

MINUTES
WAUBONSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Board of Trustees
Special Board Meeting

February 5, 2025

I. Convene Open Session

A special meeting of the Board of Trustees of Waubonsee Community College, Community College District 516, Kane, Kendall, DeKalb, LaSalle, and Will Counties, IL, convened at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 5, 2025, in the Dickson Center Community Board Room, Route 47 at Waubonsee Drive, Sugar Grove, IL.

Roll call found the following board members present: Rick Guzman, Ashley Hatcher, Daniel Jaquez, Patrick Kelsey, and Greg Thomas; board member present by means of audio conference, in compliance with Board Policy 1.100.06 and as allowed by the Open Meetings Act, sections 2.01 and 7(a): Rebecca D. Oliver; board members absent: Stacey Ries and Tina Willson; and staff members present: Dr. Brian Knetl, John Bryant, Dr. Kimberly Chavis, Dr. Anthony Ramos, Dr. Melinda Tejada, Dr. Toya Webb, Mary Baccheschi, Mary Greenwood, Dan Larsen, J. C. Paez, Dr. Stacey Randall, and Luke Winkelmann.

Ms. Willson arrived at 8:34 a.m. and joined the meeting.

II. Public Comment

A. General Public Comment

III. Institutional Reports and Presentations

A. Updates and Discussion on New Executive Orders, Their Impact on Educational Institutions, and Waubonsee's Response

Dr. Brian Knetl indicated in his report that the college's primary objective, in response to recent changes and the uncertainty that we are experiencing, is the safety of employees and students, physically and mentally, as well as continuity of service and operations to our students and to our community. Waubonsee's executive leadership team has been meeting regularly and has communicated key developments and protocols to the college, including protocols regarding any activities that may occur on any of our campuses related to federal law enforcement activity. Dr. Knetl also highlighted another key message regarding decisions made about expenditures and allocation of federal dollars. He stated that the college is committed to continue to fund certain programs impacted by those federal dollars through the spring 2025 semester, until we receive more clarity on required next steps.

B. Approval of a Contract for Legal Consulting Services

The board, on a motion by Mr. Guzman and seconded by Mr. Thomas, unanimously approved a contract for legal consulting services with Robbins Schwartz of Chicago, IL, in the annual amount not to exceed \$200,000 for the period of February 6, 2025 through February 5, 2026.

III. Institutional Reports and Presentations (continued)

C. Comprehensive Financial Update and Analysis

1. FY2024 Grants Annual Report

Dr. Stacey Randall, Executive Dean for Institutional Effectiveness and Title V Project Director, presented brief highlights from the FY2024 Grants Annual Report, including the success rates of grant applications and fiscal year comparison by funding source. Dr. Randall was happy to share that the grant award success rate has been increasing over the past few years.

2. Financial Aid Update

Mary Greenwood, Director of Student Financial Aid Services, presented a Financial Aid Update that highlighted financial aid changes at the federal, state, and institutional levels. Ms. Greenwood was pleased to report that we have seen continued growth in grant programming in federal and state levels, increases in the number of students participating in the programs, along with a growth in the FAFSA completion rate. Ms. Greenwood also shared highlights of the successes from the Waubensee Success Scholarship.

3. Investment Policy Recommendations, Restrictions, and Updates

John Bryant, Interim Vice President of Finance and Administration, shared recommendations, restrictions, and updates to current Board Policy 2.050.04 – Investment of College Funds, for consideration and for approval at a future board meeting.

4. Capital Planning

Mr. Bryant shared a summary of investments by fund and the associated restrictions with each fund. In addition, debt funding options were discussed. Mr. Bryant presented current and future capital commitments, and possible funding and timing issues were discussed with an emphasis being given go deferred maintenance. Action on transfers and debt funding will be requested for approval at a future board meeting.

5. Academic Year 2025-2026 In-District Tuition and Student Fee Rates

Mr. Bryant provided a report on academic year 2025-2026 tuition and student fee rate considerations, as well as next steps regarding a recommendation for board approval at the February 19, 2025 board meeting.

D. Presentations on Future Opportunities

1. Engagement with a Lobbyist

Dr. Toya Webb, Chief of Staff and Vice President of Strategy, and Mr. Bryant shared a presentation that highlighted several advantages and benefits for engaging with a lobbyist. They also provided next steps, following board support, which included issuance of an RFP, and a recommendation for board approval to contract with a lobbyist at a future board meeting.

III. Institutional Reports and Presentations (continued)

2. Partnership with Sugar Grove Fire Department

Bob Cofield, Dean for Health Professions and Public Service, presented an opportunity for a partnership between Waubensee Community College and the Sugar Grove Fire Department that would benefit the district and Waubensee's students by creating a shared training facility, which would also allow the college to increase our offerings within the Fire Science Program as well as provide new opportunities for our students and the community. The board supported this proposal to explore a partnership opportunity with the Sugar Grove Fire Department. A formal recommendation is anticipated in the near future for board approval.

3. Waubensee Summer Schedule

Dr. Knetl shared an update, in response to several virtual suggestions received, regarding a possible change to the summer schedule at the college. A task force was created to study the activities on campus, potential impacts, a review of all options, and then provide recommendations. At this time, a consideration for an alternate summer schedule is to close offices and services half days on Fridays in June and July. A formal recommendation is anticipated in the near future for board approval or endorsement.

IV. Executive Session

The board, on a motion by Mr. Thomas and seconded by Mr. Guzman, unanimously voted to adjourn to executive session at 12:05 p.m. in accordance with Section 2a of the Open Meetings Act where the board discussed items covered under the following exceptions: the hiring, discipline, performance, and compensation of personnel; matters of collective bargaining or deliberations concerning salary schedules; and safety and security procedures.

V. Reconvene to Open Session

The board reconvened in open session at 1:20 p.m. Roll call found the following board members present: Rick Guzman, Ashley Hatcher, Daniel Jaquez, Patrick Kelsey, and Greg Thomas; board members absent: Rebecca D. Oliver, Stacey Ries, and Tina Willson; and staff members present: Dr. Brian Knetl, Mary Baccheschi, and Ryan Hanback.

VI. Adjournment

The board, on a motion by Mr. Guzman and seconded by Mr. Thomas, unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 1:21 p.m.



Greg Thomas
2025-02-20 02:18 UTC _____
Gregory Thomas, Secretary
Waubensee Community College
Board of Trustees