

Attendance:

Trustees Present: Sonia Dinnall, Julius Dixon, Charlie Epstein, Yolanda Johnson, Todd McGee, Patty Samra, Chair Vanessa Smith, Aaron Vega, and Ivonne Vidal.

Trustees Absent: Nayroby Rosa

Guests Present: Angela O. Cardenas, Adam Thrasher, Esq., and Dr. George Timmons

Call to Order: Chair Smith welcomed Trustees present and waited an additional few minutes after the scheduled start time of the meeting to allow sufficient time for members of the public to join. No members of the public joined the meeting. At 5:36 p.m. Chair Smith called the meeting to order.

Roll Call Vote

YES: Sonia Dinnall, Julius Dixon, Charlie Epstein, Yolanda Johnson, Todd McGee, Patty Samra, Chair Vanessa Smith, Aaron Vega and Ivonne Vidal.

Chair Smith noted that at its regularly scheduled meeting on March 24, 2026, the Board voted to enter into an executive session. Because the Board did not return to regular session after that executive session, she took the opportunity to report out in this first open session since that meeting the Board's determinations in executive session, both of which were related to the minutes of the executive session held on December 8, 2025. First, the Board reviewed and approved the minutes from the December 8, 2025, executive session. Second, the Board determined that continued non-disclosure is warranted and publication of the minutes would defeat the lawful purpose of the executive sessions that were held pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30(A), Section 21(a)(1).

Chair Smith then turned to the purpose for this special meeting. She said that the Board has received two complaints alleging violations of the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law related to Board of Trustees meetings held on December 8, 2025, and March 24, 2026, and that consistent with the process outlined in the Open Meeting Law, each Trustee had been provided with a copy of those complaints. Chair Smith said that in general the complaints relate to the Board's process for managing executive sessions held during these two meetings. Before turning to the specifics of the complaints, Chair Smith introduced Adam Thrasher, Esq., Associate General Counsel for the Massachusetts Community Colleges, to provide a brief explanation of the requirements of the Open Meeting Law related to the complaint topic.

Mr. Thrasher provided a brief explanation of the requirements of the Law related to the complaint topic.

Chair Smith then turned the Board's attention to review of the two Open Meeting Law complaints. She proposed that in doing so, the Board limit its discussion to the procedural aspects of the Board's two executive sessions – and not the substance of what was discussed – in order to keep confidential the information that was discussed.

Chair Smith said that the Board entered executive session on December 8, 2025 to discuss complaints or charges brought against a public officer, employee, staff member, or individual consistent with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(1). She said that the March 19, 2026 Open Meeting Law Complaint alleged that this executive session did not comply with the Open Meeting Law because: (1) the meeting notice did not specify with enough clarity what would be discussed; (2) the discussion included topics outside the stated purpose of the executive session; and (3) the individuals who were subject to the complaints or charges did not receive 48 hours' notice that the complaints or charges would be discussed.

The complaint also seeks clarification as to whether the executive session minutes from December 8, 2025, have been reviewed and, if so, whether they are able to be disclosed. As noted at the beginning of the meeting, those minutes have been reviewed and approved, and the Board determined that their continued non-disclosure was warranted.

Chair Smith opened the floor for questions or discussion concerning the March 19 complaint. A brief discussion ensued, with all questions being asked and answered.

Chair Smith then turned to the second complaint, which was dated March 24, 2026, and said that this complaint alleged that it was inappropriate for the Board to meet in executive session on March 24, 2026 to review the executive session minutes from December 8, 2025. She opened the floor for questions or discussion concerning the March 24 complaint. There were no questions or discussion.

Chair Smith said that under the Open Meeting Law, there must be a written response to the complaints on behalf of the College and the Board. It is permissible to delegate the preparation of that response, and Chair Smith recommended that the Board delegate that responsibility to the College's General Counsel.

A motion was made and seconded to delegate to the College's General Counsel the responsibility to respond to the complaints discussed at this meeting.

Roll Call Vote

YES: Sonia Dinnall, Julius Dixon, Yolanda Johnson, Todd McGee, Patty Samra, Chair Vanessa Smith, Aaron Vega and Ivonne Vidal.

Chair Smith said that although the appropriate processes were followed concerning the executive sessions on December 9, 2025, and March 24, 2026, it was nevertheless advisable for the Board to consider whether any actions were appropriate to mitigate the risk of future claims of violations of the Open Meeting Law. Discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Trustee Julius Dixon and seconded by Trustee Patty Samra that the Board pursue training on the Open Meeting Law.

Trustee Vega proposed a friendly amendment to pursue training for the Board training to include open Meeting Law, ethics, and other training like conflict of interest and fiduciary duties to college.

A motion was made by Aaron Vega and seconded by Julius Dixon.

Roll Call Vote for the Board to pursue Open Meeting Law training

YES: Sonia Dinnall, Julius Dixon, Yolanda Johnson, Todd McGee, Patty Samra, Chair Vanessa Smith, Aaron Vega, and Ivonne Vidal.

A motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Patty Samra and seconded by Trustee Julius Dixon.

Roll Call Vote on the motion to adjourn the meeting:

YES: Sonia Dinnall, Julius Dixon, Yolanda Johnson, Todd McGee, Patty Samra, Chair Vanessa Smith, Aaron Vega and Ivonne Vidal.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Angela O. Cardenas
Board Professional, Board of Trustees

Approved: Vanessa L. Smith
Chair, Board of Trustees

Approved: Ivonne Vidal
Secretary, Vice Chair, Board of Trustees