and reinvest in the community. There is a need here for such a program, especially with the aging population. If we are primarily looking at what this facility could do for track, that is a two-year investment in students, and Ms. Kuhlemeier would like to see the \$44 million paid back to the community and region. Mr. Rhyne noted that the student athlete and athletics are part of the educational experience of our students, and athletics contribute to their development and growth. Ms. Kuhlemeier would like to see more than just a track and putting in treadmills. Mr. Knaack noted that more students could lead to more revenue and to more jobs for coaches, but without numbers, that program may be as far-fetched as a \$64 million facility.

Mr. Endress reminded trustees that the Board is charged with getting their thoughts together, so that Sports Facilities can put together a pro forma for cash flow for one of the options they provided. Mr. Knaack asked if the College could get \$64 million through the bonds. Ms. Janssen noted that the College's legal debt margin is recalculated every year and is based on assessed valuation in the district. At this point in time, our legal debt margin would be about \$53 million. The College would also need to look at the overall tax rate, which would be influenced if we issued bonds. Mr. Block expressed his belief that the facility must be funded outside of having a referendum, which would mean the College would need to be leaning on the Foundation, but we also have the Matching Grant Fund. Ms. Smith noted that when she visited other colleges, they showed their facilities, but when she does tours at Highland, she is embarrassed to show prospective students the College's facilities. She also said that students want something of their own.

Ms. Kuberski informed trustees that the YMCA contract is up for negotiation in 2025, which is an opportunity to reimagine what that looks like. Sports Facilities does not believe it would be economically efficient for the College to compete with the YMCA. There is some flexible space that could be educational facilities, and if the Board wants that, it should be included in the response to Sports Facilities. A rural grant might be a possible funding source, but the proposal must include an educational component. There have been initial discussions with the YMCA, and Mr. Rich Haight, Executive Director of the YMCA, said they are interested in this project, but there is no commitment at this point.

Sports Facilities had requested trustees answer three questions. Following discussion, trustees agreed on the following responses to the questions:

What are the must have, could have, and do not want assets in regards to the facility?

Trustees agreed that the “must haves” include all information provided to-date in Option 3B; classroom/instructional space; and, flex/team space expanded to include clear instructional space. Trustees did not have any “could have” or “do not want” items.

What will/could be the sources of funds for the facility?

Trustees brainstormed possible funding sources including a grant from the State of Illinois, as well as potential partnerships, including the YMCA, City of Freeport, Freeport Park District, Freeport School District, Stephenson County, hospital systems, larger companies, a Rural Community College grant, the private sector, or a referendum.

Insights regarding funding threshold or project funding that may restrict facility size and/or program

Trustees agreed that the current College resources for this project are almost nonexistent.

Ms. Janssen informed trustees that the College has submitted projects to the State for funding, such as the carpet replacement project. Usually if the project is funded, the College must provide a portion of the funding and put that into a separate account. Mr. Dan Dick, Executive Director of the HCC Foundation, noted that the Matching Grant is 100 percent College funds, but for every \$1 million taken out of the fund, it will reduce the subsidy to College operating dollars by about \$40,000. Ms. Kuberski stated that it may be the perception that the College is doing something with the facility, and she requested that trustees help people understand that we are looking at options, and no decisions have been made at this point. Mr. Endress reiterated that the Board has only committed to the feasibility study at this point. Mr. Pete Norman reminded trustees that the College got to this point based on the Athletics strategic plan and issues with enrollment. He stated that athletics is student-driven, and students must be enrolled full-time to participate in a College sport. A new facility would attract students, increase enrollment, and be an investment for the region.

CLOSED SESSION AND ACTION, IF NECESSARY

These items were removed from the agenda earlier in the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Endress reminded trustees that Opening Days starts at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, with the program beginning at 8:30 a.m. A reception to welcome Mr. Sam Agdasi, Vice President and Chief Academic Officer, will be held on January 19 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. The next regular Board meeting will be held on January 24, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Block moved and Mr. Boldt seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Boldt, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Knaack, Block, Endress, Smith
NAYS: None

At 4:24 p.m., there being no further business, the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



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