



REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jackson College

Central Campus, Potter Center Boardroom

05.11.26

[DRAFT & UNOFFICIAL]

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Jackson College was held on Monday, 05.11.26, 6:30P, at the Central Campus of Jackson College, Potter Center Boardroom.

Board Members Present: Vice Chairman Matt Heins, Chairwoman Donna Lake, Trustee Danielle Mackey, and Trustee George Page

Board Member Absence: Trustee Philip Hoffman, Trustee Christopher Simpson, and Trustee Teshna Thomas

Others Present Include: Dr. Daniel Phelan, Keith Everett Book, Zak McNitt, Albert Rossner, Sarah Townsley, Josh Sullivan (remotely), Joe Miller, Cindy Allen, Eddie Burkhead

Chairwoman Lake called the meeting to order at 6:30P Eastern Daylight-Savings Time (EDT).

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

CEO Phelan conducted a brief Safety Tailboard for attendees.

COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.

BOARD COMMENTS & CEO COMMENTS

Trustees shared that the Commencement, TRIO, and pinning ceremonies were all very well done and greatly appreciated.

A moment of silence was offered in observance of the 2026 National Police Week. Established by a joint resolution of Congress in 1962, National Police Week pays special recognition to those law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of others.

Pre-Audit:

Sarah Townsley (in -person) and Josh Sullivan (video-remotely) of the Board's auditing firm Rehmann presented the engagement letter and the Professional Services Plan for the upcoming audit. They expect to return to the regular October Board meeting for presentation of the audit reports. Josh Sullivan highlighted new pronouncements and changes to the reporting methodology where items such as Pell grant funds are allocated to a different area of the report than in the past. Explanations throughout the report also newly require a bit more specificity and have been streamlined for redundancies.

At Vice Chairman Heins' request, a history of the previous audits performed will be provided to the Board at the June Board meeting.

Future Signaling:

CEO Phelan led board discussion on this future signaling item:

<https://www.aacc.nche.edu/2026/04/14/strategic-compass-2035/>, highlighting AACC's five directional anchors for the upcoming decade:

1. Data Insights & Adaptive Governance: AACC becomes the learning and foresight engine for the field – anticipating disruption, informing strategy, and shaping policy.
2. Ecosystem Orchestration: Community colleges lead regional civic and workforce ecosystems integrating education, industry, government, and community partners.
3. Student Agency & Lifelong Learning: Learners are empowered as co-designers of their educational and economic futures across a lifetime.
4. Innovation for All: Innovation and transformation are accessible to every college, not just a few.
5. Voice & Advocacy: AACC defines the national narrative and policy environment for community colleges.

CEO Phelan described the [Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants \(Round 6\)](#) that Jackson College, MCCA, and LEO are pursuing jointly on behalf of MI Community Colleges, with Jackson College as the fiduciary agency.

EXCELLENCE MINUTE – 2026 Student Achievement Day – Zak McNitt

JC Registrar / Director of Jackson College Lenawee, Zak McNitt, provided highlights of the 2026 Student Achievement Day (Jackson College's Commencement Day):

- 1200 students were invited, over 3 academic terms
- 339 students participated in the event, a new high
- 562 unique students earned a credential
- 441 earned honors designation (3.0+ GPA)
- 8 former CEP students who had been paroled attended
- Graduates from all 4 JC operating EMC programs attended (Hillsdale, JC LISD Academy, JPEC, and JCEC)
- 35 volunteers assisted from all divisions of the College

- 841 credentials have been confirmed for the 26 Spring semester.

OWNERSHIP LINKAGE

CEO Phelan continues to pursue a meeting with Henry Ford Jackson Hospital's Board in accordance with the Board's FY '26-'28 Ownership Linkage schedule below. CEO Phelan and Keith Everett Book will arrange for a meeting with members of the HFJH Board at the HFJH Boardroom as soon as possible.

FY'26

- In-depth Interviews –
Interviewees:
 - Accelerate Jackson County Board (10.13.25)
 - Jackson Community Foundation Board (data share)
 - Henry Ford Jackson Hospital Board (scheduling continues)

FY'27

- In-depth Interviews –
Proposed interviewees:
 - Summit Township (Regarding upcoming community engagement, Keith Everett Book and Ashley Van Heest will be presenting JC updates at the Summit Township 05.12.26 Board meeting.)
 - Conglomerate of Townships – (at their meeting)

FY'28

- County Owners Survey – Owners respond by prioritizing a group of suggested strategies that the College could execute.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

BYLAWS CONSIDERATION

The Board considered proposed changes to their Bylaws, most of which were discussed at the 04.30.26 Board Spring Planning Session.

Vice Chairman Heins asked that the Board consider removing the actual agenda of a regular Board meeting from the Bylaws.

This agenda item will be carried forward to the 06.08.26 Board meeting so that the appropriate number of Trustees might be present for the required 6/7 votes to make changes.

MILLAGE CONSIDERATION

CEO Phelan proposed that the Board consider a millage campaign for the November 2026 ballot. For November 2026, the proposal deadline is 4:00P on 08.11.26. The Fall 2026 draft ballot language is below for consideration:

*Community College
Jackson College Millage Restoration Proposal*

This proposal will allow the College to restore its originally authorized charter millage rate of 1.33 mills on all property with the revenue of this proposal to be used for enhancing workforce training and professional trades programs. These funds will not be used for employee wages or employee benefits, and only for educational equipment and related campus facility support.

Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes originally established by election in 1964 which may be assessed against all property within the community college district boundaries of Jackson College, Michigan, be increased by 0.1973 mil (\$0.1973 per \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of 10 years, from 2027 to 2036, inclusive, to provide funds for enhancing workforce training and professional trades programs;. These funds will not be used for employee wages or employee benefits, and only for educational equipment and related campus facility support. If this millage is approved and levied in full in 2026, it is estimated to raise approximately \$1,200,000 (this millage is to restore millage lost as a result of the reductions required by the Michigan Constitution of 1963)?

Trustee Mackey requested a millage promotion plan be developed including Board participation, as well as potentially holding a Special Board meeting toward development of said plan.

Vice Chairman Heins requested that this agenda item be brought back to the 06.08.26 Board meeting.

CEO HEALTHCARE / VEBA CONSIDERATION

The Board considered aspects of the CEO's contract pertaining to the CEO's healthcare and VEBA contributions. Cindy Allen (VP, Student Achievement & College Operations) introduced Mr. Joe Miller of Miller Financial Services, the managing agent of this VEBA vehicle, who discussed the design of the instrument and provided recommendations for a reasonable funding level. If these funds are not used, they revert to the College.

Discussion ensued regarding historical inconsistent funding and tracking of the plan. Trustee Mackey and Vice Chairman Heins requested that a system for tracking the plan be firmly in place with the record keeper of the plan clearly identified.

MOTION BY VICE CHAIRMAN HEINS TO CONTRIBUTE A TOTAL OF \$250,000 OVER THE COURSE OF THREE YEARS TO THE CEO'S RETIREMENT HEALTHCARE SAVINGS PROGRAM; IDENTIFY THE RECORD KEEPER OF THE PROGRAM AS THE VP, STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT & FINANCIAL SERVICES; AND DEVELOP A WRITTEN UPDATE ON THE PLAN TO BE PROVIDED ANNUALLY TO THE BOARD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BOARD'S REVIEW OF THE CEO'S CONTRACT.. TRUSTEES VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE: TRUSTEES HEINS, LAKE, MACKAY, AND PAGE VOTING AYE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

CONSENT / REQUIRED APPROVAL AGENDA

Prior to the meeting, Board members individually reviewed the minutes of the most recent meetings of the Board dated 04.20.26 and 04.30.26, in consideration for placement into the formal record of the Jackson College Board of Trustees.

For their regular reviews, the Board considered their Executive Limitations Policy EL-11 Mission Support & Entrepreneurial Activity, and Board Governance Process Policies GP-03 Board Planning Cycle & Agenda Control and GP-12 Board Linkage with External Organizations, and Board-CEO Delegation Policy BCD-05 CEO Succession to which policy pre-review Trustees (Chairwoman Lake, Vice Chairman Heins, Trustee Thomas) and CEO Phelan recommend edits.

To test the policy itself and their understanding thereof policy BCD-05 CEO Succession, the policy pre-review Trustees shared the President & CEO Succession in Uncertain Times Case Study that the pre-review Trustees used to review BCD-05.

The Board also considered a statement of practice for the Board's succession planning (Presidential Continuity and Succession Upon Retirement, Incapacity, Death, or Other Permanent Separation).

Lastly, the Board assessed CEO Phelan's revised interpretations for Board Executive Limitation policy EL-10 Access to Education.

MOTION BY TRUSTEE PAGE TO:

- **APPROVE THE BOARD MEETING MINUTES DATED 04.20.26 AND 04.30.26;**
- **APPROVE POLICIES EL-11, GP-03, GP-12, AND BCD-05 AS AMENDED;**
- **APPROVE STATEMENT OF PRACTICE "PRESIDENTIAL CONTINUITY AND SUCCESSION UPON RETIREMENT, INCAPACITY, DEATH, OR OTHER PERMANENT SEPARATION" AS AMENDED; AND**
- **ASSESS CEO PHELAN'S INTERPRETATIONS OF POLICY EL-10 AS REASONABLE;**

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

MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE

MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE: EL-05 Asset Protection – Evidence Review: CEO Phelan presented the evidence (i.e., monitoring report) for Policy EL-05 Asset Protection indicating Partial Compliance according to his previously approved interpretations.

In response to the partial compliance noted in the monitoring report for Board policy EL-05 Asset Protection (because only 28% of Trustees completed their Title IX and JC Code of Ethics training during this monitoring period), the Board will be resent the

training links to be completed prior to the 06.08.26 Regular Board meeting, at which the monitoring report will be reassessed for full compliance.

MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE: EL-06 Investments – Evidence Review:
CEO Phelan presented the evidence (i.e., monitoring report) for Policy EL-06 Investments indicating Full Compliance according to his previously approved interpretations.

MOTION BY VICE CHAIRMAN HEINS THAT:

- 1. THE BOARD HAS ASSESSED THE MONITORING REPORT FOR POLICY EL-05 ASSET PROTECTION AND FINDS THAT IT DEMONSTRATES PARTIAL COMPLIANCE WITH REASONABLE INTERPRETATIONS OF THE POLICY, WITH THE EXPECTATION OF FULL COMPLIANCE BY 06.08.26.**
- 2. THE BOARD HAS ASSESSED THE MONITORING REPORT FOR POLICY EL-06 INVESTMENTS AND FINDS THAT IT DEMONSTRATES FULL COMPLIANCE WITH REASONABLE INTERPRETATIONS OF THE POLICY.**

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

MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE: CEO Monitoring Compliance Schedule & Summary:

CEO Phelan provided the monitoring compliance schedule an update on reports presented to the Board over the preceding 12 months with the compliance status noted – (all monitoring reports are fully compliant).

Discussion of the cadence and frequency in which policies are reviewed and monitored will be revisited at the 06.08.26 Regular Board meeting.

INFORMATION REQUESTED BY THE BOARD

College Feature: JC / JAMA Articulation Agreement – Albert Rossner & Eddie Burkhead
The Board welcomed JC Instructor Albert Rossner who outlined the new [articulation agreement](#) between JC and Jackson Area Manufacturers Association (JAMA) that creates a direct pathway for individuals participating in JAMA's advanced manufacturing programs to apply their skills and knowledge toward academic credit at Jackson College.

Trustees and CEO Phelan expressed their deep appreciation for the efforts of Albert Rossner, Eddie Burkhead, and Dr. Benjamin Valdez toward this important relationship with JAMA.

Next Board Meeting Topics

Below are currently anticipated topics:

- Excellence Minutes: TBD
- Schedule / History for Special Audit Consideration

- Bylaws Consideration
- Millage Consideration
- Foundation Membership Consideration
- Policy Review: EL-12 Land Use
- Policy Review: GP-09 Board Code of Conduct
- Evidence Review: EL-03 Planning
- Evidence Review – Part II: EL-05 Asset Protection
- Interpretations Assessment: EL-11 Mission Support & Entrepreneurial Activity
- FY '27 Budget Approval
 - Truth in Budgeting Hearing
 - Consideration of Authorization to Levy
 - Consideration of FY '27 Budget
- Selection of Representatives to the MCCA Board of Directors
- Annual Review of CEO Contract & Retirement Healthcare Savings Program
- Administrative Personnel Practices Manual/Compensation
- Cadence of Policy Review and Monitoring Schedule
- College Feature: Institutional AI and Curriculum Development – Doug Yenor
- Closed Session – Collective Bargaining Negotiations
- 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 04.20.26 and 04.30.26 Board Meeting Self-Assessment Summaries.

MEETING CONTENT REVIEW

Information was appreciated as presented.

ADJOURN

MOTION BY VICE CHAIRMAN HEINS “To adjourn.”

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

Meeting Adjourned at 8:07PM EDT.