



**Minutes of the May 20, 2025 Regular Meeting of the  
Board of Trustees of Community College District 535**

The 810<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 was conducted on May 20, 2025 at the Des Plaines campus of Oakton College, 1600 East Golf Road, Des Plaines, Illinois.

**Closed Session – Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Burns called the meeting to order at 5:25 p.m. in room 1502. Trustee Salzberg called the roll:

Trustee Martha Burns	Chair	Present
Trustee Theresa Bashiri-Remetio	Vice Chair	Present
Trustee William Stafford	Secretary	Absent
Trustee Micah Eimer		Present
Trustee Benjamin Salzberg		Present
Trustee Marie Lynn Toussaint		Present
Trustee Wendy Yanow		Present
Trustee Chris AbiNader	Student Trustee	Present

Also present in room 1502 were Dr. Joianne Smith, President; Johanna Fine, Chief Human Resources Officer; Dr. Ashley Knight, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs; Dr. Ileo Lott, Vice President for Academic Affairs; and Michele Roberts, Vice President for Administrative Affairs.

Chair Burns asked for a motion to go into closed session under the exceptions to the Illinois Open Meetings Act, with the purpose of reviewing closed session minutes of April 22, 2025; and considering the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees, collective negotiating matters, and pending litigation.

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio made the motion, seconded by Yanow. Trustee Salzberg called the roll:

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Eimer	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye
Trustee AbiNader	Aye

At 6:12 p.m., Trustee Bashiri-Remetio made a motion to adjourn the closed session meeting which was seconded by Trustee Yanow. A voice vote was called and the closed session was adjourned.

**Open Session – Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Burns called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 6:17 p.m. in room 1506.

Trustee Salzberg called the roll:

Trustee Martha Burns	Chair	Present
Trustee Theresa Bashiri-Remetio	Vice Chair	Present
Trustee William Stafford	Secretary	Absent
Trustee Micah Eimer		Present
Trustee Benjamin Salzberg		Present
Trustee Marie Lynn Toussaint		Present
Trustee Wendy Yanow		Present
Trustee Chris AbiNader	Student Trustee	Present

Also present in room 1506:

Leadership: Dr. Joianne Smith, President; Johanna Fine, Chief Human Resources Officer; Dr. Kelly Iwanaga Becker, Assistant Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness; Dr. Ashley Knight, Interim Vice President for

Student Affairs; Dr. Ileo Lott, Vice President for Academic Affairs; Michele Roberts, Vice President for Administrative Affairs; and Katherine Sawyer, Chief Advancement Officer.

Administrators: Dr. Matthew Boutilier, Director of Online Curriculum and Instruction; Steve Butera, Director of Communications and External Relationships; Dr. Rick Daniels, Director of Institutional Equity and Inclusion; Julia Gray, Interim Director of Campus Technologies; Thomas Hicks, Director of Student Success and Academic Interventions; Dr. Ruben Howard II, Dean of Business and Career Technologies; Jake Jeremiah, Dean of Library; Dr. Kanchana Mendes, Dean of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Nathan Norman, Senior Director of Workforce Development; Christine Paciero, Director of Athletics; Delia Rodriguez, Director of Adult and Continuing Education; Joseph Scifo, Director of Facilities; John Wade, Chief Information Officer; and Aaron Wernick, Chief of Campus Police and Emergency Management.

Union Leaders: Eric Bottorff, Adjunct Faculty Association; Tamara Laws, Classified Staff Association; and Dr. Suzanne Ziegenhorn, Full-Time Faculty Association.

Faculty: Joan Boggs, Psychology; Eric Bottorff, Economics; Anita Cotton, Accounting; Mary Ringstad-Gagliano, Speech and Theater; and William Strond, Biology.

Staff: Princess Escudero, Student Life and Campus Inclusion; Ernest Gest, Facilities; Jeff Gossrow, Budget; Krissie Harris, Student Life and Campus Inclusion; Tamara Laws, Bursar; Gloria Liu, Grants; Gabrielle O'Connor, Student Life and Campus Inclusion; Kushal Patel, Information Technology; Francisco Sosa, Information Technology; and Beatriz Sparks, President's Office.

Students: Taylor Anama.

Guests: Samantha Solecki.

**Pledge of Allegiance** – Trustee Burns led the pledge.

**Land Acknowledgment** –Trustee Toussaint read the Land Acknowledgment.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chair Burns asked a motion for the approval of the minutes of the April 22, 2025 regular meeting of the Board of Trustees, and the April 22, 2025 organizational meeting of the Board of Trustees. Trustee Salzberg made the motion. Trustee Bashiri-Remetio seconded the motion. A voice vote was called and the minutes were unanimously approved.

### **Statement by the President**

#### Condolences

- To Dr. Jesse Ivory, Assistant Vice President for Workforce Innovation and College Partnerships, on the loss of her brother, Bernard Ivory, a 2021 graduate of Oakton's CDL program.

#### Congratulations

- To the Class of 2025! Commencement was held last week at the Rosemont Theatre on May 12.
- Oakton graduates had a pass rate of 100% for the National Physical Therapy Exam. In addition, a PTA student received an Illinois Physical Therapy Association PTA award.

#### Employee Recognitions

- Congratulations to Distinguished Professor of English, Tina Fakhrid-Deen for having her 6th play, "Black Bone" produced by Definition Theater with shows from May 30 to June 29.

#### Student Recognitions

- Oakton STEM student, Jiheon Kang was named as one of 90 recipients of the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation scholarship for Transfer students. This year's recipients were chosen from a pool of more than 1,600 applicants. The award, which is last dollar funding after all institutional aid, can provide as much as \$55,000 per year toward tuition, living expenses, books, and required fees at the college or university of their choice.

### Athletics Recognitions

- Our first-year varsity softball team finished 3rd in the conference, and qualified as the 14th seed in the Region IV post season tournament.
- Our men's golf team finished 6th place in the Region IV tournament, and one of our golfers, Ryan Belz finished 4th qualifying him for the national tournament.
- The Men's Baseball team clinched the Region IV finals - coming back from the losers' bracket to beat Joliet Junior College in an 11-inning win! And then they went on to clinch the Division III District tournament. They will be heading to the Division III World Series in Auburn, New York.

### Happenings

- The *Kathie Shaw: Sequences in Time* exhibition at the Koehnline Museum of Art takes place through June 27, 2025
- 8-week summer classes begin June 2. There is still time to register.

### **Educational Foundation Liaison Report**

The Foundation continues to build on strong fundraising performance. Fundraising on the year is approaching \$2 million, tracking 24% over goal and 11% ahead of total performance in FY24. Notable commitments received since the last update to the Trustees include:

- A \$11,000 gift from the Anne and Mead Montgomery Family Foundation to continue their annual scholarship support.
- A \$42,000 gift from Oakton retiree and Foundation Board Director Linda Korbel to grow the Foundation's General Scholarship Endowment.
- A \$50,000 gift from the Irving M. and Sylvia Footlik Foundation to support Health Careers Education Excellence and the Workforce Skills Development Scholarship.

The Foundation will be hosting a number of events over the summer including the annual dedication of new courtyard pavers that will take place on Tuesday, June 10 at 5 p.m. on the Des Plaines campus. Scholarship Reading Events will take place on June 11 at the Ray Hartstein Campus, and June 12 at the Des Plaines campus for scholarship founders and guests of the Foundation.

Finally, the Foundation Board will hold their annual social on Sunday, July 20. Trustees and their spouses are invited to attend. Please RSVP your attendance to the Foundation or President's Office.

The Foundation Board's next quarterly meeting will take place on June 4, 2025.

### **ICCTA Liaison Report**

Trustee Salzberg shared that he attended ICCTA's Lobby Day in Springfield with President Smith, Trustee Bashiri-Remetio and Stephen Butera. He described the event as beneficial with opportunities to speak with legislators and advocate for community colleges in Illinois. This year, there was special advocacy for community colleges to be able to offer bachelor degrees so SB 1988 can move to the senate floor.

### **Student Trustee Report**

Student Trustee AbiNader thanked the outgoing Student Government Association and student club's leadership for their work during the academic year. The SGA will not be in session during the summer months as the new leadership will be engaged in training.

Mr. AbiNader shared a list of events on campus that he attended at the end of the spring 2025 semester, provided reminders regarding scholarship applications for the 2025-2026 academic year, and invited the student community to attend Fall Fest at the end of August. He also shared information about useful resources available to students such as the textbook purchase program and the Fooda phone app.

### **Student Spotlight**

Taylor Anama obtained his Associate of Arts degree on May 12. He started at Oakton in fall 2020 while being part of the Maine Township transition program for students with disabilities. Taylor started full-time at Oakton in

fall 2022, and by 2023 he started getting involved with clubs and organizations like the Campus Activities Board where he served as president. Taylor also joined the Diversability Club where he made strong connections, and became the president with the support of his friends. The club received the Club of the Year award at the 2025 Student Leadership Banquet.

Taylor's most memorable experience at Oakton is making friends with other students who became his support network. He also spoke about Oakton staff that have helped him like Gabby O'Connor and Princess Escudero in Student Life and Campus Inclusion; Giacomo Cirrincione from the Learning Center; and Kristine Panopio in ADRC/TRIO.

Taylor's plan is to find a job in information technology where he can work with computers and web development. He hopes to transfer to a four-year college to obtain a Bachelor's degree.

### Chair/Trustee Comments

Chair Burns reminded the Board that there will be a Committee of the Whole meeting on June 24 at 3:30 p.m. before to the regular meeting. She also expressed a desire for student programs like Black Student Success and ANDALE to collaborate/communicate with each other.

Trustee Yanow shared that she has attended different end of the year events and highlighted the importance of support for student programs and organizations.

### Public Participation

Professor of Biology, William Strond thanked the Board of Trustees, administrators, faculty, staff and students for the support he received during his long career at Oakton; he will retire at the end of the month. Professor Strond shared a reel of nature photos he has taken on campus throughout the years, and highlighted the importance of work done for conservation of the local fauna.

### Board Report: FY2026 Budget Highlights

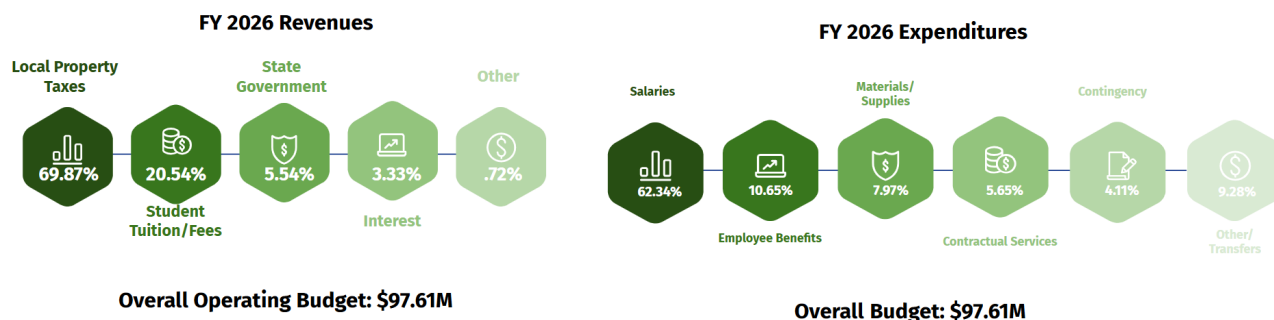
*Michele Roberts, Vice President for Academic Affairs*

#### Revenue Assumptions for FY26

- Local Property Tax CPPRT: \$1.2M
- State Appropriations: 85% of base operating grant
- No Tuition/Fee increase for FY26
- Enrollment decrease of -2.8% projected
- Interest Income of \$3.2M

#### Expense Assumptions for FY26

- Salary increases based on contractual agreements
- 7.1% increase in health premiums expected
- \$4M held in contingency
- Master Plan pre-funding of \$1M



#### Oakton's Strategic Focus for FY 2026:

- Operational Efficiencies/Effectiveness
  - Improving workflows/processes to make the work easier/faster
  - Remove barriers for students
  - Ease backlog of software projects to ensure capacity for new projects

- Requests were evaluated but will be held in contingency pending passage of the Federal Budget

#### Highlights from FY25

- Evanston Health Careers Education Center
  - Final walk-through took place May 19 - clear to occupy
  - Welcome first cohort of students for two programs in June
  - Four new full-time faculty hires
- Master Plan Updates
  - Learning Commons in Skokie
  - Landscape/signage updates at both campuses
  - New Academic Affairs/Institutional Research suites
- Adult Student Engagement
  - Extended Hours
  - Common App

#### Future State of Budget

- Held mid-year budget review in January 2025
- Accelerated several projects/positions into FY25 to have higher impact
- Success with this process increases confidence in our approach to hold strategic priorities in contingency and release them over the next fiscal year

#### Oakton's strategic focus for FY 2026:

- Operational Efficiencies/Effectiveness
- Improving workflows/processes to make the work easier/faster
- Remove barriers for students
- Ease backlog of software projects to ensure capacity for new projects
- Requests were evaluated but will be held in contingency pending passage of the Federal Budget

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **5/25-1a Approval of Consent Agenda**

Trustee Salzberg offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves adoption of the Consent Agenda."

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio seconded the motion. A voice vote was called and the motion passed unanimously.

### **5/25-1b Approval of Consent Agenda Items 5/25-2 through 5/25-7**

Trustee Yanow offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves the following items 5/25-2 through 5/25-7 as listed in the Consent Agenda."

### **5/25-2 Ratification of Payment of Bills for April 2025**

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 hereby ratifies expenditures and release of checks by the Treasurer of Community College District 535 in the amount of \$7,541,320.76 for all check amounts as listed and for all purposes as appearing on a report dated April 2025."

### **5/25-3 Acceptance of Treasurer's Report for April 2025**

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 receives for filing as a part of the College's official records, the report of the Treasurer for the month of April 2025."

**5/25-4 Compliance with Open Meetings Act, Closed Session Minutes**

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 hereby determines that the minutes of the Board closed session meetings on November 2, 2024; March 18, 2025; and March 25, 2025 no longer require confidential treatment and are released for public inspection."

**5/25-5 Action on Recordings of Closed Session Minutes**

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 recommends the destruction of the verbatim audio recordings of meetings held on February 21, 2023, March 21, 2023, April 25, 2023, May 23, 2023, June 27, 2023, and August 15, 2023."

**5/25-6 Supplemental Authorization to Pay Professional Personnel – Spring 2025**

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves an adjustment of \$80,118.56 to the total amount of part-time teaching salaries paid during the spring 2025 semester; the revised, total payment amount is \$4,490,549.23."

"Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves an adjustment of \$29,363.25 to the total amount of faculty overload salaries paid during the spring 2025 semester; the revised, total payment amount is \$811,540.78."

**5/25-7 Approval of Clinical Practice Agreements**

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves the following cooperative agreements:

Human Services (1)

Nursing (1)

Physical Therapy Assistant (1)."

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio seconded the motion. Trustee Salzberg called the roll:

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Eimer	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee AbiNader favored the resolution.

**5/25-8 Authorization to Schedule a Budget Hearing and Publish a Notice Placing Fiscal Year 2026 Budget on Public Display**

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio offered: Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535, authorizes the budget hearing and approval to publish the notice placing the Fiscal Year 2026 budget on public display."

Trustee Yanow seconded the motion. Trustee Salzberg called the roll:

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Eimer	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee AbiNader favored the resolution.

**5/25-9 Authorization to Approve May Purchases**

Trustee Toussaint offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 authorizes the approval of the attached resolutions, as stipulated in the following agenda items, for the purchase of the following:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Vendor / Location</u>	<u>Amount</u>
5/25-9a	1	Design and Installation Services for Founders Wall	Xibitz, Inc. Grand Rapids, MI	\$148,500.00
5/25-9b	1	Construction Services for Baseball Field Parking Lot	Abbey Construction Co., Inc. Aurora, IL	\$2,320,376.08
5/25-9c	1	Furniture for the Library and Learning Commons – Des Plaines Campus	Forward Space, LLC Wood Dale, IL	\$1,142,607.52
5/25-9d	1	Design and Engineering Services for Elevator Modernization – Des Plaines Campus	Perkins + Will Chicago, IL	\$41,950.00
5/25-9e	1	Chromebooks and iPads – Adult Education Grant	JensenIT, Inc. Des Plaines, IL	\$49,687.60
			Abt Electronics, Inc. Glenview, IL	\$12,136.00
5/25-9f	1	Transportation Services for Athletic Teams – One-Year Renewal	Bestway Charter Transportation, Inc. Bensenville, IL	\$76,000.00
5/25-9g	1	Library Services (CARLI and NILRC) – One-Year Renewal	CARLI Champaign, IL	\$100,000.00
			NILRC Buffalo Grove, IL	\$100,000.00
5/25-9h	1	Extreme Networks WIFI SaaS Licenses – One-Year Renewal	Sentinel Technologies, Inc. Downers Grove, IL	\$31,194.48
5/25-9i	1	Cisco Systems SmartNet Support Contract – One-Year Renewal	CompuCom Systems, Inc. Fort Mill, SC	\$31,100.00
5/25-9j	1	VMWare Support and License – One Year Renewal	JensenIT, Inc. Des Plaines, IL	\$119,812.08
5/25-9k	1	PaloAlto Networks Firewall Updates, Support and Subscription – Three-Year Renewal	JensenIT, Inc. Des Plaines, IL	\$215,575.44
5/25-9l	1	BitSight Technologies Third-Party Risk Management Services – Three-Year Renewal	BitSight Technologies, Inc. Boston, Ma	\$54,000.00

<u>Item</u>	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Vendor / Location</u>	<u>Amount</u>
5/25-9m	1	Ivanti Cherwell Software (SaaS)	Ivanti, Inc. South Jordan, UT	\$83,365.44
5/25-9n	1	ZogoTech Data Warehouse Pathways and Learning Management System (MLS) Module – Five-Year Contract	ZogoTech Technologies, LLC Dallas, TX	\$32,477.09
5/25-9o	1	Consulting Services for Academic Affairs Leadership	26 Pines Group, LLC Highland Park, IL	\$170,000.00
5/25-9p	1	Construction Services for Pedestrian Lighting and Incident Recording	Powerlink Electric, LLC Vernon Hills, IL	\$3,567,767.50
<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>				<b>\$8,296,549.23.”</b>

Trustee Salzberg seconded the motion and called the roll:

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Eimer	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee AbiNader favored the resolution.

#### **5/25-10 Preview and Initial Discussion of Upcoming Purchases**

The following purchases will be presented for approval at an upcoming Board of Trustees meeting:

- Illinois Community College Trustee Association (ICCTA) – One-Year Renewal
- Transcript Services – Three-Year Renewal
- Certified Athletic Training Services – Three-Year Contract
- PowerFAIDS Software Maintenance Contract – One-Year Renewal
- CourseDog Academic Scheduling Software
- Vehicle for President
- SoftDocs Premier Plus Support Subscription Contract
- Emergency Backup Power Generator – Skokie Campus
- Door Hardware Project
- Soccer Field Irrigation
- Consulting Services for Salesforce Software
- LinkedIn Learning Subscription

#### **5/25-11 Authorization to Hire a Full-Time, Tenure-Track Faculty Members**

Trustee Eimer offered: “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 hereby authorizes the employment of Ms. Samantha Solecki for the 2025-2026 academic year, beginning August 2025. She will receive the salary associated with the lane and step described as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Academic Rank and Assignment</u>	<u>Lane-Step</u>	<u>Base Salary</u>
Samantha Solecki	Professor, Biology	D-7	\$84,879.”

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio seconded the motion. Trustee Salzberg called the roll:



Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Eimer	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee AbiNader abstained.

#### 5/25-12 Acceptance of Administrator Resignation

Trustee Salzberg offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 accepts the resignation of Dr. Ruben Howard II effective June 28, 2025."

Trustee Yanow seconded the motion. A voice vote was called and the motion passed unanimously.

#### 5/25-13 Notification of Award of Grants

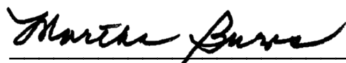
Funding has been made available to Oakton College:

- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| a. Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Grant..... | \$110,000.00        |
| <i>(Manager: Maurae Gilbert McCants / Administrator: Dr. Ileo Lott)</i>  |                     |
| b. Chicago Federation of Musicians – Local 10-208 Grant.....   | \$1,619.03          |
| <i>(Manager: Mark Olen and Daniel Cunningham / Administrator: Marc Battista and Dr. Ileo Lott)</i>                     |                     |
| <b>TOTAL:</b> .....  | <b>\$111,619.03</b> |

#### Adjournment

Chair Burns announced that the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees of Oakton Community College, District 535, will be held at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, June 24, 2025 at the Des Plaines Campus.

Trustee Salzberg made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Trustee Bashiri-Remetio. A voice vote was called and the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

  
Martha Burns, Chair

  
William Stafford, Secretary

Minutes recorded by:  
Beatriz Sparks  
5/2025