

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
BALTIMORE CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Open Session Minutes | May 19, 2021 (Virtual Zoom Meeting)

Board Members Present: Chairman Kurt L. Schmoke, Esq., Mr. Jason Perkins-Cohen, Mr. J.C. Weiss, III, Dr. Rachel Pfeifer, Ms. Leonor Tannhauser Blum, Dr. John Brothers, LPD., Mr. John D. Lewis, Ms. Lelia F. Parker, Esq., Mr. Oluwafemi S. Toriola, Student Member

Also Present: Dr. Debra L. McCurdy, President and Guests: Dr. Richard Keeling, Keeling & Associates, Dr. Alex Vasquez, Keeling & Associates, and Mr. Eric Narburgh, Keeling & Associates

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Schmoke called the Open Session Board Meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

A. Adoption of the May 19, 2021 Agenda

ACTION: Chairman Schmoke requested a motion to adopt the May 19, 2021 Meeting Agenda. Trustee J.C. Weiss motioned for the adoption of the May 19, 2021 Agenda and Trustee Leonor Tannhauser Blum seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

BOARD ACTIONS / CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Schmoke requested a motion to accept the consent agenda.

ACTION: Chairman Schmoke requested a motion to approve the Board Actions / Consent Agenda. Trustee Mr. Jason Perkins-Cohen motioned for approval of the Board Actions / Consent Agenda, and it was seconded by Trustee Weiss. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

PRESENTATIONS

A. Keeling & Associates Strategic Plan Overview and Discussion

President McCurdy introduced Dr. Richard P. Keeling, principal of Keeling & Associates (K&A). Dr. Keeling introduced his team and indicated they would be working collaboratively with Dr. McCurdy and Vice President Burrell to oversee the strategic planning process that will guide the College over the next 5 years. Other K&L team members present were Dr. Alex Vasquez, Mr. Eric Narburgh and Rehshetta Wells.

Dr. Keeling described the company capabilities as well as stated their recent work with Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) to complete their strategic plan. Additionally, each K&A team member shared their backgrounds.

Eric Narburgh described the planning process, including recent conversations with the select BCCC community – faculty and staff. He also stated there will be upcoming sessions with a wider range of faculty, staff and students. Mr. Narburgh ultimately described the planning outcomes including tactics, action steps, timelines and persons who would be accountable.

Dr. Keeling shared the legislative mandates as part of the context for the basis of the planning process. He also discussed the pandemic as an element in the planning process, and what will be post-pandemic shifts

in operational and infrastructure changes for the College. He further stated there were very robust conversations with the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs divisions.

Dr. Alex Vasquez led the Trustees discussion guided by a series of questions around the College's strengths, opportunities, challenges and future desires.

Trustee Perkins-Cohen stated the College's focus on workforce development was critical and that the College has a unique advantage in the workforce development space. As the "big kid on the block" the College has the potential to be the preeminent trainer for the City, if not for the State of Maryland. He stated he hoped the College will step into this role, lean into it and become a leader in workforce training. He further stated, the City wants the College to assume this role. Trustee Perkins-Cohen stated that historically it had not been prioritized and the City needs to help the College step up to fully assume the role.

Trustee Pfeifer stated from her unique perspective as a Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) administrator, she sees the role of the College as a place to prepare students for careers. She stated the College is a place where students can get both a job and a career focus through a two-year degree. She stated a large section of students in the City want to go to college, yet at least half of those who desire a college degree are actually enrolling and even less complete their degree. She noted students want to work and have the option to get a sustainable job to support their families. Further, she stated the BCPSS students perceive the College as the 13th grade, which results in them taking the college for granted. She also said some students have negative experiences. She wants BCCC to be seen as the next step in their journey.

Trustee Lewis stated the College is an asset and must become the "go to" institution in Baltimore in order for the City to become all it can be.

Trustee Brothers stated he believes community college, and BCCC specifically, is the greatest opportunity for anyone to go where they want to go. He stated the College has so much unrealized potential and he wants the College to assume the next level. He believes the College should take a regional approach.

Trustee Bloom stated she believed that while workforce development is essential, she also sees BCCC as a place to prepare students to transfer to a 4-yr institution. She believes the College must do a better job of preparing students to transfer to 4-yr colleges and universities. She stated she does not believe BCCC is adequately preparing students to transfer to state institutions such as Towson or the University of Maryland.

Trustee Weiss stated, as a graduate of BCCC, that the College does provide students with the foundation needed to transfer to four-year institutions. He also said he agrees with Trustee Brothers regarding the regional approach.

Trustee Toriola stated he believes the College is preparing students to transfer to four-year institutions. He believes there should be a strong internship component to ensure students are prepared for work life. He further stated there should be strong partnerships with companies to have internship opportunities for students. He believes that if students feel safe on Campus, this will help students choosing BCCC as their first choice.

Chairman Schmoke stated he believed the College's greatest asset is President. McCurdy. He stated one of the biggest problems the College faced was leadership turnover and the appearance of a chaotic environment. He stated he sees the president as having the experience to lead along with her

cabinet. He stated as the president's profile is elevated, the overall image of the College will also be elevated. He also states the College has a great deal of history to overcome. He stated he sees how the College is rebuilding its reputation. He believes the College must meet the legislative mandates and ensure the legislature is aware of the progress. He further stated the need to keep Dr. McCurdy in her position for longevity in leadership.

Dr. Vasquez followed up on comments about unrealized infrastructure, unrealized potential and what no longer holds true for the College.

Trustee Blum indicated she believed the College was serving its West Baltimore constituents and there is great opportunity to serve East Baltimore. She stated there is potential to expand the infrastructure to East Baltimore.

Trustee Pfeifer stated she believes there are faculty who go above and beyond to support students and that those faculty need to be recognized.

Dr. Vasquez turned the discussion to the challenges faced by the College, such as relevance and programs.

Trustee Pfeifer responded by talking about the barriers student face during the enrollment process which may hinder their overall success. She stated some of the challenges student face are the financial aid process, unsupportive adults, and negative experiences. She stated it is important to share externally how these fundamental processes have improved.

Trustee Brothers spoke about the improvement with the relationship between the College and Annapolis and BCPSS. He stated historically, the College's reputation has not been strong and, that the philanthropic and corporate communities need consistent reinforcement that the College is on firm ground. He stated the College can work on establishing a relationship with the corporate sector.

Chairman Schmoke stated that, in the past, the reputation and face of the College rested with the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, not the President. He stated this is a work in progress and that lot of progress is being made in ensuring the President is the primary face of the institution.

Dr. Vasquez followed up with the discussion topic of what are the aspirational ideas for the College.

Trustee Lewis stated the education landscape is very competitive environment. However, he believes there is great opportunity, because there are no geographic boundaries.

Trustee Weiss stated there are many challenges, especially the West/East side locations. He stated the College is seen as a West Baltimore institution.

Trustee Blum stated that, in part, it is the City's transportation that creates the barrier to the East and West sides.

Trustee Pfeifer stated the College needs more visibility for the East Baltimore location.

Trustee Brothers stated the College needs to take advantage of online learning and what opportunities this opened as a result of the pandemic. He also stated the College should build relationships between the four-year schools as well as companies to create learning experiences for students.

Trustee Pfeifer stated the College created a pipeline between the University of Baltimore and should ensure the alignment with curriculum.

Chairman Schmoke stated the College should increase its marketing around showcasing student outcomes post-graduation.

Trustee Brothers stated the College should explore what other area community colleges are doing and determine the BCCC niche.

Chairman Schmoke mentioned during the strategic planning process, consideration should be given to reexamining the relationship between the College and the City. The Mayors Scholars Program was a step in the direction to make the Mayor a champion of the College, similar to the other county executives who champion their respective institutions.

Dr. McCurdy stated the College is making headway with the Mayor and has a good relationship with President of the City Council. She also stated it is a national issue where community colleges are seen as the 13th grade. She shared that nationally community colleges are enrolling 51% of the students in higher education institutions, yet community colleges have not reaped comparable financial support and visibility. She stated she looks for the Board to continue to state the value of BCCC throughout their networks.

Trustee Pfeifer stated the broader community needs to affirm the strengths showcased by BCCC.

Trustee Brothers stated that from his foundation experience, he struggles on how to sell the College to funders/donors. He noted there are lots of positive stories from faculty and alumni and the College needs to tell these stories.

Trustee Pfeifer suggested the creation of unified and shared documents to be used across the College and BCPS to highlight articulation agreements and careers.

Chairman Schmoke asked when K&L will provide an update to the Board? K&L responded they will return and share the data/information gathered as well as follow up with the Board with a summary session.

Trustee Weiss stated it will be nice to have the school become the school of choice for not only students but also employers and funders.

Trustee Brothers stated he would like to see the progress of a student from a local high school through the enrollment process, matriculation, graduation and employment.

Trustee Toriola stated he believes the College is living up to their mission statement but more work needs to be done and more progress shown.

Chairman Schmoke said the College has new leadership and no longer has a reputation of chaotic leadership.

Trustee Pfeifer stated she no longer wants to see families and counselors push students away from attending the College.

Dr. McCurdy extended thanks to the Trustees for their constructive comments. She stated she would set aside time with the Chair to review the discussions.

Chairman Schmoke also extended his thanks Dr. Keeling and his associates.

ACTION: Chairman Schmoke stated that rather than going through the individual Cabinet reports, a note should be made in the recording Minutes that the Board of Trustees has reviewed the reports. All Trustees agreed.

ACTION: Chairman Schmoke requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Brothers motioned for adjournment and Trustee Pfeifer seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 5:36 pm.

Attendance:

- Dr. Debra L. McCurdy, President
- Ms. Maria Rodriguez, Esq., General Counsel
- Dr. Rose Reinhart, Vice President of Student Affairs
- Mr. Michael Thomas, Vice President of Workforce Development
- Ms. Dawn Kirstaetter, Vice President of Advancement and Strategic Partnerships
- Dr. Liesl Jones, Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Ms. Lyllis Green, Chief Internal Auditor
- Mr. Stephan Byam, Chief Information Officer
- Ms. Channa Williams, Interim Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Ms. Becky Burrell, Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning

BCCC Staff Present:

Sharon Stoddard, Valerie Grays, Eileen Hawkins, Sylvia Rochester, Renata Allen, Katana Hall, Edna Street-Jones, Denise Holland, Daviedra Sauldsberry, Michael Berends, Chris Jordan, Arline Yarborough

Others Present:

Kristin McFarlane, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General
Richard Keeling, Chairman/Senior Executive Consultant, Keeling & Associates
Alex Velasquez, Vice President, Consulting Services & Senior Consultant, Keeling & Associates
Eric Narburgh, Consultant, Keeling & Associates
Rehshetta Wells, Project Assistant, Keeling & Associates