

**MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
UTICA AND ROME, NEW YORK
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
April 20, 2026 MEETING MINUTES**

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Mohawk Valley Community College Board of Trustees held in the Alumni College Center, Room 116, of Mohawk Valley Community College, Utica, New York was called to order at 4:06 p.m. by Chair Waters on Monday, April 20, 2026.

Members Present

Wendy Waters
Dana Jerrard
Camille Kahler
David Mathis
Elaine Falvo
William S. Calli
Frank Dubeck
Anthony (Tony) Colón
Anna D'Ambrosio
Minajla Ibrahim, Student Trustee

Members Excused

None

2. Open Forum

The Board heard remarks from John Welch regarding the potential deactivation of the Airframe & Powerplant program.

3. Call for Conflicts of Interest

Student Trustee Minajla Ibrahim disclosed her conflict with discussion item 10c: Board Policy Revision 1003 Duties of the Officers and will not participate in that discussion or any action taken as a result.

4. Chair's Report

Chair Waters reported on a number of student, faculty, and athletic accomplishments noting that these recognitions reflect the strength of Mohawk Valley Community College's academic programs, student leadership, and co-curricular engagement.

The Board recognized a milestone achievement in Hawk Athletics, acknowledging the Softball Head Coach for reaching her 100th career win, a significant professional accomplishment reflecting leadership and dedication to student-athletes.

Chair Waters reported that MVCC students received several prestigious academic honors at the SUNY and statewide levels. Two students were named recipients of the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence, the highest honor bestowed upon SUNY students. Additionally, students were recognized through Phi Theta Kappa for outstanding academic achievement, leadership, and service, including selection to the Phi Theta Kappa All-New York Academic

Team and national-level honors.

She further highlighted the exceptional achievements of MVCC's Lambda Beta Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, which earned extensive recognition at the New York Regional Convention and the international Phi Theta Kappa Catalyst convention. The chapter received multiple first-place awards at the state level and achieved Five Star Chapter Status for the fifteenth consecutive year, demonstrating sustained excellence in scholarship, leadership, and community service.

Faculty and advisors were also recognized for their contributions to student success. The Board Chair acknowledged a faculty member who received a Phi Theta Kappa Horizon Award for outstanding commitment to student leadership and academic excellence, as well as an adjunct instructor recognized for five years of service as a Phi Theta Kappa advisor.

Chair Waters then asked for the Treasurer's Report.

5. Treasurer's Report

Interim Vice President Parry reported on the College's financial position as of March 31, 2026, noting that the College remained in sound financial condition. Year-to-date revenues exceeded expenses by approximately \$14.0 million, inclusive of grant activity, with approximately \$15.0 million in net grant revenue recognized.

Parry reviewed revenue and expense activity, reporting that fall tuition revenue exceeded projections while spring tuition trended slightly below budget. Chargeback and out-of-state tuition revenues were below budget due to enrollment trends and a reduction in the per-student chargeback rate. Expenses were higher than the prior year, reflecting increased enrollment and expanded operations, with certain increases offset by corresponding non-credit program revenues.

Parry further reported that the College received approximately \$14.7 million in federal student financial aid, with approximately \$2.2 million refunded to students.

6. Student Trustee Report

Student Trustee Minajla Ibrahim reported on recent Student Congress activities and student engagement initiatives across the College. She noted Student Congress participation in the SUNY Student Assembly conference, ongoing efforts related to the Hawks Life App, and the completion of Student Congress officer elections.

Ibrahim provided an update on improvements to the College's spiritual rooms, reporting on enhancements made to designated spaces to better support student needs. She also highlighted upcoming student engagement events, including campus-wide programs, community-focused activities, and end-of-semester events taking place on both campuses.

Ibrahim concluded by sharing examples of recent student activities and collaborations with regional partners, emphasizing continued efforts to promote student involvement, leadership, and community engagement.

7. Committees and Affiliations

Student Success Committee

Committee Chair Tony Colón reported that the Student Success Committee met on April 13, 2026. The Committee reviewed MVCC's Academic Momentum Plan, developed in alignment with SUNY's systemwide Academic Momentum Campaign to improve student retention, equity, and degree completion. The Committee discussed the College's multi-year, data-driven strategy focused on improving early academic momentum for first-time, full-time students, with particular emphasis on timely completion of gateway English and math courses, fall-to-fall retention, and attainment of 30 or more credits in the first year.

The Committee reviewed key strategies supporting the plan, including expanded early alert systems, embedded academic support, proactive and structured advising, enhanced course scheduling, and development of dashboards to monitor student progress and identify barriers. Additional discussion addressed FAFSA completion strategies, communication and stakeholder engagement, and the use of SUNY-provided implementation funding to support tutoring and faculty and staff training. It was noted that SUNY has approved MVCC's Academic Momentum Plan and commended the College for its strong alignment, leadership commitment, and focus on equitable student success.

Auxiliary Services Corporation (ASC)

Board Liaison Elaine Falvo reported that the Auxiliary Services Corporation Board of Directors met on March 24, 2026. The Board reviewed financial audit materials presented by external auditors D'Arcangelo and accepted the ASC financial statements and required filings, as well as related financial statements for affiliated student and athletic entities, all of which received clean audit opinions.

The ASC Board reviewed and approved several operational and financial matters, including a one-year extension of the Barnes & Noble agreement and an updated Academic Advantage Pack rate for the 2026–2027 academic year.

In addition, the Board approved the ASC officer slate for the 2025–2026 year and discussed potential options for future bookstore relocation, with further analysis to be conducted.

Dormitory Corporation (DC)

DC Chair Anna D'Ambrosio reported that the Dormitory Corporation Board of Directors met via Zoom on April 14, 2026, and reviewed several facilities and financing matters. The Board received an update on proposed brickwork repairs and agreed to temporarily defer the project pending implementation of a revised financing structure. The Board also reviewed a comprehensive building condition assessment prepared by March Associates, which outlines current conditions, anticipated useful life of systems and equipment, and provides guidance for future capital project planning. In addition, an update was provided on the status of the insurance claim related to the Penfield water main break.

Under old business, the Board voted to rescind a previously adopted resolution related to restructuring Dormitory Corporation debt. Under new business, the Board adopted a resolution authorizing the refinancing of existing debt into a fixed-rate mortgage. The refinancing is intended to cover the existing bond obligation and provide additional funding for critical summer infrastructure projects, including fire alarm and hot water system work. The refinancing is expected to reduce annual debt service by approximately \$200,000, support future capital projects, and mitigate a previously anticipated balloon payment.

The Board acknowledged and expressed appreciation for the work of staff in developing the refinancing proposal.

Foundation

Executive Director Ferro-Aurience reported that the Foundation experienced continued strong activity in scholarship administration, including a significant increase in student applications during the spring cycle. Scholarship committees were in the process of completing their reviews, with award notifications to be issued shortly and preparations underway for the annual Scholarship Awards Dinner recognizing student recipients and donor support.

She further reported that the Foundation's financial portfolio remained stable and well-managed, maintaining a long-term, diversified investment strategy despite market volatility, with total assets exceeding \$12.7 million. Upcoming meetings of the Foundation Executive Committee and full Board were noted.

ACCT/NYCCT

Trustee Tony Colón reported on recent Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) regional and federal activities. It was reported that the ACCT Northeast Regional Meeting held on April 7 was well attended and provided updates from national ACCT leadership, along with opportunities for regional dialogue among trustees on shared challenges, collaboration, and engagement in national governance and advocacy efforts.

An update was also provided on federal legislative and budget developments affecting community colleges. Key topics included proposed changes to federal financial aid and workforce programs, ongoing advocacy related to Workforce Pell Grants, and pending federal budget and workforce legislation. The importance of continued trustee advocacy at the federal level was emphasized, particularly in light of potential funding impacts on programs critical to student access, workforce development, and community college operations.

NYCCT Board Chair-Elect Wendy Waters provided an update on recent statewide trustee engagement and advocacy efforts. It was reported that the NYCCT Board Chair Update is now being distributed to all trustees statewide to ensure broader awareness of policy, budget, and advocacy issues affecting community colleges. Ongoing advocacy efforts related to the State budget were noted, including continued engagement with state officials to advance funding priorities for community colleges. In addition, the upcoming NYCCT Spring Convening was highlighted, noting record participation and a focus on future-focused board leadership and statewide collaboration.

An update was also provided on recent legislative developments, including the reintroduction of a bill similar to the Bronson legislation related to community college governance and staffing. It was reported that the bill, previously vetoed, has been reintroduced in the State Senate and is expected to be co-sponsored in the Assembly. Ongoing discussions with state partners and coordinated advocacy efforts, including potential trustee outreach, were noted as the legislation advances.

SUNY/NYCCAP

There was no SUNY/NYCCAP report.

8. President's Report

President VanWagoner reported on the College's Key Performance Indicator (KPI) related to MVCC's mission of providing high-quality educational opportunities. The Board reviewed student satisfaction measures drawn from the SUNY Student Opinion Survey and MVCC's internally developed pulse survey, which is used to monitor trends between SUNY survey cycles. Indicators reviewed included student satisfaction with the quality of instruction, overall MVCC experience, likelihood of choosing MVCC again, and students' sense of belonging. He reported that recent results reflected strong performance across all measures, with scores trending upward over time. When comparative SUNY data has been available in prior years, MVCC has consistently ranked in the top tier among community colleges. President VanWagoner noted that these indicators provide meaningful insight into student perceptions of educational quality and engagement and will continue to be monitored through future survey administrations.

President VanWagoner also reviewed the "Fire Chat" scenario-based strategic discussion guide and reported consensus of the Board to utilize this format during future workshops or retreats.

He concluded by requesting an executive session following the meeting to discuss personnel matters.

College Senate

Senate Chair Professor Christine Miller provided an update on recent Faculty Council of Community Colleges (FCCC) plenary discussions and governance-related activities. Discussion focused on increasing challenges related to academic freedom and the critical role of shared governance in supporting academic freedom. A presentation by CUNY representatives emphasized the interdependence of governance and academic freedom and encouraged institutions to consider the establishment of formal academic freedom committees. Additional discussion among campus governance leaders addressed governance body structures, the role of union contracts, and opportunities for collaboration and shared learning across institutions.

FCCC

FCCC Representative Professor Amanda Miller also provided an update on the FCCC plenary activities, highlighting ongoing systemwide discussions related to academic momentum, student support, and faculty involvement in policy development. It was reported that FCCC feedback has contributed to improvements in SUNY initiatives and strengthened collaboration across governance sectors, with continued emphasis on academic freedom, shared governance, transfer pathway revisions, accreditation expectations, and emerging systemwide priorities related to workforce education and artificial intelligence policy development.

9. Vice President Reports

There were no questions from the Board regarding the written reports submitted by the Vice Presidents. The Vice President Spotlight presented by Dr. Jake Mihevc highlighted MVCC's leadership in cybersecurity education through its long-standing cyber competition initiatives and alignment with the Defense Cyber Workforce Framework (DCWF). The presentation reviewed MVCC's role in developing and hosting regional and national cybersecurity competitions that provide students with experiential, skills-based learning opportunities and support workforce readiness. Emphasis was placed on efforts to evidence student competencies through competition-based assessment, the use of emerging credentialing and badging frameworks, and proposed initiatives to strengthen pathways between academic preparation, industry standards, and

federal workforce needs.

10. Discussion Items

MSCHE Self Study Update, MSCHE Co-Chairs Ross Wittenberg and Anne Nolan

The Board received an update on the College's Middle States Self-Study process, including the overall timeline, progress to date, and key milestones for the current and upcoming phases of the accreditation cycle. It was reported that working groups and the Steering Committee have been actively engaged in evidence collection, drafting criteria narratives, and reviewing self-study materials, with several deliverables completed or underway. The update also outlined upcoming work, including continued review and refinement of draft materials, Cabinet and Board review of selected standards, and preparation for submission of the Self-Study Report and the Evaluation Team Chair's preliminary visit. The Co-Chairs noted that the College has entered the final year of the self-study process and remains on track for the scheduled Middle States evaluation activities.

College's 80th Anniversary/April Community College Month Update, Executive Director of Marketing and Communications Alen Smajic

The Board received background information on coordinated marketing and communications planning around Community College Month and the College's 80th Anniversary. It was reported that the Community College Month campaign emphasizes the role of community colleges as both an affordable first step and a strong next step for students and working adults, highlighting workforce preparation, transfer success, affordability, and regional impact through alumni and employer stories. Planning concepts for the 80th Anniversary were also reviewed, including potential events, storytelling initiatives, digital content, and community engagement opportunities, with future discussion anticipated regarding priorities, audiences, resources, and opportunities for Board involvement.

First Reading Board Policy Revision: 1003. Duties of the Officers

Student Trustee Minajla Ibrahimy recused herself from the Board's discussion of this item.

The proposed amendment to Board Policy 1003 addresses an unintended policy gap that disqualified otherwise eligible Student Trustees from seeking re-election solely due to exceeding the 45-credit hour limit, while preserving the original eligibility standard for initial election. The amendment retains the 45-credit hour limit for initial election, clarifies eligibility for incumbent Student Trustees seeking re-election, and eliminates the unintended disqualifying effect of credit accumulation on re-election.

A motion to waive the first reading of Board policy was made by Trustee Frank Dubeck and seconded by Trustee Anna D'Ambrosio. Motion passed 9-0, 1 abstention.

A motion to approve the policy revisions as presented was made by Vice Chair Dana Jerrard and seconded by Trustee William Calli. The motion carried 9-0, 1 abstention.

11. Consent Agenda

Attachment a. Minutes of March 23, 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting

Attachment b. Treasurer's Report

Attachment c. Conferring of Degrees

Attachment d. Administrator Promotion in Level and/or Academic Rank

- Attachment e.* Promotion in Academic Rank - Professional Association
- Attachment f.* Non-teaching Professional Promotions
- Attachment g.* Kagan Crawford, Financial Aid Advisor
- Attachment h.* Emeritus, Michael McHarris
- Attachment i.* Emeritus, Bryan Alguire
- Attachment j.* Distinguished Retiree, David Smith

Discussion: President VanWagoner acknowledged the rigor of the promotion process and expressed appreciation for the significant time and effort contributed by members of the promotion committees. He further expressed support for the recommendation of three retirees of distinguished merit for Emeriti and Distinguished Retiree status.

A motion to approve Consent Agenda Items 11a-11j was made by Trustee Frank Dubeck and seconded by Trustee Elaine Falvo. The motion was unanimously approved.

Motion for an executive session with no further action to discuss personnel was made by Trustee David Mathis and seconded by Trustee Elaine Falvo.
Unanimously approved.

The Board of Trustees entered into executive session at 5:47 p.m.
The meeting reconvened at 6:10 p.m.

12. Adjournment

Motion was made by Trustee William S. Calli and seconded by Trustee Tony Colón to adjourn the meeting at 6:11 p.m. Unanimously approved.