

**MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
UTICA AND ROME, NEW YORK**

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Mohawk Valley Community College Board of Trustees held in the Stetson Boardroom, Payne Hall, Room 300, of Mohawk Valley Community College, Utica, New York was called to order at 4:02 p.m. by Chair Waters on Monday, September 15, 2025.

Members Present

Wendy Waters
Dana Jerrard
David Mathis
Anna D'Ambrosio
Anthony Colón
Frank Dubeck
William S. Calli
Camille Kahler
Elaine Falvo

Members Excused

Student Trustee

2. Chair's Report

Chair Waters opened the meeting by stating that finalized committee memberships and meetings dates have been distributed to each trustee's seat and communicated through email. She noted that Facilities Campus Safety Committee will meet on Monday, September 22 from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.

Chair Waters went on to recognize several recent college achievements:

- Student Athlete Andre Pasha of Syracuse, New York was named Region III Male Athlete of the Year, Director of Athletics and Head Coach of the Men's Soccer Team Dominic DiMaggio was named Region III Athletic Director of the Year and for the second consecutive year, MVCC Head Athletic Trainer and Professor Jennifer Krohn was named Region III Athletic Trainer of the Year.
- Our residence halls opened this fall with more students seeking housing than available beds. Thanks to the rapid, collective efforts of Dennis Gibbons and our Housing and Residence Life team every student was safely housed within just over a week. Their work included real-time tracking of arrivals, creative fiscal approaches to speed decision-making, personal outreach to local students, and cross-divisional contingency plans. By September 9, the "good problem" of over-capacity became an example of MVCC's ability to respond quickly, collaboratively, and always with students at the center.
- At the recent NYCCT Annual Conference, our own Gloria Karol was invited to co-present at the Community College Secretaries Training session. Her session, *AI as Your Digital Assistant: Working Smarter, Not Just Harder*, drew on her expertise to help colleagues across the state explore practical ways artificial intelligence can support daily work and strengthen work/life balance. Her presentation introduced a prompt design

framework, comparing weak versus strong prompts with a live demonstration of how clearer instructions lead to better AI output. She rounded out the session by showcasing applications directly relevant to her work at MVCC – including a review of the Governance Navigator custom GPT as well as ways she has personally used AI to inspire creativity and reclaim valuable time.

Chair Waters then asked for the Treasurer's Report.

3. Treasurer's Report

Vice President Squires explained that the monthly financial statements are not yet available due to the ongoing closing of the books in preparation for the annual audit. The Census date is September 19 which will be the next good snapshot of where our enrollment stands. Financial Aid refund checks are scheduled for October 17 and November 14. The auditors will be on campus to begin their fieldwork October 27. By the end of October, we will have solid numbers on where we landed for year end August 31, 2025.

4. Student Trustee Report

As the Student Trustee position is currently vacant, there was no report. Recruiting for the Student Trustee position is in process. Elections will be held in the coming weeks.

5. Committees and Affiliations

Auxiliary Services Corporation (ASC)

ASC will meet this Wednesday, September 17.

Dormitory Corporation (DC)

DC will meet October 6.

Foundation

Executive Director Ferro-Aurience reported that MV Gives is happening this week. Thanks to a generous anonymous donor, the MVCC Foundation has secured a \$15,000 1:1 matching gift that will double the impact of contributions made during the campaign. This year's focus is on scholarships and student support including:

- New Scholarships for emerging programs such as Fashion Design and the upcoming Dental Hygiene program
- The Sandy Cummings Memorial Student Engagement Scholarship, enduring lasting support for student leaders.
- A Community Education Scholarship, expanding access to MVCC's Community Education programs and summer camps for local children.
- Support for MVCC's Loaner Laptop Program, providing essential technology access to students each semester.

The Foundation remains grateful for the Board's continued leadership and support in helping spread the word about MV Gives. With your partnership in promoting this effort and encouraging participation, the Foundation can secure the full \$15,000 match and make an even greater impact on the lives of our students.

Upcoming Foundation Events:

- Applied Technology Groundbreaking Ceremony: Monday, September 22 at 10:00 a.m. in Quad
- Wilcox Presidential & Exceptional Scholarship Lunch: Monday, October 16 at 12:00 p.m. in WH225
- Livin' on a Legacy Concert to benefit the Sandy Cummings Memorial Scholarship: Tuesday, October 28 at 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., WH Lobby / Schafer Theater
- MVCC Hall of Fame Reception & Ceremony: Thursday, November 6 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. WH225/2nd Floor Lobby
- Board Holiday Gathering: December 2 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Fort Schuyler Club

Executive Director Ferro-Aurience reviewed that the Foundation closed out its fiscal year on August 31, 2025 with over \$1.59M. As of this morning, there is approximately \$11,713,463 in the Foundation's Strategic Financial Services portfolio. Financials:

Upcoming Foundation Meetings

- Audit, Finance & Investment Committee – October 2
- Foundation Executive Committee – October 9
- Nominating & Governance Committee – October 16
- MVCC Foundation Board – October 23

ACCT/NYCCT

Trustee Tony Colon provided an update on recent federal developments based on ACCT's latest policy report released last Friday. Congress still hasn't passed a full federal budget for the upcoming year. There is growing bipartisan momentum to expand Pell Grant eligibility and the JOBS Act, which supports this effort, continues to gain traction. This could potentially create new opportunities for MVCC to expand certificate programs that meet regional workforce needs. The Department of Education has also delayed the release of the final Title IX rule, while will impact how colleges handle gender-based discrimination and campus safety. MVCC should continue to prepare to revise policies in anticipation of the new federal guidelines. Financial Aid changes include the new FAFSA rollout that has led to delays and processing issues as well as new "risk-sharing" proposals that would tie federal funding to loan repayment or graduate earnings outcomes. ACCT is concerned that these metrics may penalize open-access colleges. ACCT is monitoring budget negotiations around Minority-Serving Institutions. If cuts or delays in this funding happen, this could disproportionately affect colleges serving underrepresented populations. Looking ahead, ACCT's Washington, D.C. office is enhancing communication efforts. In the coming months, they'll launch updated digital platforms, more regular policy briefings, and a stronger national network of state coordinators—trusted peers who will help deliver timely updates and mobilize trustee input on national issues.

Lastly, the 2025 ACCT Leadership Congress will be held October 22nd through the 25th in New Orleans. It's an important national gathering for trustees, presidents, and policymakers, and an opportunity for MVCC to be part of key conversations shaping the future of our sector.

NYCCT Chair Elect Wendy Waters added that ACCT holds webinars every two weeks on what's happening in Washington. She noted these are worth watching. She wished Trustee Colón good luck on his candidacy for Secretary-Treasurer at the upcoming ACCT Conference. She then went on to report on the recent NYCCT Annual Conference. NYCCT is developing an educational module on open meetings law and the Bronson Bill impacts. President VanWagoner and Todd McLees presented a fireside chat. Congratulations to the C3 program – Tracy Coulson and Michelle Sebastian – and Trustee David Mathis on their NYCCT Awards. Trustee Mathis was the only one to receive a standing ovation. Chair Waters also went on to wish Trustee Mathis a happy birthday which is tomorrow. Chair Tisch from SUNY Board participated in the NYCCT conference, Valerie Dent led a round table discussion as well at the conference. CUNY attended the annual conference which helped to build connection and relationships. CUNY was invited to attend the legislative efforts. The SUNY Chancellor also attended and presented at the NYCCT Annual Conference.

SUNY/NYCCAP

President VanWagoner reported that he will be attending the Chancellor's SUNY Fall Presidents Meeting in early October. Vice Chancellor Dent will be visiting campus on Wednesday. Similar to past SUNY campus visits, a background brief was developed and shared providing an overview of MVCC and highlighting our efforts around SUNY Reconnect.

President VanWagoner continued on with an NYCCAP update. After two recent retirements, the average tenure of a community college president is plus or minus three years.

6. President's Report

President VanWagoner began by sharing his takeaways from the NYCCT conference and commended Chair Waters for stepping in at the last minute to deliver a two-to-three-hour awards banquet. He thanked all trustees for attending and congratulated Trustee Mathis and the C3 program on their awards.

With the Census date just a few days away, he noted that enrollment updates would be shared in his upcoming Friday Focus.

President VanWagoner then provided an update regarding the student who was struck by a car on Friday. He has reached out to the student's family and shared that, while the injuries were serious, the prognosis is positive.

Lastly, he shared that he attended Dr. Dan Phelan's presentation at NYCCT, took detailed notes, and plans to share his reflections either during a future board workshop or at the February retreat.

President VanWagoner asked for a brief executive session to discuss personnel following the board meeting with no further action.

College Senate

College Senate Chair Professor Christine Miller reported that the College Senate had a robust

start to its first meeting in September. The meeting included a review of updates to the Academic Integrity form; a presentation by Vice President Pine and the CARE Team; a presentation by Dr. Marshall on bias and microaggressions; and an update from Bobby Rogan regarding the Facilities and Sustainability Dropbox.

Two policy revisions had both their first and second reads through College Senate: Microcredentials and Posthumous Degrees.

The Senator Mentor/Mentee Initiative was reviewed, and a sign-up sheet was distributed asking each senator to provide their name, years of service at the College, and whether they would like to serve as a mentor or a mentee.

The meeting concluded with an open conversation that led to a discussion about donor-funded laptops and how the Foundation has incorporated this need into its MV Gives campaign.

7. Vice President Reports and Administrative Services Spotlight

There were no questions from the Board regarding the written reports submitted by the Vice Presidents. The Division of Administrative Services was spotlighted with Vice President Squires sharing his takeaways from his tenure here at the College. The Board received a reflective presentation summarizing key administrative milestones, challenges, and accomplishments since 2013, including improvements to public safety, strategic financial stabilization, infrastructure development, strengthened employee and community partnerships, and sustained student success. The presentation concluded with appreciation for the commitment of faculty, staff, and trustees in supporting MVCC's mission and student-centered focus.

8. Discussion Items

First Reading Board Policy revision 6001. Degrees (Microcredentials)

Vice President Kahler provided an overview of the need for the proposed policy language changes. The revisions are a response to workforce development needs and intended to align with SUNY policies and provide workforce pipeline avenues to better support the Fast Track programs.

Motion to waive first reading policy by the Board of Trustees was made by Trustee William S. Calli and seconded by Trustee Frank Dubeck. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to approve the Board Policy revisions as presented was made by Trustee Anna D'Ambrosio and seconded by Trustee William S. Calli.

DEI Equity Assessment

The Board received an update on Mohawk Valley Community College's continued advancement in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). The College has made significant strides in embedding DEI principles throughout its strategic priorities, academic culture, and community partnerships. A two-phase institutional equity assessment, aligned with SUNY and Achieving the Dream (ATD) frameworks, evaluated 20 DEI benchmarks. The majority of these criteria are now rated as "Established" or "Integrated," reflecting strong college-

wide implementation.

Notable achievements include comprehensive equity training for supervisors and search committees, expanded faculty/staff development, robust student engagement programs, and strengthened community collaborations. MVCC's participation in ATD's Racial Equity Leadership Academy and recognition as a 2025 Leader College Award recipient further affirm its strategic DEI leadership. While progress is evident, the College remains committed to continuous improvement in areas such as student mentoring and DEI-based program outcomes.

This work contributes directly to accreditation readiness and reinforces MVCC's commitment to inclusive excellence.

9. **Consent Agenda**

Attachment a. Minutes of August 18, 2025 Board of Trustees Meeting

Attachment b. Treasurer's Report

Attachment c. Stephen Cook, Coordinator, Cybersecurity Initiatives

Attachment d. Sean Radigan, Technical Director, NCAE Cyber Games Project

Attachment e. Amend Staffing Plan: Alexander LapeChristen, Workforce Navigator

Attachment f. Kaitlyn Mars, STEP Coordinator

Attachment g. Kristen Rasmussen, Instructor

Attachment h. Amend Staffing Plan: Michael Zombek, Technical Assistant

A motion to pull off Consent Agenda 9a Minutes of August 18, 2025 Board of Trustees meeting for further discussion was made by Trustee David Mathis and seconded by Trustee Frank Dubeck. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion to approve Consent Agenda Items 9b-9h was made by Trustee William S. Calli and seconded by Trustee Frank Dubeck. The motion was unanimously approved.

Discussion on the August 18, 2025 Board of Trustees minutes reflected a change under the NYCCT report to clarify Chair Waters update on the Vice Chancellor search. The minutes will be amended to reflect that SUNY appointed an internal candidate as the permanent candidate not on an interim basis.

Motion to approve Consent Agenda 9a with these changes was made by Trustee William S. Calli and seconded by Trustee Frank Dubeck. The motion was unanimously approved and the August 18, 2025 minutes will be amended.

Motion for an executive session with no further action to discuss personnel was made by Trustee Anna D'Ambrosio and seconded by Trustee William Calli. Unanimously approved.

The Board of Trustees entered into executive session at 5:26 p.m.
The meeting reconvened at 5:47 p.m.

10. Adjournment

Motion was made by Trustee William S. Calli and seconded by Trustee Anna D'Ambrosio to adjourn the meeting at 5:48 p.m. Unanimously approved.