

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

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The regular meeting of the Board of Illinois Community College District No. 519 was called to order by Mr. Jim Endress, Board Chairperson, at 4:03 p.m. on November 26, 2024, 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, Ms. Pennie Groezinger, Mr. James Rhyne Jr., Ms. Sarah Kuhlemeier (departed 5:15 p.m.), Ms. Mary Kaufman, and Mr. Daeshon Verner (departed 4:52 p.m.)

The following members attended virtually: None

The following members were absent: Mr. Shawn Boldt

Others physically present: Ms. Chris Kuberski, President; Mr. Steve Mihina, Faculty; 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, Vice President/CAO, Academic Services, and Dean, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Fine Arts; Ms. Liz Gerber, Vice President/CSSO, Student Development & Support Services; Mr. Jeremy Bradt, Director, Enrollment & Records; Mr. Jim Yeager, Faculty; Ms. Sara McKenna, Wipfli, LLC; Mr. Pete Surges, Coordinator, Multimedia Content; Ms. Jodi Rogers, Office Coordinator, Athletics & Physical Education; Mr. Dan Dick, Executive Director, HCC Foundation; Ms. Jeniece Smith, Director, Marketing & Community Relations; Dr. Andy Dvorak, Retired Faculty; and four other attendees: "Cougars," "Luke," "Norm," and "Smith-Norman PC"

**APPROVAL OF TRUSTEE(S) ATTENDING MEETING VIA ELECTRONIC MEANS**

There were no trustees who requested to attend the meeting virtually.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**PUBLIC HEARING CONCERNING THE TAX LEVY**

At 4:04 p.m., the Chairperson announced that the next agenda item would be a public hearing to receive public comments on the Tax Levy. Mr. Endress asked trustees if there were any further comments about the tax levy, and there were none. He asked the Board Secretary if any written testimony had been received concerning the tax levy, and there was none. He asked if there was any oral testimony or public comments concerning the 2024 tax levy, and there was none.

Mr. Endress stated that all persons desiring to be heard had been given an opportunity to present oral and written testimony with respect to the tax levy. Mr. Kaufman moved and Ms. Groezinger seconded the motion that the public hearing on the tax levy be adjourned. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Verner  
NAYS: None

At 4:05 p.m., the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the public hearing on the tax levy adjourned.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Block moved and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the October 15, 2024, regular meeting, as presented. The vote being unanimous, the motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Jim Yeager, Faculty member, made public comments in opposition of hiring a search firm for the Director of Athletics and Physical Education position search, and shared his belief that the College has a qualified candidate for the position in Mr. Luke Norman.

### **INTRODUCTIONS**

Ms. Gerber introduced Mr. Pete Surges, Coordinator, Multimedia Content.

### **AUDIT REPORT**

Ms. Janssen introduced Ms. Sara McKenna, Senior Manager and lead auditor for the College's FY24 annual audit. Ms. McKenna provided an overview of the audit, noting that prior to the regular meeting, she met with the Audit & Finance Committee, where she provided a more detailed overview. The College received a clean "unmodified" opinion on the basic financial statements. The State Adult Education and Family Literacy grants and credit hour data also received clean "unmodified" opinions with no compliance findings, and there were no findings on internal controls over financial reporting or compliance. In addition, student financial aid was tested and received a clean "unmodified" opinion on direct and material compliance requirements with one compliance finding related to the student financial aid major program, which was discussed with the Audit & Finance Committee. Overall, net income increased \$3.7 million, of which grants increased \$1.2 million, including an increase in student financial aid of \$400,000, Child Care and Development Fund of \$500,000, and the Congressional Directives grant of \$300,000. Long-term debts decreased due to paying off \$2.4 million on the principal. There was also \$455,000 in new subscription liability. Ms. McKenna reported that the top three revenue sources in FY24 were local taxes, student tuition and fees, and federal grants, while the top three expenses were instruction, institutional support, and operation and maintenance. She reviewed the five-year trend in assessed valuation, noting that the property tax rate has remained fairly stable and consistent.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

A. Academic

1. CollegeNOW Agreement Between Highland Community College and Pecatonica CUSD #321 for the 2024-2025 Academic Year (FY25)  
*Recommendation:* That the Board of Trustees approves the CollegeNOW agreement for the 2024-2025 (FY25) academic year, as presented, for qualified students attending Pecatonica CUSD #321.
2. CollegeNOW Agreement Between Highland Community College and Pecatonica CUSD #321 and West Carroll CUSD #314 for the 2025-2026 Academic Year (FY26)  
*Recommendation:* That the Board of Trustees approves the CollegeNOW agreement for the 2025-2026 (FY26) academic year, as presented, for qualified students attending Pecatonica CUSD #321 and West Carroll CUSD #314.

B. Administration (None)

C. Personnel

1. Part-time Instructors, Overload, and Other Assignments  
*Recommendation:* That the Board of Trustees approves the list of part-time instructors, overload, and other assignments, as presented.

D. Financial

1. Proposed Fee Changes for Fall 2025  
*Recommendation:* That the list of proposed fee changes be approved, as presented, beginning with the Fall 2025 semester.

Mr. Rhyne moved and Mr. Verner seconded the motion to approve the consent items, as presented. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

**MAIN MOTIONS**

A. Academic (None)

B. Administration

1. Second Reading – Reaffirmation of Policy on Policies

Ms. Groezinger moved and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to approve for second reading the reaffirmation of the Policy on Policies, as presented. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

2. Second Reading – Revised Policy 1.03: College Mission, Vision and Core Values

Ms. Groezinger moved and Ms. Kaufman seconded the motion to approve for second reading revised policy 1.03, College Mission, Vision and Core Values, which is included in Chapter 1, Board of Trustees, of the policy manual. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

C. Personnel

1. Appointment: Human Resources Generalist

Ms. Kaufman moved and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to approve the appointment of Ms. Stephanie Hintz as full-time Human Resources Generalist, beginning December 2, 2024, at an FY25 annualized salary of \$62,130, plus appropriate fringe benefits. This is a full-time, non-exempt professional position and is within the FY25 budget. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

2. Revised Job Description: Financial Aid Assistant

Ms. Groezinger moved and Mr. Block seconded the motion to approve the revised job description for the Financial Aid Assistant, as presented. This is a part-time, non-exempt classified position and is included in the FY25 budget. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Block, Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

3. Revised Job Description and Job Title: Coordinator, Financial Aid  
Ms. Kaufman moved and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to approve the revised job description and job title for the Coordinator, Financial Aid, as presented. This is a full-time, exempt professional position and is included in the FY25 budget. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

4. Revised Job Description and Job Title: Financial Aid Specialist  
Mr. Block moved and Ms. Groezinger seconded the motion to approve the revised job description and job title for the Financial Aid Specialist, as presented. This is a full-time, non-exempt classified position and is included in the FY25 budget. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

5. Revised Salary Range Placement: Coordinator, Financial Aid  
Mr. Rhyne moved and Ms. Kaufman seconded the motion to approve the revised salary range placement for the Coordinator, Financial Aid with placement at range level 29 on the Highland Salary Range Table. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

6. Revised Salary Range Placement: Financial Aid Specialist  
Ms. Kuhlemeier moved and Mr. Block seconded the motion to approve the revised salary range placement for the Financial Aid Specialist with placement at range level 24 on the Highland Salary Range Table. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

7. Appointment: Speech Communication Instructor  
Ms. Groezinger moved and Mr. Rhyne seconded the motion to approve the appointment of Ms. Carolyn Clarke as a full-time, tenure-track Speech Communication Instructor in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Fine Arts Division, beginning January 9, 2025, at an FY25 Spring semester salary of \$31,061 (based on MA+0, with 2 years' experience, which is \$62,122 for the full academic year), plus appropriate fringe benefits. This is a full-time faculty position and is within the FY25 budget. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

8. Appointment: Dean, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Fine Arts  
Ms. Kaufman moved and Mr. Rhyne seconded the motion to approve the appointment of Ms. Rae Brunner as full-time Dean of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Fine Arts, beginning January 2, 2025, at an FY25 annualized salary of \$90,000, plus appropriate fringe benefits. This is a full-time, administrative position and is within the FY25 budget. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Block, Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

D. Financial

1. Acceptance of FY24 Annual Audit  
Ms. Kaufman moved and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to accept the annual audit for FY24. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

2. Approval of Contract with Spelman Johnson for Search Firm Services for Director of Athletics and Physical Education Search

Mr. Verner moved and Ms. Groezinger seconded the motion to approve the contract, as presented, with Spelman Johnson in the amount of \$32,000, plus direct allocated expenses such as selective advertising, travel, and background investigations, to provide services to support the recruitment and successful placement of the Director of Athletics and Physical Education.

Ms. Kuberski was asked what the College has done to try to fill the position, and she reviewed the process to date, noting that the search began in Summer 2024, when the position was advertised. Interviews were held, and the search committee had a candidate that met the criterion of the committee. An offer was made but it was not accepted, so the committee reconvened and ultimately recommended to hire a search committee. Ms. Gerber explained that the search committee suggestion came after discussions in early October. Right now, it would be a mid-academic year search, and a search firm would ensure the pool had individuals with the experience the College is looking for. The search firm also has a unique opportunity to go to conferences and “sell” the College. An interim Director of Athletics and Physical Education is in place, which allows the committee to regroup with the search committee and search firm with the hope of finding someone in the March to May timeframe. Mr. Block stated that the Athletic, Learning, and Event Center is the largest project the College has done, bigger than the Nursing addition or Wind Tech building. This is a very significant situation and it needs all hands on deck. He would also like to have Mr. Boldt’s input into the recommendation to hire a search firm. Ms. Kuberski also noted that any candidate would be eligible to apply.

Following discussion, Mr. Block moved and Mr. Verner seconded the motion to table the recommendation to hire the search firm. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

3. Resolution Authorizing Use of Protection, Health, and Safety Funds Remaining from Previous Projects for Project “Building W (Maintenance) Septic System”

Ms. Groezinger move and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to approve the Resolution, as presented, authorizing the use of Protection, Health, and Safety funds remaining from previous projects in the amount of \$32,200 for Project Building W (Maintenance) Septic System. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the Resolution adopted.

4. Resolution Authorizing Project “ADA Accessibility Parking Lot D” and to Authorize Approval for a Health and Safety Levy

Mr. Block moved and Ms. Groezinger seconded the motion to approve the Resolution, as presented, authorizing a Protection, Health, and Safety project for ADA Accessibility Parking Lot D in the amount of \$34,200 and approve a levy of health and safety funds to finance the project. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the Resolution adopted.

5. Resolution Authorizing Project “Testing Center Building H” (Student/Conference Center) and to Authorize Approval for a Health and Safety Levy

Ms. Groezinger moved and Ms. Kaufman seconded the motion to approve the Resolution, as presented, authorizing a Protection, Health, and Safety project for Testing Center Building H (Student/Conference Center) in the amount of \$387,000 and approve a levy of health and safety funds to finance the project. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Kaufman, Block, Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the Resolution adopted.

6. Resolution Authorizing Project “Accessibility and Asbestos Abatement Building N” (Natural Science Center) and to Authorize Approval for a Health and Safety Levy

Ms. Kuhlemeier moved and Ms. Groezinger seconded the motion to approve the Resolution, as presented, authorizing a Protection, Health, and Safety project for Accessibility and Asbestos Abatement Building N (Natural Science Center) in the amount of \$1,008,160 and approve a levy of health and safety funds to finance \$863,800 of the project. If approved, the remaining \$144,360 for the project will be recommended for approval to be funded through Protection, Health, and Safety funds left over from prior years. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Block, Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the Resolution adopted.



7. Education and Building Fund Levy

Mr. Block moved and Ms. Kaufman seconded the motion to approve the Resolution, as presented, providing for the levy of educational purposes taxes in the amount of \$7,865,000 and building purposes taxes in the amount of \$2,105,000 for the year 2024 to be collected in the year 2025; and that the levy for the year 2024 be allocated 50% for FY25 and 50% for FY26. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the Resolution adopted.

8. Insurance Levy

Ms. Groezinger moved and Ms. Kuhlemeier seconded the motion to approve the Resolution, as presented, providing for a special tax levy in the amount of \$1,235,000 to cover the cost of purchasing insurance under 745 ILCS 10/9-107 of the Tort Immunity Act, for the year 2024 to be collected in the year 2025; and that the levy for the year 2024 be allocated 50% for FY25 and 50% for FY26. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman, Block, Endress,  
Verner  
NAYS: None

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the Resolution adopted.

9. Audit Levy

Ms. Kaufman moved and Mr. Block seconded the motion to approve the Resolution, as presented, providing for a special tax levy in the amount of \$80,000 to cover the cost of an annual audit under 110 ILCS 805/3-22.1 of the Public Community College Act of the State of Illinois, for the year 2024 to be collected in the year 2025; and that the levy for the year 2024 be allocated 50% for FY25 and 50% for FY26. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

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

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the Resolution adopted.

10. Social Security and Medicare Levy

Ms. Groezinger moved and Mr. Block seconded the motion to approve the Resolution, as presented, providing for a special tax levy in the amount of \$210,000 to cover the cost of Social Security and Medicare under 40 ILCS 21-101 of the Social Security Enabling Act for the year 2024 to be collected in the year 2025; and that the levy for the year 2024 be allocated 50% for FY25 and 50% for FY26. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

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

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the Resolution adopted.

11. Payment of Bills and Agency Fund Report – October 2024

Mr. Block moved and Ms. Kaufman seconded the motion to approve the Resolution authorizing and directing Ms. Jill Janssen, Treasurer, to make payments or transfers of funds for the October 2024 bills, including Board travel, amounting to \$1,479,733.19, Automated Clearing House (ACH) debits W0000660 through W0000661 amounting to \$51,318.13, Electronic Refunds of \$4,279.00, with 5 adjustments of \$859.00, such warrants amounting to \$1,534,471.32. Transfers of funds for payroll amounted to \$733,273.78. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

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

Whereupon the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the Resolution adopted.

## **REPORTS**

### Treasurer's Report

#### *Statements of Revenue, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance*

There was no report.

### Budget Update

Ms. Janssen reported that the College underwent a rating review with Standard and Poor's and received an AA- rating with a stable outlook. She explained that the process was like a mini-Higher Learning Commission report, but it is important when the College issues bonds, and it is a factor in the interest rate. She also reported that last Thursday, she attended the closing for the property located at 3156 West Pearl City Road, and the owners will vacate the property within 30 days. Mr. Block noted that the College's actual tax rate from 2019 to 2023 has come down every year, and he would challenge the other taxing bodies to take a look. He noted that this is a result of good money management.

### Foundation

Mr. Dick was unable to attend the meeting at this time, so there was no report.

### Student Trustee

There was no report.

### Audit & Finance Committee

The Audit & Finance Committee reviewed the audit at their meeting preceding the regular Board meeting.

### Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) Representative

There was no report.

Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT)

Those who attended the ACCT Annual Leadership Congress in October will report on the conference at the December retreat.

Board Chair

Mr. Endress received a mum plant on behalf of the Board and administration after his back surgery, which he appreciated. He noted that he continues to feel a little better. He also attended several Highland events, including the guest lecturer from the University of Illinois on bioreactors, the Foundation annual meeting and Distinguished Alumni event, the Leadership Forum closing banquet, and the ribbon-cutting yesterday for the new Mobile Medical Unit. He noted that there are a lot of good things happening.

President

Ms. Kuberski provided an update on the search for a Dean of Agriculture, Business, and Technology. The search committee, led by Mr. Phillips, met and he indicated that the committee hopes to interview candidates after the holiday break. It was originally hoped to have a candidate for the beginning of the semester, but mid-semester is more realistic. Mr. Anderson's shift to working on workforce development will not happen until the new Dean is hired.

At 5:04 p.m., the Chairperson declared a recess; the meeting resumed at 5:08 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Ms. Groezinger moved and Ms. Kaufman 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; and, collective negotiating matters under Open Meetings Act exception 2-C-2, and to return to Open Session for possible action. The roll call on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne, Kuhlemeier, Kaufman  
NAYS: Block

The vote being five ayes and one nay, 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 5:09 p.m., the Chairperson declared the meeting in Closed Session.

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

AYES: Endress, Groezinger, Rhyne, Kaufman, Block  
NAYS: None

At 5:38 p.m., the Chairperson declared the motion carried and the Closed Session ended.

**ACTION, IF NECESSARY**

No action was necessary.

**REPORTS (Continued)**

*Foundation Report*

Mr. Dick joined the meeting and thanked those who attended the Distinguished Alumni event, noting that it was great hearing from those who were honored. The market is propelling investments forward, and there are great new gifts. Mr. Dick is looking forward to Thanksgiving, which is a time of giving, and noted that the end-of-year solicitations have gone out. He encouraged trustees to consider participating in year-end giving as a Board.

**OLD BUSINESS**

*Feasibility of an Athletic, Learning, and Event Center*

Ms. Kuberski attended the Noon Rotary meeting to speak about the potential Athletic, Learning, and Event Center. The task force will meet again on December 10, where Ms. Kuberski will share the cost of the pool and roof, as well as the draft timeline, which will be shared at the Board retreat.

**NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

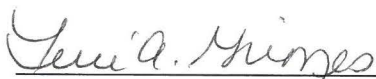
**DATES OF IMPORTANCE**

The next quarterly Board retreat will be held on Thursday, December 12, at 11:00 a.m. and will be preceded by the Manufacturing and CNC Lab ribbon-cutting at 10:00 a.m. Opening Days will be held on January 9, 2025, and the next regular Board meeting is scheduled for January 28, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Groezinger moved and Ms. Kaufman seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. At 5:41 p.m., the vote being unanimous and 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