

## Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Holyoke Community College

Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 8:00 AM to Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 9:30 AM EST Via Zoom

### Attendance

**Trustees Remote:** Sonia Dinall, Julius Dixon, Charles Epstein (Trustee Epstein joined at 8:03 a.m.), Trustee McGee, Trustee Rosa, Trustee Rosa, Trustee Samra, Trustee Vidal, Trustee Chair Smith

**Trustees Absent:** Trustee Johnson

**In-Person Guests:** N/A, Remote meeting due to inclement weather conditions

**Remote Guests:** Susan Bacchiocchi, Alan Bloomgarden, Kevin Booker, Karyn Briand, Saul Caban, Angela Cardenas, Sintique Carrillo, Linda Chavers, Julissa Colon, Vannah Dhankher, Mayra Diaz, Kate Douglas, Margaret Downing, President George Timmons, Stacy Graves, Jeffrey Hadyen, Andrea Hojnacki, Mark Hudgik, Liza Hurley, Jane Johnson Vottero, Jennifer Kerr, Johanna Lebron, Lauren Leclair, Jane Lernere, Jason Maurice, Irm Medina, Anne Morales Medina, Julie Phillips, Jessica Putnam, Will Reyes-Cubides, Kris Ricker Choleva, Narayan Sampath, Amanda Sbriscia, JulieAnn Schortmann, Momina Sims, Ben Snyder, Carole Sterritt, Kim Straceski, Renee Tastad, Rebecca Townsend, Marlowe Washington and Chris Yurko

### **MEETING**

- I. Call to Order – Chair Smith called the 445th Meeting of the Holyoke Community College Board of Trustees to order at 8:00 a.m.
- II. Roll Call  
**Roll Call Vote:** 8:01 a.m.  
YES: Sonia Dinnall, Julius Dixon, Todd McGee, Nayroby Rosa, Chair Vanessa Smith, Ivonne Vidal.
- III. Consent Agenda
  - A. Consideration of the Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting of February 24, 2026.
  - B. Report of Personnel Actions dated February 24, 2026. *(See Attached)*
  - C. To empower the President of the College to approve all personnel actions prior to the next meeting.**Roll Call Vote** for Consent Agenda: 8:02 a.m.  
A motion was made by Trustee Rosa and seconded by Trustee Dixon to accept the Consent Agenda as presented.  
**YES:** Sonia Dinnall, Julius Dixon, Todd McGee, Nayroby Rosa, Chair Vanessa Smith, Ivonne Vidal.  
**ABSTAIN:** Patricia Samra
- IV. Trustee Spotlight - Welcome Trustee Samra - Trustee Samra provided details on her professional experience and background. All Trustees present introduced themselves and welcomed Trustee Samra.
- V. Committee Reports:

#### **A. Audit & Finance Committee**

Trustee Epstein and Narayan Sampath met with Coriant last week to discuss the portfolio allocation. The next Committee Meeting is scheduled for March 19, 2026, where there will be a presentation of the fees for the next academic year. A presentation on student fees will be presented and approval sought at the March 24th BOT meeting. Vice President Sampath introduced HCC's new Comptroller, Jessica Putnam.

#### **B. By-Laws and Governance Committee**

The by-laws and governance committee continues to work on finalizing the onboarding packet for new Trustees. The committee drafted a Trustee Compact, which is a clear articulation of a board member's roles and responsibilities. The committee is finalizing the agenda for the upcoming half-day retreat on March 7, 2026.

#### **C. Foundation Board Update**

Chair Smith reported that the HCC Foundation Board of Directors will meet on March 10, 2026. She shared that the HCC Drive to Change Lives will take place on March 4th and encouraged all Trustees to participate, noting that our goal is to have 100% Trustee participation. Scholarship season is open, with students currently applying. Julie Phillips of IA reported that the annual scholarship reception is May 14, 2026. Anyone interested in being a scholarship reviewer should email [scholarhsip@hcc.edu](mailto:scholarhsip@hcc.edu).

### **VI. Report of Chair Smith**

Chair Smith reported that she and Trustee Rosa attended the Civic Discourse Regional Hub Inaugural meeting, which was a follow-up to a statewide convening that occurred in October. The meeting was well attended, with representatives from the Department of Higher Education and from HCC and other institutions of higher education in Western Massachusetts. The group is looking to find ways to enhance civic discourse on campus, which involves engaging students in civic inquiry and in the democratic process. Chair Smith gave a shout-out to Dr. Rebecca Townsend, who has been instrumental in advancing these efforts state-wide.

Chair Smith reported that she, Trustee Yolanda Johnson, Chief of Operations Angela Cardenas, and President George Timmons went to the ACCT National Legislative Summit in Washington, DC, February 8-12. There were general education sessions, where the higher education landscape and federal funding process were discussed, as well as meetings on Capitol Hill with our elected representatives. It was a great opportunity to convene with community college colleagues from Massachusetts and across the country. Following advocacy preparation meetings with Nate Mackinnon from MACC, the group met with Congressman Richie Neal and an aide from Senator Elizabeth Warren's Office. We are fortunate to have strong support from our legislative delegation.

Dr. Timmons and Chair Smith met with Susan Goldsmith, Chair of the HCC Foundation, and Dr. Amanda Sbriscia in the first of what will become regular "Quartet Meeting" between College and Foundation leaders. The primary goal of these meetings is to develop a strong working relationship and to ensure that the Foundation's activities in support of the College are aligned with the College's strategic plan.

### **VII. President's Report**

A. Dr. Timmons began his report by noting that the HCC Women's basketball team will be playing in the division semifinal game on Friday, February 27, 2026 5:30 p.m. at the Bartley Center. He provided a brief update on the ACCT legislative summit, where he and others from HCC met with

Richie Neal and a member of Elizabeth Warren's staff and advocated for specific things that are germane to community colleges, including elimination of taxation of the Pell Grants and modifying the American Opportunity Tax Credit. Dr. Timmons plans to continue to engage with our representatives and our congressional members to advocate on these and other issues. Last month, the CAI received a 5-year accreditation form the American Culinary Federation. He gave a shout-out and congratulations to Tracy Carter, Chair of the CAI program. Academic and Student Affairs has completed their search, and Dr. Michale Jarvin will be joining HCC on July 1st as our Dean for the Division of Business, Science, Technology and Mathematics. The Mathematics Department will be welcoming Dr. Michael Muller in the fall, and the Psychology Department will welcome Allison Lobo.

On January 30th, HCC hosted a HCC night at the Thunderbirds game, over 50 alumni in attendance, along with faculty and staff. Dr. Timmons extended kudos to the IA team for their efforts. On February 10th, in support of Strategic Plan 3.0, the College hosted an employee engagement event. Thank you to the Strategic Planning Steering Committee for organizing the event. It was very well attended with productive conversation.

On February 18th HCC hosted an inspired giving event at CAI where we celebrated the transformative power of strategic investment in education and community. We cohosted the event with NEPM and were joined by two alumni, Gina Berry, an estate planning and elder law attorney at Bacon Wilson, and Elizabeth Roman from NEPM. Another shout out to the IA for their efforts on this event.

We want to thank Amanda Sbriscia for her years of service to HCC as both the Vice President for Institutional Advancement and the Executive Director of Foundation; her time here has brought tremendous growth and we wish her much success as she moves to her next endeavor. Dr. Timmons also recognized two of our colleagues who received awards; Dr. Vanessa Martinez, who has been recognized for her work with students to collect oral histories of Holyoke citizens during the pandemic, and Murad Majad, who was honored this year as Keeper of the Dream Award recipient in 2026 from Westfield State University for his work as family Liaison Coordinator for Westfield Public Schools, which is closely tied to his work as an HCC ESOL Advisor.

- B. Presentation: Assistant Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Analytics. Discussed the four-year results of our current strategic plan and provided updates on spring enrollment numbers.

#### VIII. Board Engagement Opportunities

HCC Day of Giving – March 4, 2026

BOT Special Session – March 7, 2026

St. Patrick's Day breakfast – March 18, 2026

Taste of Gratitude Luncheon – April 22, 2026

#### IX. Adjournment

##### **Roll Call Vote for Adjournment**

A motion was made by Nayroby Rosa and seconded by Charles Epstein to adjourn the 445th meeting of the Holyoke Community College Board of Trustees at 9:43 am.

**YES:** Sonia Dinnall, Julius Dixon, Todd McGee, Nayroby Rosa, Chair Vanessa Smith, Patricia Samra, Ivonne Vidal

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela O. Cardenas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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

