

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Holyoke Community College

Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 8:00 AM to March 24, 2026 at 9:30 AM EST hybrid

Attendance

Trustees Present: Trustee Julius Dixon, Trustee Rosa, Trustee Samra, Trustee Vega, Chair Smith, Trustee Vidal (joined the meeting at 8:05 a.m.)

Trustee Absent: Trustee Dinall

Trustees Remote: Trustee Epstein, Trustee McGee, Trustee Johnson

In-Person Guests: Vanessa Martinez, Irma Medina, Kris Ricker Choleva, Jane Lerner, Narayan Sampath, Will Reyes-Cubides, Carlos Garcia, Kate Douglas, Jason Maurice, Rebecca Townsend, Chris Yurko, Jessica Putnam, Sara Avery, Marlowe Washington, Lisa Mahon, Melissa Weiss, Renee Tastad, Corey Booker, Dan Campbell, Christien Janik, Debra O'Connor

Remote Guests: Adina Gianelli, Daniel Ayers, Aimee Funk, Alan Bloomgarden, Alison Wrobel, Anna Marie Hernandez, Anne Moralis-Medina, Jane Johnson Vettero, Johanna Lebron, Julissa Colon, Lauren Leclair, Pesha Black, Liza Hurley, Margaret Downing, Raul Gutton, Saul Caban, Sean Sullivan, Shakira Acoff, Stacy Graves, Susan Baccsan Bacchicchi, Todd Wonder, Veena Dhanker, Walt Pfau

MEETING

- I. Call to Order – Chair Smith called the 446th Meeting of the Holyoke Community College Board of Trustees to order at 8:01 a.m.
- II. Roll Call
Roll Call Vote: 8:01 a.m.
YES: Trustee Dixon, Trustee Epstein, Trustee Johnson, Trustee McGee, Trustee Rosa, Trustee Samra, Trustee Vega, and Chair Smith.
- III. Consent Agenda
 - A. Consideration of the Minutes of the Board of Trustees Special Meeting of December 8, 2024.

A motion was made by Trustee Dixon and seconded by Trustee Rosa to accept the Minutes of the December 8, 2025 Special Meeting as presented.
Roll Call Vote for Minutes of December 8, 2025 Special Meeting at 8:03 a.m.
YES: Trustee Dixon, Trustee Epstein, Trustee Johnson, Trustee McGee, Trustee Rosa, and Chair Smith.
ABSTAIN: Trustee Samra and Trustee Vega
 - B. Consideration of the Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting of February 24, 2026.
 - C. Report of Personnel Actions dated February 24, 2026. (See Attached)
 - D. To empower the President of the College to approve all personnel actions prior to the next meeting.

A motion was made by Trustee Samra and seconded by Trustee Dixon to accept the remainder of the Consent Agenda as presented.

Roll Call Vote for remainder of the Consent Agenda at 8:04 a.m.

YES: Trustee Dixon, Trustee Epstein, Trustee Johnson, Trustee McGee, Trustee Rosa, Trustee Samra, Trustee Vega, and Chair Smith.

IV. Trustee Spotlight - Welcome Trustee Aaron Vega - Trustee Vega provided details on his professional experience and background. Trustees present introduced themselves and welcomed Trustee Vega.

V. Committee Reports:

A. **Audit & Finance Committee**

Daniel Ayers of Ecampus presented information on a proposal for an “all access” bookstore. A second presentation on student fees was provided by Vice President Narayan Sampath.

A motion was made by Trustee Vidal and seconded by Trustee Rosa to approve the proposed increase in student fees as presented.

Roll Call Vote to approve FY27 Student Fees at 8:52 a.m.

YES: Trustee Dixon, Trustee Epstein, Trustee Johnson, Trustee McGee, Trustee Rosa, Trustee Samra, Trustee Vega, Trustee Vidal, and Chair Smith.

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

Vice Chair Ivonne Vidal reported on the Special Meeting held on March 7, 2025, which was essentially a half-day governance retreat, and the various subjects covered, including discussions about the proposed Trustee Compact and a revamping of the Board’s committee structure to align with the pillars of the College’s new strategic plan. A discussion continued about the Trustee Compact and its content, and Chair Smith called for a vote to approve the Trustee Compact as presented.

A motion was made by Trustee Dixon and seconded by Trustee Vidal to approve the Trustee Compact as presented.

Roll Call Vote to approve the Trustee Compact at 8:56 a.m.

YES: Trustee Dixon, Trustee Epstein, Trustee Johnson, Trustee McGee, Trustee Rosa, Trustee Samra, Trustee Vega, Trustee Vidal, and Chair Smith.

C. **Foundation Board Update**

Chair Smith reported that the HCC Foundation Board of Directors met on February 10, 2026. She provided an update on the success of the HCC Drive to Change Lives that took place on March 4; she said that over 450 donors contributed to this year’s campaign, and we passed \$1 million dollars in total support raised for our students since 2021. The Scholarship season is underway and applications are being reviewed. April 22 is the Taste of Gratitude Luncheon at CAI and May 14 is the scholarship reception on campus.

VI. Report of Chair Smith

Chair Smith thanked Trustees for their attendance at the very successful and productive March 7 special meeting. She noted that along with several members of the HCC team, she attended the St. Patrick’s Day breakfast held recently at the Log Cabin. She and Trustee Rosa are working with Dr. Veena Dhanker and Kris Ricker Choleva to retrieve better focused data to bring to use by the Board. Chair

Smith recognized Dr. Vanessa Martinez as an award recipient for her teaching and work in the community.

President's Report

- A. Dr. Timmons began his report by asking for a round of applause for Women's History Month and noted some events that took place around the college in celebration of the month. President Timmons reported on the progress of the Strategic Plan 3.0 and commended the Vice Presidents for leading the cross-cutting team efforts. President Timmons reported he is hosting luncheons in collaboration with HCC Foundation to build partnerships by engaging with friends of HCC. Dr. Timmons noted collaboration with Senator Gomez and Senator Velis' Office to secure a \$20 million earmark for deferred maintenance and capital projects. He noted HCC is close to finding a new Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs through the search process and hopes to make an announcement soon. Dr. Timmons congratulated Dr. Martinez on her award.
- B. Presentation: Assistant Vice President, Renee Tastad; Lisa Mahon, English Professor; Melissa Weise, Sociology Adjunct Professor, Dr. Vanessa Martinez, Community Based Learning Coordinator and Irma Medina, Integrated Learning Director discussed the Menstrual Equity project, which places menstrual products in campus bathrooms.

VII. Board Engagement Opportunities (See attached)

VIII. Executive Session

A motion was made by Trustee Dixon and seconded by Trustee Samra “to enter Executive Session pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(1) to discuss complaints or charges brought against a public officer, employee, staff member, or individual, and to include review and approval of executive session minutes of December 8, 2025, to determine if the provisions of this subsection warrant continued non-disclosure.”

Roll Call Vote to enter executive session at 9:34 a.m.

YES: Trustee Dixon, Trustee Johnson, Trustee McGee, Trustee Rosa, Trustee Samra, Trustee Vega and Chair Smith

Chair Smith indicated that the Board would not return to open session at the conclusion of the executive session, and the Board entered executive session at 9:34 a.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