

**Highland Community College**  
*Combined Board of Trustees Regular Meeting and Quarterly Board Retreat*  
*June 21, 2023*  
*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 8:01 a.m.

***Members Physically Present:*** Mr. Doug Block, Mr. Jim Endress, Ms. Pennie Groezinger (arrived 8:05 a.m.), Mr. Shawn Boldt, Mr. James Rhyne (arrived 8:03 a.m.), Ms. Sarah Kuhlemeier, Ms. Mary Kaufman, and Ms. Allison Coon

***Members Virtually Present:*** None

***Members Absent:*** None

***Others Physically Present:*** Ms. Chris Kuberski, President; Mr. Pete Fink, Director, ITS; Ms. Liz Gerber, Vice President/CSSO, Student Development & Support Services; Mr. Pete Norman, Director, Athletics and Physical Education; Dr. Stephanie Eymann, Dean, Nursing & Allied Health; and, Ms. Terri Grimes, Board Secretary

***Others Virtually Present:*** Ms. Jill Janssen, Vice President/CFO, Administrative Services, Board Treasurer; Mr. Sam Agdasi, Vice President/CAO, Administrative Services; Mr. Scott Anderson, Vice President, Business, Technology, and Community Programs; Ms. Liz Gerber, Vice President/CSSO, Student Development & Support Services; Ms. Jodi Rogers, Office Coordinator, Athletics; Mr. Luke Norman, Head Coach/Coordinator, Sports Information & Intramurals; Ms. Jennifer Smith-Norman, College Access Specialist, TRIO Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC); Ms. Vicki Warthen, Director, Marketing & Annual Giving, HCC Foundation; Mr. Dan Dick, Executive Director, HCC Foundation; Mr. Anthony Musso, Coordinator, Career Services; and Mr. Pete Norman, Director, Athletics and Physical Education

**APPROVAL OF TRUSTEES ATTENDING MEETING VIA ELECTRONIC MEANS**

There were no trustees attending the meeting virtually.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Block moved and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to approve the agenda, as presented. The vote being unanimous, the motion carried.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

## **OPENING REMARKS**

Ms. Kuberski reported that, as of Monday, Summer enrollment was up 15.8 percent in credit hours and 13.7 percent in head count, with Fall credit hours up 13.3 percent and head count up 14.0 percent. These numbers will not be publicized until after 10<sup>th</sup> day results have been received. She also noted that Ag occupation classes were reduced by one credit hour to make sure they are complying with credit hour compliance. These are dual credit classes so it will impact credit hours, but Ms. Kuberski does not believe it will be drastic. Last Fall, there were five new Nursing students, and this Fall we have 15. The Leadership Institute is on pace to have significantly more students this Fall than last Fall. Ms. Kuberski attended the Northwest Illinois Economic Development meeting, which was attended by Senator Andrew Chesney, who was particularly interested to know what was on the horizon for economic development in Jo Daviess County. Manufacturing and the continued need in the area was mentioned. Ms. Kuberski put on his radar that we are expanding our manufacturing space, and if there was any additional funding or support for that, we would be interested. She also pointed out that there are allocations in the State budget for manufacturing and mentioned to him to make sure that the small, rural schools are not left out. During the meeting, they also talked about ag, healthcare, early childhood, and the feasibility study. Mr. Endress reported that Highland was very well represented at the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) annual meeting, and he announced that Mr. Block received the Ray Hartstein Trustee Achievement Award. Mr. Jon Looney, former ICCTA president and former Black Hawk College trustee, was recognized and made a lifetime member. Mr. Justin Ebert and Ms. Monica Pierce hosted a meeting recently to gather input as a follow-up to Mr. Del Scheider's vision that Highland become a northwest Illinois ag research site. Mr. Endress attended the meeting, which was also attended by numerous Highland representatives, as well as representatives of the ag industry. The current quandary is that there is some money from the State that was originally allocated to construct a building to start the ag research process, but building costs have escalated dramatically due to COVID. Mr. Endress concluded his remarks by announcing that a current Highland student, Mr. Ben Bremmer, was recently elected treasurer of the state FFA Association. Mr. Endress also reported that his wife, Deborah, has hired a couple Highland students to get some tasks done around his farm.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES**

### *Budget and Finance Options for Capital Development Projects*

Ms. Janssen provided background on the proposed salary increase for nonunion employees and reviewed the salary increases for the past five years. For FY24, the Custodial/Maintenance agreement included a 2.5 percent increase for year two of the agreement, but year one included a larger increase to address measures to increase minimum wage. The recommendation to be presented for approval later in the meeting is for a 3.5 percent increase for nonunion employees, which will equate to \$224,700, including the phase-in of the compensation study adjustments. Health insurance increases will be \$63 for single and \$157 for family coverage per year, depending on the type of coverage selected. The recommended salary increase is based on what is being seen for market trends and taking into

consideration the College's budget. Ms. Janssen provided an update on the FY23 budget, noting that revenue is coming in about \$500,000 more than budgeted and expenses at \$140,000 less than budgeted. Statewide, community colleges received a seven percent increase in funding. Allocations for each community college have not been received from the Illinois Community College Board at this time, but Ms. Janssen does not believe the College will receive the whole seven percent. The FY23 end result would be an ending fund balance of about \$7.1 million or 46 percent of operating expenses. She noted that the College strives for a fund balance of around 25 percent. The FY24 budget-building process is ongoing, and Ms. Janssen is compiling the budget requests. She believes the Operating Fund will probably have a deficit of maybe as much as \$1 million in FY24, which would bring the fund balance down to 35 percent. A budget work session will be held prior to the July regular meeting. Ms. Janssen has also talked with PMA, our bond advisors, and she provided trustees with some information on potential future bond options.

*Discussion of Final Report from Sports Facilities Regarding the Feasibility of a Potential Athletics, Learning, and Event Center*

Sports Facilities provided a final report at the May Board meeting, and Ms. Kuberski thought the Board should have an opportunity to discuss the information. Sports Facilities has been asked for additional information, particularly with costs. Trustees shared their thoughts on a potential facility.

Ms. Kuberski noted that Freeport School District is currently investing in soccer fields throughout their district, which would be a pipeline to Highland, and she believes starting with soccer would be important due to the local interest. Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed to go back to Sports Facilities and ask for a modified pro forma for option 3A that includes soccer, an indoor track, practice space, recreation center, and is something that can be added to or phased in. Ms. Kuberski noted that there will likely be a small cost for the pro forma. It was also mentioned that later in the meeting, two trustees will be appointed to the committee to discuss the YMCA partnership, which will be a key component.

*Designation of Expert Panel to Comply with the Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act*

As part of the Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act, there is a component related to training, which asks that the Board appoint an expert panel that would develop and implement policies and procedures, advise students, faculty, and staff on how to identify and address the needs of students with mental health concerns, and train faculty and staff. The Act is partially funded now by the State. In the next few months, Ms. Gerber will bring forward a recommendation to the Board to formally name an expert panel. She explained that, as part of the Act, there is to be a state-level technical center created, which has not been done yet, so the work may be slow in moving forward while waiting for the center to provide advice. Mr. Block reminded trustees that when Senator Dick Durbin was on campus, he noted that mental health is an issue, and Mr. Block asked what percent of the State requirements are funded by State or federal funds. Ms. Gerber reported that she submitted an estimate to ICCB of \$250,000. In FY23, the College received \$94,000, and she is unsure of the FY24 allocation. She has advocated to ICCB that the funding be allocated to community colleges based on what was submitted in the request.

At 9:48 a.m., the Chairperson declared a recess; the meeting resumed at 10:07 a.m.

## **DIVISION FOCUS: NURSING AND ALLIED HEALTH**

Dr. Stephanie Eymann provided an update on the Nursing and Allied Health division, highlighting several areas. The new simulation lab opened in January, with amazing feedback from students. A flu shot clinic will be held this Fall and will use the lab. The NCLEX first-time pass rates for the class of 2022 are at 86 percent, with second chance pass rates at 100 percent. The Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) canceled their focused visit due to the current pass rates and program revisions. Highland had the second largest pass rate increase in the state of Illinois for ADN programs. Four Nursing instructors are doctoral prepared, the latest being Dr. Chrislyn Senneff. New Nursing faculty member, Ms. Billie Jo Rogers, joined the division in Spring 2023 and is teaching pediatrics and pharmacology. Currently, Dr. Eymann is looking at the possibility of adopting an early admission program for Nursing students once they graduate from high school. The CNA program has increased enrollment and currently has a waiting list. The course includes new clinical sites and new resources for students. The deadline for applying for the Medical Assistant program is July 1, and the curriculum has been revamped from a 12-month program to nine months, starting this Fall. The College received \$316,000 through a PATH grant from ICCB that has provided 13 full-ride scholarships, including tuition, fees, books, a set of scrubs, and exam costs, as well as funding to support tutoring, student services, simulation supplies, marketing materials, updated equipment and computers/tablets, conferences, and other items. The grant will continue in FY24. Dr. Eymann concluded her report by announcing that she and Ms. Janssen completed the paperwork for the mobile medical unit, and once the funds are received, the project will move forward.

### **MAIN MOTION (ACTION)**

A. Software Solutions Proposal with Concensus Technology, LLC, for Concensus Care Primary Engineer Services

Mr. Boldt moved and Ms. Groezinger seconded the motion to approve the software solutions proposal from Concensus Technologies, LLC, as presented, for a three-year renewal of the Concensus Care Primary Engineer services, at a cost of \$4,250 per month (\$153,000 total cost over the three-year period.) The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Endress, Groezinger, Boldt, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Coon  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

B. Property and Liability Insurance

Mr. Rhyne moved and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to authorize President Chris Kuberski to accept the proposal from the Illinois Counties Risk Management Trust (ICRMT) for an insurance program as follows: Property, Auto, General, Liability, Educator's Legal Liability, and Umbrella at an annual premium not to exceed \$199,749. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Groezinger, Boldt, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Coon  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

C. Intercollegiate Athletics Insurance

Ms. Groezinger moved and Mr. Block seconded the motion to authorize President Chris Kuberski to accept the proposal from First Agency for an intercollegiate athletics insurance program as follows: accident, expanded medical, and catastrophic at an annual premium not to exceed \$33,889. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Boldt, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger, Coon  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

D. Approval of Salary Increases for Eligible Administrative, Professional, and Classified Nonunion Staff

Ms. Groezinger moved and Ms. Kaufman seconded the motion to approve an FY24 salary increase for eligible administrative, professional, and classified nonunion staff in an amount of 3.5% of an individual's FY23 pay rate effective with the start of FY24 (July 1, 2023). The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger, Boldt, Coon  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

E. Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) GASB 96 Professional Services for Fiscal Year 2023 Audit

Ms. Kaufman moved and Mr. Boldt seconded the motion that the firm of Wipfli be retained to perform professional services related to the adoption of Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) GASB 96, Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements, at a cost not to exceed \$5,500. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger, Boldt, Rhyne, Coon  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

F. Compensation Adjustments: Director, Facilities and Safety; Student Advisor; Student Advisor/Transfer Coordinator; Vice President, Business, Technology and Community Programs

Mr. Block moved and Ms. Kaufman seconded the motion to approve compensation adjustments effective July 1, 2023, as follows:

Kurt Simpson, Director, Facilities and Safety: \$1,280  
Beth Groshans, Student Advisor: \$742  
Vicki Schulz, Student Advisor/Transfer Coordinator: \$834  
Scott Anderson, Vice President, Business, Technology and Community  
Programs: \$4,800

The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger, Boldt, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier,  
Coon  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

- G. Subscription Agreement with Culture Partners for Consulting and Advisory Services  
Ms. Groezinger moved and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to approve the two-year agreement with Culture Partners, as presented, for consulting and advisory services at an annual rate of \$37,000 per year (\$74,000 for two years) to support the continued culture work of ONE Highland. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Block, Endress, Groezinger, Boldt, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman,  
Coon  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

- H. Second Reading – Revised Policy 4.095: Leave, Vacation – Administrative/Professional/Classified Employees  
Mr. Rhyne moved and Mr. Block seconded the motion to approve for second reading revised policy 4.095, Leave, Vacation – Administrative/Professional/Classified Employees, as presented. The policy is included in Chapter IV, Personnel, of the policy manual. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Endress, Groezinger, Boldt, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block,  
Coon  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

- I. Second Reading – Revised Policy 4.12: Leave, Sick – Administrative/Professional/Classified Staff  
Ms. Kaufman moved and Mr. Rhyne seconded the motion to approve for second reading revised policy 4.12, Leave, Sick – Administrative/Professional/Classified Employees, as

presented. The policy is included in Chapter IV, Personnel, of the policy manual. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Groezinger, Boldt, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress,  
Coon  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

J. Second Reading – Revised Policy 4.16: Leave, Personal Days

Mr. Block moved and Ms. Kaufman seconded the motion to approve for second reading revised policy 4.16, Leave, Personal Days, as presented. The policy is included in Chapter IV, Personnel, of the policy manual. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Boldt, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger,  
Coon  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

K. Acceptance of Proposal: Monument and Exterior Wayfinding Signage Project

Ms. Kuhlemeier moved and Ms. Kaufman seconded the motion that the Board of Trustees authorizes the President to accept a proposal and enter into an agreement between Highland Community College and Chicago Sign Group, LLC, of Vernon Hills, Illinois in the amount of \$225,092 to complete the entrance monument and exterior wayfinding sign project. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger, Boldt,  
Coon  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

**BOARD UPDATES**

*Required Trustee Leadership Training*

Mr. Endress reminded trustees that they are required to complete leadership training in the first, third, and fifth years of their term. Several trustees have already completed the training, and Ms. Kaufman indicated she will be completing the Open Meetings Act training soon.

*Appointment of Highland Community College Representatives for the YMCA Partnership Task Force*

The 50-year agreement with the YMCA is set to expire. Ms. Kuhlemeier and Mr. Rhyne volunteered to represent the Board on the task force to discuss the partnership. Mr. Endress stated

that it will be up to Ms. Kuberski's discretion who from the College should serve on the committee. Mr. Block noted that the College's interest needs to be student centered.

### **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 of the public body or legal counsel for the public body under Open Meetings Act exception 2-C-1; collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives under exception 2-C-2; pending litigation under exception 2-C-11; and, the semiannual review of all Closed Session minutes and audio recordings under exception 2-C-21, 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: Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger, Boldt, Rhyne, Coon  
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. The video stream and meeting would resume after the Closed Session.

At 11:10 a.m., the Chairperson declared the meeting in Closed Session.

Ms. Groezinger moved and Mr. Block seconded the motion to end the Closed Session. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger, Boldt, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Coon  
NAYS: None

At 11:56 a.m., the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the Closed Session ended.

### **ACTION, IF NECESSARY**

- A. Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees

Action on the appointment of a Financial Aid Specialist II was not necessary.



B. Collective Negotiating Matters

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between Highland Community College Board of Trustees) and Highland Community College Faculty Senate, Affiliated with AFT/IFT Local 1957 Regarding Extension of Academic Technology Resources Vacancy Interim Plan

Ms. Kaufman moved and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between Highland Community College (Board of Trustees) and Highland Community College Faculty Senate, affiliated with AFT/IFT Local 1957 extending the interim plan for the Coordinator of Academic Technology Resources due to a continued vacancy. It was further recommended that Mr. Michael Skwara, User Services Librarian/Coordinator of Learning Management System, continues to serve as a temporary replacement for the Coordinator, Academic Technology Resources position, provide mentoring and training to the new person, and receive six hours of overload pay through December 31, 2023. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Block, Endress, Groezinger, Boldt, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Coon  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

C. Pending Litigation

No action was necessary.

D. Semiannual Review of Closed Session Minutes and Audio Recordings

Ms. Groezinger moved and Mr. Block seconded the motion that the Closed Session minutes, which were previously closed, remain closed at this time and unavailable for public inspection. It was further recommended that the audio recordings from the following Closed Sessions be destroyed at this time, pursuant to the Open Meetings Act: June 22, 2021; July 20, 2021; July 27, 2021; August 17, 2021; September 8, 2021; September 28, 2021; November 2, 2021; November 23, 2021; and December 8, 2021. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Endress, Groezinger, Boldt, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Coon  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### *Rural Post-secondary Partnership Grant*

Ms. Kuberski provided an update on the federal Rural Post-secondary Partnership Grant, explaining that several weeks ago, the College was invited by Northern Illinois University (NIU) to collaborate on the grant. It is her understanding that Senator Dick Durbin reached out to NIU and suggested they apply. The focus of the grant is on creating a system for career pathways for high school and dual credit students. It would help any student in the high school to identify their career path, and then take dual credit and other classes at Highland, and complete their associate's degree. Two plus two (2+2) agreements would be created with NIU so that NIU's pipeline also improves. According to data in the grant, Highland is sending students to NIU at a lesser percentage than other community colleges, so that is why they reached out to the College. A similar program has been successful at Sauk Valley Community College. This grant connects high school students to the business and industry providers in the area through internships, job shadowing, and other things, which would benefit Highland because the College has been wanting to think about ways to strengthen partnerships with business and industry. The grant has a DEI component, taps into NIU's essential skills training, and would provide that training not only to high school students but to our First-Year Experience Seminar (FYES) students. Ms. Kuberski's hope is that it would also be made available to the business and industry partners that might want some upscale training, which is what they indicated they wanted at the Corporate Partners breakfast earlier this year. The grant connects and aligns many efforts to move Highland forward. The College's award from the four-year grant would be \$180,000, with a \$20,000 match, per year. The grant was submitted yesterday by NIU, and Ms. Kuberski believes the award announcement should be made in October.

### *July Board Meeting Date*

Mr. Endress noted that Mr. Block and Ms. Kuhlemeier have conflicts with the July regular meeting. Following discussion, it was agreed to keep the meeting on July 25<sup>th</sup> due to other potential conflicts with other dates. The budget work session will begin at 3:00 p.m. It was also noted that the Decennial Committee will meet at 3:00 p.m. on August 22.

### *Student Housing*

Mr. Block noted that during the candidate's discussion, some people brought up student housing. He asked if it would be possible to have a discussion with the landlords' group to discuss the possibility. Ms. Gerber reported that in the strategic planning meetings, there was a discussion about student housing. Several years ago, there were discussions with the landlords' association group, and housing opportunities were listed on the College website. She offered to restart those conversations.

### *Internships and Externships*

Mr. Block requested that discussion take place at a future retreat on internships and externships, including successes and barriers. This will be on the September Board retreat agenda.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Kaufman moved and Mr. Block seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The vote being unanimous and there being no further business, at 12:19 p.m. 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