



## **REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Jackson College

Central Campus, George E. Potter Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor,  
Boardroom

10.14.24

---

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Jackson College was held on Monday, 10.14.24, 6:30pm, at the Central Campus of Jackson College, George E. Potter Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Boardroom.

*Board Members Present:* Chairperson John Crist, Vice-Chairperson Sheila Patterson, Trustee Matt Heins, Trustee Donna Lake, Trustee Christopher Simpson, and Trustee Teshna Thomas

*Board Member Absence:* Trustee Philip Hoffman

*Others Present Include:* Dr. Daniel Phelan, Keith Everett Book, Brendon Beer, Cindy Allen, Ashley Van Heest, Heather Ruttkofsky, Julie Hand, Danielle Mackey, D.R. Hammontree

Chairperson John Crist called the meeting to order at 6:30PM Eastern Daylight Savings Time.

### **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

The draft minutes of the Regular Board of Trustees dated 09.09.24 were reviewed by the Board and moved into the permanent record by Chairperson Crist, on behalf of the Trustees.

### **DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There were no conflicts of interest expressed by Trustees for items appearing on the agenda for the meeting.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

#### *PUBLIC COMMENTS:*

Chairperson Crist invited attending members of the public (who registered via the form provided at the Board Room door prior to this portion of the agenda) to offer their comments to the Board of Trustees (up to five minutes each).

Chairperson Crist reminded the Board and public of the following:

- Trustees are not to engage the presenters per Board Policy, though the Board Chair will thank each presenter noting that the Board will take presenter comments under advisement. Doing so avoids potential legal liability for the

Board (individually and collectively), as well as disruption of the Board-CEO Delegation policies and related authority and duties.

- When addressing the Board, speakers are asked to be respectful and civil. Be advised that, as an on-going practice, the Board does not respond in this Board Meeting setting when the matter presented concerns personnel, student issues, operations, or other matters that are being addressed through the established grievance or legal processes, or otherwise are a subject of review by the Board of Trustees.

Danielle Mackey (Candidate for Jackson College Board of Trustees – 6-year term) – Danielle Mackey announced her candidacy for Trustee to the Board, providing background, relevant experience, endorsements, and her focus should she be elected to the Board which included: student success, community engagement, and financial stability.

D.R. Hammontree (Candidate for Jackson College Board of Trustees – 2-year term) – D. R. Hammontree announced his candidacy for Trustee to the Board, providing his background, relevant experience, and hopes to move purposeful energy should he be elected through community and police oversight, racial equity, and planning.

Dr. Mark Ott (Current JC Employee – Jackson College Faculty) – Dr. Ott provided the following good news stories:

- Assistant Professor Nina Knight and adjunct faculty member David Hayes have written an article together that was recently accepted for publication in the Humanities Review.
- Composition Instructor Holly Taylor was recently selected to give a presentation at the annual national conference for the Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference in March.
- Dr. Becky Roberts and Professor Chrissy Hughes had the privilege of speaking to the Careers class at Hillsdale High School. They discussed careers in Communication and Graphic Design and were also able to share personal experiences about maximizing the college experience and making smart "school-to-career" choices.
- Jackson College faculty members are engaging with the future of AI in education, hosting two recent AI workshops on campus. The sessions focused on Writing in the Age of AI and possible futures for AI in education. This was in partnership with the JCISD and the statewide MiSTEM group, including public school educators from the region. The events included a guest speaker who is an educational technology expert from Central Michigan University and provided attendees with a copy of a new scholarly text on the topic. Each Trustee was provided with a copy of Teaching with AI, courtesy of the IQC: Faculty Professional Development Committee of the Academic Council.
- Dr. Ott announced a concert being held at Jackson College next week. On behalf of Conductor Dan Bickel, Dr. Ott invited Trustees to attend the rehearsal

on 10.15.24 to see the new Potter Center Instrumental Music Studio in action, and also to attend the actual concert on 10.22.24.

- Lastly, he shared hopes that the new Dean of Arts and Sciences will be joining soon. On behalf of the members of the faculty committee, he described the Dean hiring search as having been done professionally with the interest of both faculty and administration coming into this important hire.

#### *BOARD COMMENTS & CEO REPORT:*

CEO Phelan provided a written CEO report, a new Board meeting feature, in lieu of prior Trustee Briefings, for the Board's review and consideration going forward, offered as a routine, transparent communication tool regarding on-going impacts on Board's ENDS, as well as Collegiate updates.

Trustee Lake described her pride in the College while participating in the recent Starry Night event hosted by the Jackson College Foundation on Central Campus: the food, staff, faculty, and Foundation employees (i.e., Julie Hand, Brigitte Robinson, and Sheril Tarrant) were inspiring. Trustee Lake shared comments from others that attended the event that described their appreciation and hopes that similar events will be hosted again, events that demonstrate how far the College has come, how it continues to grow, and how the community can embrace the College.

Trustee Simpson and Trustee Thomas echoed Trustee Lake's comments.

Vice-Chairperson Patterson shared her appreciation for the CEO Report.

#### *EXCELLENCE MINUTE:*

The Board welcomed Heather Ruttkofsky (Jackson College Dean of Heather Sciences, Career & Technical Trades) and Heather Lauer (Jackson County Faculty Instructor, Surgical Technology) to share exciting developments within JC's Surgical Tech Program.

The Program started in 2024 with 9 students and 8 clinical sites. For the current program year, there are currently 26 eligible students and an expected 18 clinical sites. The program is garnering employment promises and scholarships.

The first site visit for accreditation of the program was exemplary, with all minor findings quickly rectified. The accreditation notice should be known by the second week in January. Jackson College could potentially take the lead in this field with Henry Ford. Employment at Jackson College because of the good work with the Surgical Tech Program has been sought after. Accreditors shared that Jackson College students in the program by level 1 are more advanced than entry level employees.

President Phelan and Chairperson Crist thanked Heather Lauer for this achievement, especially in light of the fact that Professor Lauer has been at the College for less than a year.

## **OWNERSHIP LINKAGE**

### *OWNER LINKAGE - MILLAGE UPDATE*

CEO Phelan offered feedback received from the Millage Information Flyer that was distributed throughout the county, other media, and speaking engagements held / scheduled by CEO Phelan, Trustees, and JC administrators:

Speaking engagements:

- League of Women Voters: 9/24, 9/26
- JTV: 10/22, 10/30

He also offered that 100 yard signs, privately funded, will be available to those that would like them this week.

## **ITEMS FOR DECISION**

### *GOVERNANCE PROCESS ITEMS: Consideration of February 2025 Regular Board Meeting Date Change*

The Board considered if they should keep the proposed Regular Board meeting on 02.10.25 or move it to 02.17.25, if any Board member is attending the [2025 ACCT Community College National Legislative Summit – 02.09-12.25](#).

**MOTION BY VICE-CHAIRPERSON PATTERSON TO MOVE THE PROPOSED REGULAR BOARD MEETING ON 02.10.25 TO 02.17.25. TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES CRIST, HEINS, LAKE, PATTERSON, SIMPSON, AND THOMAS VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### *EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS ITEMS: EL-04 Financial Conditions & Activities – Policy Review*

The Board's Executive Limitations policy EL-04 Financial Conditions & Activities was reviewed by the Board for its regularly scheduled review. Chairperson Crist, Trustee Lake, Trustee Simpson, and CEO Phelan recommended a minor edit for the Board's consideration.

### *EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS ITEMS: EL-08 Communication & Support to the Board – Policy Review*

The Board's Executive Limitations policy EL-08 Communication & Support to the Board was reviewed by the Board for its regularly scheduled review. Chairperson Crist, Trustee Lake, Trustee Simpson, and CEO Phelan recommended minor edits for the Board's consideration.

**MOTION BY TRUSTEE HEINS TO APPROVE POLICIES EL-04 FINANCIAL CONDITIONS & ACTIVITIES AND EL-08 COMMUNICATION & SUPPORT TO THE BOARD AS AMENDED. TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES**

**CRIST, HEINS, LAKE, PATTERSON, SIMPSON, AND THOMAS VOTING AYE.  
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS ITEMS: EL-04 Financial Conditions & Activities –  
Interpretations Assessment*

CEO Phelan presented his interpretation recommendations for policy EL-04 to the Board for their regularly scheduled review. Updates to the recommendations were minor language clarifications.

*EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS ITEMS: EL-08 Communication & Support to the Board –  
Interpretations Assessment*

CEO Phelan presented his interpretation recommendations for policy EL-08 to the Board for their regularly scheduled review. Updates to the recommendations were minor language clarifications.

**MOTION BY TRUSTEE LAKE TO APPROVE THAT THE BOARD HAS ASSESSED  
CEO PHELAN'S INTERPRETATIONS OF POLICIES EL-04 AND EL-08 AND FINDS  
THAT THEY DEMONSTRATE A REASONABLE INTERPRATION OF THE POLICIES.  
TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES CRIST, HEINS, LAKE,  
PATTERSON, SIMPSON AND THOMAS VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED  
UNANIMOUSLY.**

*CONSIDERATION OF EXPANDING THE OFFICE HOLDER ACCOUNT*

The Board considered expanding upon the allocation of funding support to CEO Phelan's Office Holder Account. The request was made based upon the increasing requests the CEO is receiving, the rising expectations for support, as well as the need for an increased ability to engage with those in public service, or seeking public service.

The office holder account is designed to advance the mission of the institution by way of donations made by the CEO to equally support candidates. The CEO's current account is at \$30K, which he receives via direct payment for said purposes. CEO Phelan has had to use personal funds in recent years to accommodate requests for support.

Trustee Heins asked if there is a better mechanism for this that would not incur additional personal taxation due to the allocation of these funds. President Phelan noted that currently, there is not a better mechanism, and that this approach is used across community colleges as a result.

Vice-Chairperson Patterson described that sometimes the return of support is not reciprocated. In accordance with Michigan law, CEO Phelan cannot reveal how the support funds are distributed. Trustee Heins described his concerns with this model. CEO Phelan described the current process as an imperfect system. This has been a part of CEO Phelan's contract since he started in 2001 and was in the previous CEO contracts as well.

**MOTION BY TRUSTEE SIMPSON TO APPROVE AN INCREASED CONTRIBUTION OF \$10K TO THE OFFICER HOLDER ACCOUNT, BRINGING IT TO A TOTAL OF \$40K. TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**TRUSTEES SIMPSON: AYE,**

**TRUSTEE HEINS: AYE (WITH CONCERN FOR THE SYSTEM STRUCTURE)**

**CHAIRPERSON CRIST: AYE**

**VICE-CHAIRPERSON PATTERSON: NAY**

**TRUSTEE LAKE: AYE**

**TRUSTEE THOMAS: AYE**

**MOTION PASSED 5:1.**

### **CONSENT / REQUIRED APPROVAL AGENDA**

#### *CONSIDERATION OF PARTNERS FOR FISH & WILDLIFE PROGRAM – LANDOWNER AGREEMENT*

The Board considered an agreement between Jackson College, The Dahlem Conservancy and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services to restore habitat for the benefit of Federal trust species on private lands and support priority actions identified in the Regional Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program Strategic Plan.

CEO Phelan confirmed that the agricultural instructional program at the College no longer has a need for the property and that The Dahlem Conservancy would like to participate in this federal program as well. There is no cost to the College unless the College withdraws from the 10-year contract.

**MOTION BY TRUSTEE HEINS TO APPROVE THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN JACKSON COLLEGE, THE DAHLEM CONSERVANCY AND THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICES TO RESTORE HABITAT FOR THE BENEFIT OF FEDERAL TRUST SPECIES ON PRIVATE LANDS AND SUPPORT PRIORITY ACTIONS IDENTIFIED IN THE REGIONAL PARTNERS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE PROGRAM STRATEGIC PLAN. TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES CRIST, HEINS, LAKE, PATTERSON, SIMPSON AND THOMAS VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE**

*MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE: EN-01 Board's ENDS (#5) – Evidence Review*  
CEO Phelan presented the evidence (i.e., monitoring report) for Policy EN-01 Board's ENDS (5) indicating Full Compliance according to his previously approved interpretations.

**MOTION BY VICE-CHAIRPERSON PATTERSON THAT THE BOARD HAS ASSESSED THE MONITORING REPORT FOR POLICY EN-01 BOARD'S ENDS (5) AND FINDS THAT IT DEMONSTRATES COMPLIANCE WITH A REASONABLE INTERPRETATION OF THE POLICY. TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**TRUSTEES CRIST, HEINS, LAKE, PATTERSON, SIMPSON, AND THOMAS VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE: EL-01 Treatment of Learners – Evidence Review*

CEO Phelan presented the evidence (i.e., monitoring report) for Policy EL-01 Treatment of Learners indicating Full Compliance according to his previously approved interpretations.

*MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE: EL-02 Treatment of Staff – Evidence Review*

CEO Phelan presented the evidence (i.e., monitoring report) for Policy EL-02 Treatment of Staff indicating Full Compliance according to his previously approved interpretations.

**MOTION BY TRUSTEE THOMAS THAT THE BOARD HAS ASSESSED THE MONITORING REPORT FOR POLICIES EL-01 TREATMENT OF LEARNERS AND EL-02 TREATMENT OF STAFF AND FINDS THAT THEY DEMONSTRATE COMPLIANCE WITH A REASONABLE INTERPRETATION OF THE POLICIES. TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES CRIST, HEINS, LAKE, PATTERSON, SIMPSON, AND THOMAS VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE: CEO Monitoring Compliance Schedule & Summary:*

CEO Phelan provided an update on reports presented to the Board over the preceding 12 months with the compliance status noted.

## **MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE**

*MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE: BCD-01 Unity of Control – Survey Results Review:*

Chairperson Crist presented the aggregate responses from Board members to a Self-Evaluation Survey of BCD-01 Unity of Control.

*MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE: GP-05 Role of Vice Chair– Survey Results Review:*

Chairperson Crist presented the aggregate responses from Board members to a Self-Evaluation Survey of GP-05 Role of Vice Chair.

*MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE: GP-08 Board & Committee Expenses– Survey Results Review:*

Chairperson Crist presented the aggregate responses from Board members to a Self-Evaluation Survey of GP-08 Board & Committee Expenses.

## INFORMATION REQUEST BY THE BOARD

### *Investigation Recommendations Outline & Timeline:*

In response to the motion passed at the 09.09.24 Regular Board Meeting, CEO Phelan offered a report regarding his work to-date, and timeline for addressing the remaining Miller Johnson recommendations.

Regarding Trustee Heins' inquiry, CEO Phelan confirmed that a document that was missing from an employee file during the investigation is now in that employee file. Trustee Heins requested a documented process for use in confirming that performance improvement plans and related documents are consistently included in employee files.

Trustee Thomas suggested the use of an audit process to confirm that appropriate documents are filed.

Trustee Simpson requested a documented process for employee training associated with the hiring process. CEO Phelan described a new certification process that will be required for employees to participate in the hiring process going forward.

Regarding Trustee Heins' inquiry into how to confirm that policies are followed, CEO Phelan described a letter of agreement that could be modified to express the responsibility of an employee to have annually read, understood, and upheld the policies of the College, including policies that have been updated.

Trustee Simpson asked how employees know when a policy is changed and understood. CEO Phelan described that links to policies are sent out via the weekly employee newsletter when policies have been changed and that all policies are on the College's intranet. Supervisors are responsible to ensure that College policies are followed. The new employee orientation is also robust with policy information.

CEO Phelan confirmed for Vice-Chairperson Patterson that annual training for core policies happens automatically and electronically. Supervisors conduct quarterly Personal Management Interviews (PMIs) which are documented electronically.

Trustee Heins asked CEO Phelan to describe how 3 CHRO searches have failed. CEO Phelan noted that CHRO positions across the state are the most challenging to fill at present. It is possible that the salary range being offered needs to be increased, which is feedback CEO Phelan has received recently from local colleagues. He described that the use of contracted services to fill positions is exorbitant and finite, and that executive search firms normally require a percentage of the placement's salary for 3 years. CEO Phelan hopes to have a clear answer regarding the direction he will take concerning the Dean and CHRO roles within a week to 10 days.

To ensure that security is getting the diversity training that they need, CEO Phelan described a certification and testing process for this training and use of Cultural Fluency Associates. He also described a book that the Leadership Council is discussing on a



quarterly basis (How to Know a Person, by David Brooks), as well as the use of the annual PACE and CCCSE (Community College Center for Student Engagement) surveys.

To ensure that separation of reporting and investigatory elements associated with Title IX, CEO Phelan described how reporting is handled by a neutral party, followed by adjudication and investigation by the College's legal counsel. Then there is a third individual that reports the results of investigations. The President has established an Office of the General Council which is now located in the President's office and accessible by anyone.

CEO Phelan will provide updates to all relevant issues as they occur via his CEO Report presented at the regular Board meetings going forward.

*College Feature:*

Jackson College Chief Strategy & IR Officer Ashely Van Heest offered a PACE Survey and Strategic Agenda Update. Ashley Van Heest thanked Jennifer Dobbs and her team for their work on the survey and presentation. The timeline of the PACE Survey review process follows:

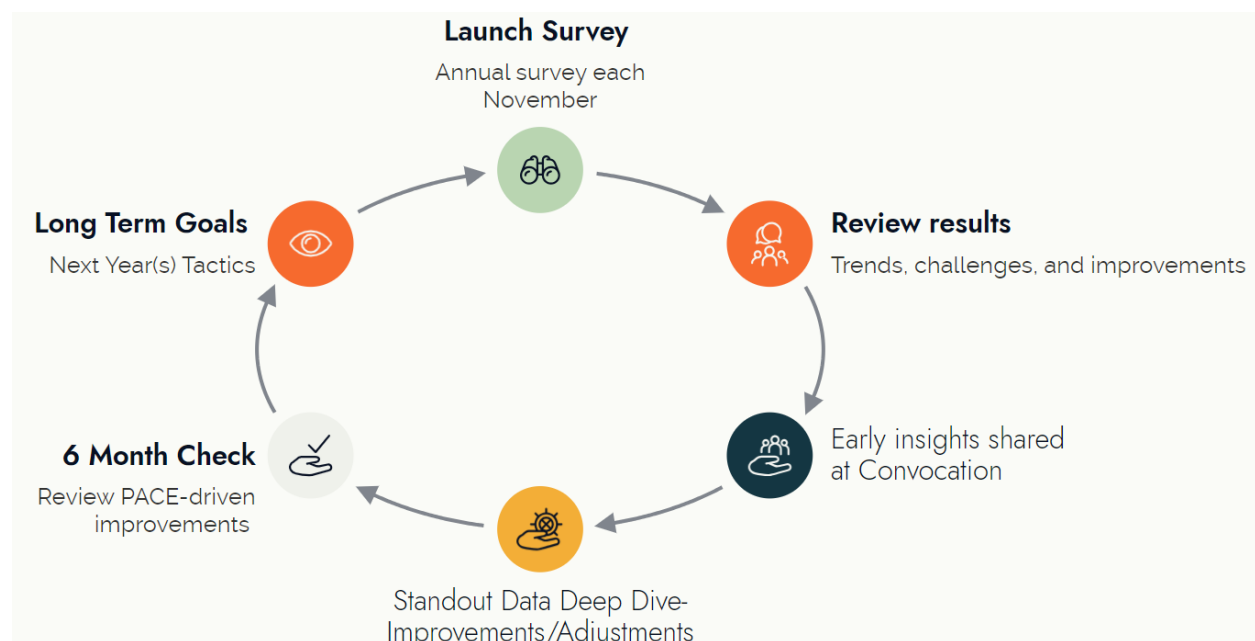


The collaborative insights that go into the PACE Survey include:

- 2022 PACE Review
- Inclusive Excellence
- Administrator Meetings
- Strategic Agenda
- Convocation
- Group Review

Ashley Van Heest walked the Board through lists of progress that has been made and will be on-going in accordance with the PACE survey suggestions. She also described the process of how the PACE Survey suggestions become tactics toward the goals of the Strategic Agenda.

The future of the PACE Survey looks like this:



Trustee Heins and Van Heest discussed the current benefits of conducting the PACE survey annually (rather than bi-annually). CEO Phelan thanked Ashley Van Heest and Jennifer Dobbs for their leadership in this important cultural work for the College. Trustee Thomas shared her appreciation for the work being done.

#### *Next Board Meeting Topics – 11.04.24:*

CEO Phelan provided the members with a portent of items that are to come at the 11.04.24, Jackson College Board of Trustees Meeting and took agenda suggestions.

Below are currently anticipated topics:

- Excellence Minute
- Policy Review: EL-07 Compensation & Benefits

- Policy Review: EL-09 Organization Culture
- Policy Review: GP-13 Special Rules of Order
- Policy Review: BCD-02 Accountability of the CEO
- Interpretations Assessment: EL-07 Compensation & Benefits
- Interpretations Assessment: EL-09 Organization Culture
- Evidence Review: EL-04 Financial Conditions & Activities
- Evidence Review: EL-08 Communication & Support to the Board
- CEO Monitoring Compliance Schedule & Summary
- CEO, CFO Audit Certifications
- Audit Report
- Consideration of Budget Adjustments (if needed)
- FY 2025 Q1 Financial Report
- College Feature: Marketing (Dotty Karkheck, Director of Marketing)
- DEI Update

## **SELF-EVALUATION OF GOVERNANCE PROCESS & BOARD PERFORMANCE AT THIS MEETING**

### *Principles of Policy Governance:*

Members discussed the Policy Governance principles of monitoring institutional performance, executive limitations, and governance process.

## **MEETING CONTENT REVIEW**

All was appreciated by the Board. Report from the President was appreciated.

## **ADJOURN**

**MOTION BY VICE-CHAIRPERSON PATTERSON “To adjourn.”**

**TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES CRIST, HEINS, LAKE, PATTERSON, SIMPSON, AND THOMAS VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Meeting Adjourned at 8:07pm ET.

The foregoing minutes for the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees held on Monday, October 14, 2024 were approved at the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees on Monday, November 4, 2024.

