REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Jackson College
Central Campus, Potter Center Boardroom
11.09.26

[DRAFT & UNOFFICIAL]

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Jackson College was held on Monday, 11.09.26, 6:30P, at the Central Campus of Jackson College, Potter Center Boardroom.

Board Members Present: Vice Chairman Matt Heins, Trustee Philip Hoffman, Chairwoman Donna Lake, Trustee George Page, Trustee Christopher Simpson, and Trustee Teshna Thomas

Board Member Absence: Trustee Danielle Mackey

Others Present Include: Dr. Daniel Phelan, Keith Everett Book, Dr. Benjamin Valdez, Cierra Sylvester, Jonathon Marowelli

Chairwoman Lake called the meeting to order at 6:30P Eastern Time.

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:

JC Instructor Holly Gonzalez-Taylor shared copies of her third-year professional project called *Voz*, which is a literary arts magazine featuring the writing of students, staff, and faculty in the Jackson College community. Gonzalez-Taylor collaborated on this project with JC Associate Professor of Graphic Design, Chrissy Hughes, and graphic design student Emmalee.

BOARD COMMENTS & CEO COMMENTS:

Chairwoman Lake described her appreciation of the Potter Center Concert held on 11.07.26, Lauren Alaina.

Chairwoman Lake requested 2 amendments to the agenda that were approved by consensus of the Board:

1. Agenda item “EL-02 Treatment of Employees – Evidence Review”: This agenda item was pulled from the Consent / Required Approvals Agenda until the

College's Institutional AI Policy is fully vetted and approved. CEO Phelan described his pursuit of consultants to help in the College's AI approach.

2. Agenda item "Special License Resolution": This agenda item was added to the Consent / Required Approval Agenda for the Board to consider and approve the Special License Resolution for the Annual Sportsman's Banquet being held at Jackson College on 02.13.27.

CEO Phelan described Congress as being back in session, with leadership changes following the elections, which will have implication on College, some of which will be better understood in the months ahead.

CEO Phelan also expressed his gratitude to Trustee Thomas for her service on the Board of Trustees (which will conclude on 12.31.26) sharing hope that she will consider remaining on the JC Foundation Board.

Prior to the meeting via the Board meeting preparatory materials, CEO Phelan described a Michigan Arts and Culture Council (MACC) $20K Experience Support Grant application that would provide financial support for a theatre performance in Spring 2027. If awarded, JC Foundation would provide a $5K match as required.

FUTURE SIGNALING:
CEO Phelan shared an AI-assisted presentation entitled Looking Back From 2040, created from multiple sources, focused on nurturing human-centered methods at the center of our work.

Trustee Hoffman described how what used to take 50 years is now taking 15 years with the assistance of AI, and the importance of responsibly embracing AI.

Chairwoman Lake described appreciation for the description of how AI does one thing while humans do another.

Prior to the meeting, the Board reviewed this future signaling article:
https://www.gallup.com/workplace/716117/employee-engagement-below-30-first-time-years.aspx?utm_campaign=mb&utm_source=morning_brew&utm_medium=newsletter

Gallup reports that U.S. employee engagement fell to 29% in the third quarter of 2026, its lowest level in 15 years, with the sharpest declines among remote and hybrid employees.

Interestingly, only 46% of employees strongly agreed that they understood what was expected of them, and just 37% felt that someone at work cared about them as a person.

These findings suggest that organizational remote structures and change generally, may be outpacing the communication, clarity, and human connection needed to sustain engagement.

DRAFT

For Jackson College, this may be a signal to consider how employee disconnection could affect our capacity to achieve the Board's intended results (ENDs) for students and our community. The College's commitment to being a Human-First, human development organization, begins with recognizing that the people serving our students also need clarity, connection, and care.

Two questions the Trustees considered:

1. ENDs and Ownership…What might this trend signal about the changing needs of the community we serve, and what should we learn through ownership linkage before considering whether our Ends policies require refinement?
2. Executive Limitations and monitoring…Do our policies adequately define unacceptable conditions concerning employee treatment and institutional capacity, and does our monitoring provide sufficient evidence of compliance while preserving the President's authority to select operational approaches?

EXCELLENCE MINUTE: JC Community Engagement – Cierra Sylvester
CEO Phelan introduced Cierra Sylvester, the College's new Executive Director of External Engagement. Based upon the Board's recommendation, CEO Phelan added a full-time position for purposes of expanding our reach in the tri-county area, connecting more of our citizenry and organizations to the College.

For this month's Excellence Minute, Cierra Sylvester shared highlights of her first 60 days at Jackson College building relationships, understanding JC's community footprint, and creating a coordinated approach to engagement.

She described how her next steps will include:

- Developing the External Engagement webpage.
- Revamping the Jackson College Speaker's Bureau.
- Establishing a "JC in the Community" presence and communication approach.
- Advancing the External Engagement CRM, shared calendar, and annual calendar.
- Launching monthly External Engagement touch bases.
- Continuing to evaluate priority strategic partnerships.
- Exploring opportunities for employee volunteer engagement, including a potential annual service afternoon.
- A potential partnership opportunity with Jackson Inter-Faith Shelter.

BOARD GOVERNANCE
OWNERSHIP LINKAGE UPDATE:
At the Board's 10.29.26 Planning Session, members requested that an Ownership Linkage Task Force be compiled of Chairwoman Lake, Trustee Mackey, and Trustee Simpson to hold an Ownership Linkage meeting with members of the Jackson County

DRAFT

NAACP. The Task Force has been compiled thus and scheduling efforts with Executive Officers of the Jackson Branch NAACP are underway.

CONSENT / REQUIRED APPROVAL AGENDA
ADOPTION OF MINUTES, POLICY REVIEW, AND INTERPRETATIONS ASSESSMENTS:
Prior to the meeting, Board members individually reviewed the minutes of the most recent Regular Board Meeting dated 10.12.26 and Board Fall Planning Session dated 10.29.26, in consideration for placement into the formal record of the Jackson College Board of Trustees.

For its regular review, the Board considered their ENDS Policy EN-01 (#4) , to which policy pre-review Trustees (Chairwoman Lake, Vice Chairman Heins, and Trustee Thomas) and CEO Phelan recommended no edits at this time. Also, for their regular assessments, the Board assessed the CEO's interpretations of Board ENDS policy EN-01 (#1-3) for reasonability with one area of suggested edits by CEO Phelan under policy item 1.1.3.

Trustees also reviewed a case study (Measuring the Fuzzy ENDS) that the policy pre-review Trustees discussed during their policy review session on 10.12.26.

Lastly, Trustees reviewed the Special License Resolution for the Annual Sportsman's Banquet held at Jackson College on 02.13.27.

AS REQUIRED BY LAW: MOTION BY TRUSTEE THOMAS, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIRMAN HEINS, TO APPROVE THE SPECIAL LICENCE RESOLUTION FOR THE ANNUAL SPORTSMAN'S BANQUET HELD AT JACKSON COLLEGE ON 02.13.27.

TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES HEINS, HOFFMAN, LAKE, PAGE, SIMPSON AND THOMAS VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION BY TRUSTEE PAGE TO:

- **APPROVE THE BOARD MEETING MINUTES DATED 10.12.26 and 10.29.26;**
- **APPROVE POLICY EN-01 (#4);**
- **ASSESS THE CEO'S INTERPRETATIONS FOR POLICY EN-01 (#1-3) AS REASONABLE, AS AMENDED;**

TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES HEINS, HOFFMAN, LAKE, PAGE, SIMPSON AND THOMAS VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DRAFT

ITEMS FOR DECISION

MLK JR. MEDAL OF SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENT DECISION:
The Board considered nomination forms for the 2027 MLK Jr. Medal of Service Award.

Julie Hand described the 20+ year legacy of the award and event, noting that the proceeds support Challenge Day for the community.

Later in this meeting, Julie Hand shared that the highest scoring nomination (per the scoring sheets completed by each Trustee present) was Cathy Brechtelsbauer.

MOTION BY TRUSTEE THOMAS TO AWARD THE 2027 MLK JR. MEDAL OF SERVICE AWARD TO CATHY BRECHTELSBAUER. TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES HEINS, HOFFMAN, LAKE, PAGE, SIMPSON AND THOMAS VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

2027 BOARD MEETING DATES / TIMES:
Following the discussion at the Board's Fall Planning Session (10.29.26), CEO Phelan proposed dates for the Board's 2027 Regular Board Meetings, Planning Sessions, Summer Retreat, & Conferences.

Overview: Regular Board Meetings, beginning in 2027, will be the **2nd Monday of each month**, **excluding July, August, November, and December** during which no Regular Board Meetings will be held. (January was previously discussed as a month for no regular Board meeting, but the College is required in Section 111 of Michigan's Community College Act of 1966 (Public Act 331), codified at MCL 389.111, specifically subsections (2) and (3) to hold an organizational meeting in January (election of Board officers) following the date of the regular community college election.

Further, the Regular Board Meetings would start at 5:30pm in the Potter Center Boardroom (preceded by a social-only Board dinner at 5:00pm in the Ready Room.)

Chairwoman Lake described that she will not be able to attend Board's Spring Planning Session on 03.25.27. Vice Chairman Heins will chair that planning session in her absence.

MOTION BY TRUSTEE HOFFMAN TO APPROVE THE 2027 BOARD MEETING DATES / TIMES AS PRESENTED. TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES HEINS, HOFFMAN, LAKE, PAGE, SIMPSON AND THOMAS VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DRAFT

MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE

MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE: EL-04 FINANCIAL CONDITIONS & ACTIVITIES – EVIDENCE REVIEW:
CEO Phelan presented the evidence (i.e., monitoring report) for Policy EL-04 Financial Conditions and Activities indicating Full Compliance according to his previously approved interpretations.

MOTION BY TRUSTEE THOMAS THAT THE BOARD HAS ASSESSED THE MONITORING REPORT FOR POLICY EL-04 FINANCIAL CONDITIONS AND ACTIVITIES AND FINDS THAT IT DEMONSTRATES COMPLIANCE WITH REASONABLE INTERPRETATIONS OF THE POLICY. TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES HEINS, HOFFMAN, LAKE, PAGE, SIMPSON AND THOMAS VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE: EL-08 COMMUNICATION & SUPPORT TO THE BOARD – EVIDENCE REVIEW:
CEO Phelan presented the evidence (i.e., monitoring report) for Policy EL-08 Communication and Support to the Board indicating Full Compliance according to his previously approved interpretations.

MOTION BY TRUSTEE SIMPSON THAT THE BOARD HAS ASSESSED THE MONITORING REPORT FOR POLICY EL-08 COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT TO THE BOARD AND FINDS THAT IT DEMONSTRATES COMPLIANCE WITH REASONABLE INTERPRETATIONS OF THE POLICY. TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES HEINS, HOFFMAN, LAKE, PAGE, SIMPSON AND THOMAS VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

INFORMATION REQUESTED BY THE BOARD

REGULAR HLC ACCREDITATION UPDATE – Dr. Benjamin Valdez:
Dr. Benjamin Valdez (VP, Student Achievement & Academics) provided the Board with an update on our progress leading up to the comprehensive HLC re-accreditation visit via a demonstration of how the College is using the software platform Watermark, how it helps the College track student achievement and prepare for the self-study.

COLLEGE FEATURE: JPEC HISTORY – Jonathon Marowelli:
For this month's College Feature, the Board welcomed JPEC's President, Jonathon Marowelli, who shared highlights of JPEC's performance trends since conception, trends in academics, enrollment, outcomes, and partnerships.

CEO Phelan noted that JPEC is clearly successful in its own right and was the catalyst for the creation of JCEC…and students are the beneficiary of both. Trustee Hoffman described pride in his vote to pursue JPEC. President Marowelli described that the 27% JPEC enrollment growth in the past 2 years has been due to listening to JPEC students

DRAFT

and using a marketing firm that promotes charter schools. He also shared excited that JPEC may be moving into elementary instruction.

Trustee Simpson described the positive character of the JPEC students he engaged with at Challenge Day. President Marowelli shared that JPEC's graduation rate is 90% currently. National Clearing House data helps to track the students. Trustee Hoffman requested a bi-annual one pager on the process of JPEC.

NEXT BOARD MEETING TOPICS
The Board reviewed agenda topics for the Board's next meetings – 12.10.26 Special Board Meeting and 01.11.27 Regular Board meeting.
Below are currently anticipated topics.
12.10.26 Special Board Meeting

- Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance
- Declaration of Conflict of Interest
- Communications
    - Public Comments
- Annual Consideration of the CEO Contract *

01.11.27 Regular Board Meeting

- Excellence Minutes: Removing Barriers Grant – Julie Hand
- Organized Election for Board Offices
- Code of Conduct Pledge
- Policy Review: EN-01 (#5) Board's Ends
- Policy Review: EL-01 Treatment of Learners
- Policy Review: EL-02 Treatment of Employees
- Policy Review: GP-13 Special Rules of Order
- Policy Review: BCD-02 Accountability of the CEO
- Evidence Review: EL-07 Compensation & Benefits
- Interpretations Assessment: EN-0 (#4) Board's ENDS
- Consideration of Distinguished Service Award Nominations
- Quarterly Financial Report
- College Feature: Healthwise – Heather Ruttkofsky & Sarah Case
- Next Board Meeting Topics

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. They also reviewed the results of the 10.12.26 and 10.29.26 Board Meeting Self-Assessment Summaries.

Trustee Hoffman described how the Board adhered precisely to the principles and policies of Policy Governance.

DRAFT

MEETING CONTENT REVIEW
No comments.

ADJOURN
MOTION BY TRUSTEE HOFFMAN "To adjourn."

TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES HEINS, HOFFMAN, LAKE, PAGE, SIMPSON, AND THOMAS VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:57P ET.

DRAFT