

MASSACHUSETTS BAY COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of the May 20, 2025, Board Finance & Administration Committee meeting
Webex Meeting – <https://www.youtube.com/@MassBayCommCollege/streams>

Committee members participating: Matthew Kahn, Chair; Ilissa Povich, Ex-officio; Tobey Choate, Trustee; Diane Schmalensee, Trustee.
Trustee Prado was unable to attend.

Staff members participating: David Podell, President; Marcus Edward, Vice President for Finance & Administration; Steve Baccari, Controller; Josh Cheney, Associate Dean of Students; Sheila Donlon, Director of Student Accounts; Dustin Gerstenfield, Director of Administrative Computing; Courtney Jackson, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost; Henry Lopez, Director of End User Services; Deborah Grady, Executive Assistant for Finance & Administration.

Call to Order and Introductions

Committee Chair Matthew Kahn called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (*Item 1*).

The Chair asked for the review of the prior committee meeting minutes and called for a motion.

MOTION: Trustee Choate made the motion to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2025, Board of Trustees' Finance & Administration Committee meeting as presented. Trustee Povich seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ROLL CALL:

Matthew Kahn YES; Tobey Choate YES; Ilissa Povich YES; Diane Schmalensee YES.

FINANCE ITEMS

Vice President Marcus Edward presented the Finance Items to the Committee.

FY2025 Budget vs. Actual Comparison Report (*Item 2*)

The March budget-to-actual report shows a favorable variance of approximately \$1,967,000. The variance is due to better performance on revenue and expenses compared to the projected budget.

Revenue

The positive revenue variance of \$1.1M is driven mostly by the positive variance in tuition & fees line.

Vice President Edward reported that the College has budgeted for a 16% increase in enrollment. The enrollments for the fall, spring, and summer sessions have increased by 16.6%, 19.6%, and 30%, respectively.

Expenses

Expense shows a favorable variance of \$878K.

Chair Kahn called for a motion.

MOTION: Trustee Povich made the motion to accept the FY2025 Budget vs. Actual Report and recommend approval to the Full Board. Trustee Schmalensee seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ROLL CALL:

Matthew Kahn YES; Tobey Choate YES; Ilissa Povich YES; Diane Schmalensee YES.

Investments, Cash, & Student Receivables Summary *(Item 3)*

- The investment balance at the end of March was \$29M. Investment balance at the end of April was \$29.2M
- Cash – end of March the balance was \$7.8M. This reflects a month over month decrease of \$226K. At the end of April, the balance was \$8.9M
- Student receivables at the end of March was \$4.3M. Receivables increased by \$541K over the prior month driven by summer enrollment which is up 30%. Student receivables at the end of April were \$5.3M.

Chairman Kahn requested the balance for April for each of the reports.

Cash & Investment Comparison by Month *(Item 4)*

A chart showing the monthly cash balances over last 5 years was provided to the Committee. Ahead of the full board meeting, the chart will be updated to include the April figures.

KITCHEN RENOVATION UPDATES *(Item 5)*

Vice President Edward reported that through March 31 the College spent \$174K on the design phase of the kitchen project. The project is currently out for bid, with bids due May 28. The contract is scheduled to be awarded during the week of June 2. Construction is anticipated to begin on June 15, and the expected completion date is January 15. The kitchen should be open for Spring, 2026.

LOCAL FUND GUIDELINES *(Item 6)*

The Local Fund Guidelines dictate college expenses that are not related to state appropriations, grants, or union contracts. Essentially, it dictates funds raised from tuition and fees, investment revenue, interest earned, and contract revenue from business operations. The guidelines are reviewed every five years and changes are sent to the Board of Trustees to approve. The changes in this year's version were mostly clarifying criteria for expenses and reimbursements and emphasizing the need for a purchase order before a purchase, based on operational insights over the last five years. There were no substantial changes made from the last iteration. It was noted that this is an internal document, and that our practices may be modestly different for other colleges whose practices may be structured differently.

MOTION: Trustee Povich made the motion to accept the 2025 Local Fund Guidelines and recommend approval to the Full Board. Trustee Choate seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ROLL CALL:

Matthew Kahn YES; Tobey Choate YES; Ilissa Povich YES; Diane Schmalensee YES.

A question was raised regarding the status of the soccer field project. President Podell reported that the report received to standardize the soccer field came with a price tag of \$11M. It was determined that a better option would be to try to combine the soccer field project with the plan for the Health & Wellness Center project.

PERSONNEL ITEMS

Tenure Recommendations: *(Item 7)*

Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Courtney Jackson Courtney Jackson explained the tenure process and reported that four individuals are up for tenure. Upon the recommendation of the Unit Personnel Practices, Committee, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, and the President, the following employees are recommended to the Board for approval.

- Karen Akukwe, Coordinator of Transfer Affairs & Articulation
- Scott Fitzgerald, Assistant Professor of Automotive Technology
- Tom Niemi, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Business
- Tracey Vincent, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Engineering

MOTION: Trustee Povich made the motion to accept the tenure recommendations and recommend approval to the Full Board. Trustee Schmalensee seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ROLL CALL:

Matthew Kahn YES; Tobey Choate YES; Ilissa Povich YES; Diane Schmalensee YES.

Tobey Choate left the meeting.

Sabbatical Requests: *(Item 8)*

Vice President Jackson presented two sabbatical requests.

The first sabbatical request was for Professor Jill Silos who is currently working with renowned painter, sculptor, and educator Roberta Weir on a book about her creative partnership with musician and countercultural leader Jerry Garcia from 1970-1994. The sabbatical would result in the completion of a book that illuminates the multiple ways that a cultural leader of the 1960s expressed his artistic impulses and would serve Professor Silos' larger intellectual project of validating the 1960s counterculture as a cultural and political force that shaped modern American life.

MOTION: Trustee Povich made the motion to accept the Sabbatical Requests: for Jill Silos and recommend approval to the Full Board. Trustee Schmalensee seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ROLL CALL:

Matthew Kahn YES; Ilissa Povich YES; Diane Schmalensee YES.

The second sabbatical request was for Professor Jeanie Tietjen to support the growth of the Institute for Trauma, Adversity, and Resilience in Higher Education. Professor Tietjen's previous sabbatical (a full-year/half-teaching load model), together with the Title III resources, moved projects forward in all three major domains of the College's work as leaders in Trauma-Informed Higher Education (TIHE). The sabbatical request for Spring 2026 proposes further development in all three domains of the Institute's work: Best Practices at MassBay; Serving as a resource to higher education and especially community colleges, and Research and Writing.

MOTION: Trustee Povich made the motion to accept the Sabbatical Requests: for Jeannie Tietjen and recommend approval to the Full Board. Trustee Schmalensee seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ROLL CALL:

Matthew Kahn YES; Ilissa Povich YES; Diane Schmalensee YES.

Personnel Actions Report: *(Item 9)*

Vice President Edward presented the reports to the Committee, noting nine **new employees**,

- Risk Compliance Analyst
- Associate Director of Institutional Research
- Institutional Security Officer
- Administrative Assistant in the Facilities Office
- Payroll Director
- Recruitment Assistant in the Office of Human Resources and Payroll
- Assistant Coordinator of Instruction Technology
- Two Academic and Transfer Counselors

Recruitment Report: *(Item 10)*

Vice President Edward presented the recruitment report which shows 19 open positions (12 staff, 7 faculty).

President's Updates:

President Podell noted that the Union has purchased billboards to highlight their low salaries and the challenges they face due to increasing enrollment. A proposal to conduct a study on community college faculty salaries is included in the Senate Budget and is supported by the Senate President.

President Podell went on to note that Summer enrollment is up 30% FTE - 18% headcount. Fall enrollment is up 47% in FTE - 50% in headcount, but these numbers will change as the summer progresses.

The President reported that the College recently experienced a case of financial aid fraud. One individual, posing as multiple students, enrolled in online courses and collected financial aid under each identity. The scheme was uncovered when two of the identities were found to be using the same bank account. As a result, the College suffered a direct loss of approximately \$80,000 and is required to repay \$130,000 to the state and federal government. The fraud has been reported to the police and the Inspector General. During a subsequent discussion, it was suggested that although the perpetrator used only online banks, those banks might bear some liability.

Chair Kahn inquired whether Prime Buchholz would be present at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Trustee Povich moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Trustee Schmalensee.

ROLL CALL:

Matthew Kahn YES; Ilissa Povich YES; Diane Schmalensee YES.

Chair Kahn adjourned the meeting at 8:44 a.m.

 

Matthew Kahn

Date

Committee Chair

Board of Trustees

 6/27/2025

David Podell

Date

President

Massachusetts Bay Community College