

Full Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Quinsigamond Community College Board of Trustees

Thursday, September 10, 2026, 12:00 – 4:00 PM

Worcester Senior Center, 128 Providence Street, Worcester, MA 01604

Trustees Present: Chair Linda Maykel, Vice Chair Eric Goodwine, Mari Gonzalez, Jorgo Gushi, Flo LeClair, Jessica Mandes, Satya Mitra, Raj Rajeshkumar, Dawit Quilty
(Arrived at 2:15 PM)

Trustees Absent: Max German, Lynn Keeley

Others Present: President Luis Pedraja, Kathy Rentsch, Sean Nelson, Michelle Tufau Afriyie, John Holloway, Deb Spotts, Karen Hutner, Sara Simms, Deb LaFlash, Becky Lindley, Allison Vickstrom, Associate General Counsel Adam Thrasher
(Arrived at 1:15 PM), Jess Ahrens Montecalvo – Board Secretary

Meeting called to order at 12:45 PM by Board Chair Maykel and roll call attendance noted.

The Board of Trustees of Quinsigamond Community College, at its regular meeting held at the Worcester Senior Center on Thursday, September 10, 2026, took the following actions:

- I. Consent Agenda:** *The purpose of the Consent Agenda is to expedite business by grouping routine agenda items together to be dealt with by one Board motion without discussion. Any member of the Board or staff may ask that any item on the Consent Agenda be removed and placed later on the agenda for full discussion. Such requests will be automatically respected.*

If any item is not removed from the Consent Agenda, the action on the agenda is approved/accepted by single Board action adopting the Consent Agenda.

- A. Minutes from the June 10, 2026 Regular Board Meeting (approve)
- B. Budget and Finance Update – FY26 and FY27 (accept)
- C. Informational Personnel Items (accept)
- D. President's Out-of-State Travel (accept)
- E. President's Leave Time (accept)

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Trustees of Quinsigamond Community College voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda (A-E) as presented.

II. Chair Updates

Dr. Linda Maykel, Board Chair

- Board Chair Linda Maykel reported on a successful Fall 2026 All College Day and positive start to the academic year. At the event, Chair Maykel provided faculty and staff with an update on the presidential search process. She also noted presentations showcasing the College's artificial intelligence (AI) initiatives and Saint-Gobain's three-year, \$300,000 investment in the advanced manufacturing space.

III. Standing Committee Reports

A. Audit and Oversight Committee – No meeting

Trustees: Mitra (Chair), German, Gonzalez, Goodwine, and Gushi

- The Audit and Oversight Committee did not convene since the last Board meeting, so there are no updates to report.

B. Strategic Planning, Education, and Student Success Committee – No meeting

Trustees: Rajeshkumar (Chair), LeClair, Mandes, Maykel, Keeley, and Quilty

- The Strategic Planning, Education, and Student Success Committee did not convene since the last Board meeting, so there are no updates to report.

C. Executive Committee – August 17, 2026)

Trustees: Maykel, Goodwine, Mitra, and Rajeshkumar

1. FY26 Presidential Evaluation

- Chair Linda Maykel reported that the Executive Committee reviewed and approved President Luis Pedraja's annual evaluation and recommended it to the full Board of Trustees for approval. The meeting packet included the executive summary of the Fiscal Year 2026 Presidential Evaluation for President Luis Pedraja and the full report of responses to the Presidential Evaluation Form; President Pedraja's Annual Report was presented to the full Board at the June 10, 2026 Board meeting.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Trustees of Quinsigamond Community College voted unanimously to approve the FY26 Presidential Evaluation as presented and to authorize all allowable compensation increases for President Luis Pedraja, as determined by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, including merit, cost-of-living, and/or equity adjustments, in recognition of his performance.

IV. QCC Foundation Report

Jorgo Gushi, QCC Foundation President

A. QCC Foundation YTD Fundraising Report

- Chief Advancement Officer Deb Spotts presented an update on fundraising and advancement activities on behalf of the QCC Foundation. She reported significant progress during the past fiscal year, including a 47% increase in donors, the addition of 151 new individual donors, and a 17% increase in donor retention. She also highlighted the implementation of a new financial management system and outlined FY27 fundraising goals of \$2 million, including \$1 million designated for the QCC Center.
- QCC Foundation President and Trustee Jorgo Gushi also presented leadership updates for the QCC Foundation. He reported that Linda Cavaioli has stepped down as the Foundation Treasurer while remaining on the Foundation Board; Foundation Director Jessica Favreau has taken over as the new Foundation Treasurer. Trustee Gushi noted that this will be his last year as the Foundation President and he's working on a transition plan including list of priorities and leadership succession plan.

V. Student Trustee Report

Dawit Quilty, Student Trustee

- New Student Trustee Dawit Quilty was unable to attend the beginning of the meeting due to class obligations, and therefore, no student trustee report was presented. Student Trustee Quilty joined the meeting at approximately 2:15 PM.

VI. President's Report

Dr. Luis Pedraja, QCC President

A. Ongoing Initiatives & Campus Updates

- President Pedraja reported that fall enrollment currently exceeds 9,100 students and was tracking slightly above budget projections. He noted that ongoing student retention efforts have contributed to encouraging enrollment results and stated that the College continues to monitor longer-term demographic and enrollment trends, including the stabilization of enrollment following recent growth associated with free community college initiatives.

B. Presidential Transition Plan

- President Pedraja presented a comprehensive Presidential Transition Plan designed to ensure a smooth leadership transition and preserve institutional momentum following his retirement in July 2027. Key elements included:
 - **Fundraising and Legacy Initiative:** President Pedraja discussed opportunities to leverage the transition period to support fundraising initiatives and strengthen donor engagement, including the development of a campaign focused on scholarships, the QCC Center, and other institutional priorities.
 - **Presidential Transition Materials:** President Pedraja outlined plans to develop an institutional presidential briefing book for the incoming president that will include cabinet responsibilities and priorities, ongoing strategic initiatives, and key institutional and community relationships. Transition materials will also include a relationship matrix documenting key relationships with policymakers, community organizations, donors, business leaders, and other stakeholders to facilitate continuity for the incoming president. President Pedraja further described the development of an institutional risk assessment addressing budget and funding considerations, state policy developments, strategic planning implications, and other factors requiring ongoing attention. connections with policymakers, donors, business leaders, and community stakeholders to ensure continuity.
- Trustees engaged in discussion regarding naming considerations for a potential transition-related fundraising initiative and broader goals they would like the next president to inherit.

VII. Other Business

A. Mission, Vision, and Values Update

- Jess Ahrens Montecalvo, Executive Assistant to the President and Secretary to the Board, and Becky Lindley, Director for Engagement, Initiatives, and Recognition, provided an update on the work of the Mission, Vision, and Values Committee.

- They reported that the College’s current mission, vision, and values statements have not been revised in over 15 years and outlined the committee’s efforts to conduct a comprehensive review and revision process. As part of its review process, the committee completed an environmental scan and collected survey responses from students, faculty, staff, alumni, trustees, and community stakeholders.
- The committee presented two draft versions of revised mission, vision, and values statements and facilitated trustee discussion and feedback. Trustees generally favored concise language, while emphasizing the importance of preserving QCC's distinctive identity, commitment to equity and opportunity, and future-focused mission.
- The committee will continue gathering feedback from governance bodies, faculty, staff, students, alumni, foundation members, and community partners before advancing a final recommendation through governance and Board approval channels.

B. Presidential Search

1. Presentation from the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

- Representatives from the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, including Chief Legal Counsel Constantia Papanikolaou and Director of Trustee and Legislative Relations Alex Demou, provided an overview of the presidential search process. The presentation addressed the statutory authority of and touchpoints between the local Boards of Trustees and the Board of Higher Education, the formation and responsibilities of the search committee, the candidate interview and finalist selection procedures, the terms of appointment and compensation considerations, and the anticipated search process and expectations. Trustees also received search process flowcharts and guidance documents for future reference, including “Prseidential Presidential Search, Selection and Appointment process - At-A-Glance” and “Guidelines and Procedures for the Search, Selection, Appointment and Removal of Community College Presidents At A Glance.”

2. Selection and Hiring of Executive Search Firm

- The Board interviewed four finalist presidential search firms, as selected by the Executive Committee. Each firm presented its qualifications, methodology, candidate recruitment strategy, stakeholder engagement process, and experience conducting community college presidential searches. Trustees asked questions regarding community college experience, experience in Massachusetts, candidate recruitment strategies, stakeholder engagement strategies, communication practices, transition support, and more.
- Following the presentations, trustees discussed the process for reviewing references and selecting a firm.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Trustees of Quinsigamond Community College voted unanimously to delegate to Chair Linda Maykel and Vice Chair Eric Goodwine the authority to conduct reference checks on the four finalist presidential search firms and report their findings back to the Board. The Board further agreed to convene a special meeting at a later date to review the findings and vote on the selection of a presidential search firm.

3. Establishment of Presidential Search Committee

- ***Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Trustees of Quinsigamond Community College voted unanimously to delegate to Chair Linda Maykel and Vice Chair Eric Goodwine the authority to establish and select members for a Presidential Search Committee in accordance with the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Guidelines and Procedures for the Search, Selection, Appointment and Removal of State University and Community College Presidents.***

4. Presidential Search Budget

- Chair Maykel suggested a presidential search budget of \$100,000 to support expenses associated with the presidential search process, including search firm fees, recruitment advertising, in-person meetings, finalist on-campus interviews and candidate travel, and other related expenses as recommended by the search firm.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Trustees of Quinsigamond Community College voted unanimously to establish a budget of \$100,000 for the administration and management of a presidential search process.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.

Upcoming Meetings:

- **Executive Committee** – Monday, September 21, 2026, at 3:00 PM, Zoom – CANCELED
- **Special Board Meeting** – Monday, September 21, 2026, at 3:00 PM, Zoom
- **Strategic Planning, Education & Student Success Committee** – Monday, September 21, 2026, at 4:00 PM, Zoom
- **Audit & Oversight Committee** – Monday, September 21, 2026, at 5:00 PM, Zoom
- **Regular Board Meeting** – Monday, October 5, 2026, at 5:00 PM, Room 107A

Respectfully submitted,

Jess Ahrens Montecalvo, Executive Assistant to the President & Secretary to the Board