



MIRACOSTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

MARCH 27, 2025
(Approved April 17, 2025)

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Trustees of the MiraCosta Community College District met in open session on Thursday, March 27, 2025, in Room 1131 on the San Elijo Campus. President Cassar called the meeting to order at 4 p.m.

II. FLAG SALUTE / ROLL CALL

Board members present:

Rick Cassar

Raye Clendening

Heather Conklin

Ann Crosbie (absent)

Frank Merchat

Anna Pedroza

Jackie Simon

Rahime Demirci (Student Trustee) (absent)

Administrators present:

Superintendent/President Cooke

Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Tim Flood

Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Denée Pescarmona

Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Alketa Wojcik

Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Hayley Schwartzkopf

III. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

A. Special Meeting/Closed Session of February 20, 2025

B. Regular Business Meeting of February 20, 2025

By motion of Trustee Clendening, seconded by Trustee Pedroza, the board approved the minutes of the special meeting/closed session of February 20, 2025.

Vote: 6/0/0

Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Merchat, Pedroza, Simon

Abstentions: None

Absent: Crosbie

By motion of Trustee Simon, seconded by Trustee Merchat, the board approved the minutes of the regular business meeting of February 20, 2025.

Vote: 5/0/1

Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Merchat, Pedroza, Simon

Abstentions: Conklin

Absent: Crosbie

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS ON AND NOT ON THE AGENDA

Director of Public Information & Governmental Relations, Marketing & Communications Kristen Gonzales played a video of the Chem/Bio Building's Grand Opening from February 27, 2025. Dr. Al Taccone, San Elijo Site Administrator and Dean, Career Education, welcomed the board to the San Elijo Campus and gave a brief update on current happenings on this campus.

V. CHANGES IN AGENDA ORDER

None

VI. PRESENTATIONS

A. Sabbatical Leave Report – Professor Afifa Zaman

Dr. Zaman shared highlights from her recent sabbatical project, which focused on her doctoral research at the University of Southern California. Her dissertation, Educational Experiences and Psychosocial Well-Being of Newcomer Afghan Refugee Students in California Community Colleges explores the challenges and resilience of students who arrived after August 2021. Drawing from statewide data and in-depth student interviews, Dr. Zaman presented key findings and offered thoughtful recommendations on how community colleges can better support students from refugee backgrounds.

VII. CONSENT ITEMS

- A.** Ratify Recommendations of Superintendent/President in Approving Personnel Actions
- B.** Ratify Memorandum of Understanding 25-01 Between the MiraCosta Community College District and the MiraCosta College Academic Associate Faculty
- C.** Approve Classification of New Position and Job Description for Clinical Placement Coordinator
- D.** Approve Reorganization of Select Classified Staff Positions in the Art Department
- E.** Approve FF&E Purchase of Outdoor Furniture from Corporate Spaces, Inc. Dba: Parron Hall for Chem/Biotech Building – Oceanside Campus
- F.** Approve Purchase for AV Technology Equipment Replacement, Event Support Hardware and Supplies
- G.** Approve the Purchase of Network Switches/Infrastructure Equipment
- H.** Award Contract for RFP#08-25 Independent Audit Services
- I.** Approve Service Agreement with Clear Digital Labs, LLC for the California Apprenticeship Initiative Digital Marketing Grant
- J.** Approve Award Bid 10-25 Bottled Water – Delivery and Related Products
- K.** Ratify and Approve Contracts and Purchase Orders

By motion of Trustee Merchat, seconded by Trustee Simon, consent items A-K were approved as presented.

Vote: 6/0/0

Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Merchat, Pedroza, Simon

Abstentions: None

Absent: Crosbie

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Adopt Resolution No. 12-24/25 – Excuse Board Member Absence

By motion of Trustee Clendening, seconded by Trustee Merchat, the board adopted Resolution No. 12-24/25 to excuse Trustee Heather Conklin from the February 20, 2025, board meeting.

Vote: 5/0/1
Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Merchat, Pedroza, Simon
Abstentions: Conklin
Absent: Crosbie

B. Approve Submission of the 2025 California Community Colleges Trustee Board Election Ballot

By motion of Trustee Clendening, seconded by Trustee Conklin, the board approved the submission of the 2025 California Community Colleges Trustee Board Election Ballot.

Vote: 6/0/0
Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Merchat, Pedroza, Simon
Abstentions: None
Absent: Crosbie

C. Approve Memorandum of Understanding between the MiraCosta Community College District and the MiraCosta College Foundation

By motion of Trustee Clendening, seconded by Trustee Conklin, the board approved the memorandum of understanding between the MiraCosta Community College District and the MiraCosta College Foundation.

Vote: 6/0/0
Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Merchat, Pedroza, Simon
Abstentions: None
Absent: Crosbie

D. Adopt Resolution No. 13-24/25 to Provisionally Withdraw Membership from the San Diego County Risk Management Worker's Compensation Joint Powers Authority prior to March 31, 2025

By motion of Trustee Merchat, seconded by Trustee Pedroza, the Board adopted Resolution No. 13-24/25 to Provisionally Withdraw Membership from the San Diego County Risk Management Worker's Compensation Joint Powers Authority prior to March 31, 2025.

Vote: 6/0/0
Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Merchat, Pedroza, Simon
Abstentions: None
Absent: Crosbie

IX. PERIODIC REVIEW – BOARD POLICIES (Action Required)

A. Board Policy 3250 – Institutional Planning

B. Board Policy 4070 – Course Auditing

C. Board Policy 5052 – Student Open Enrollment

By motion of Trustee Merchat, seconded by Trustee Pedroza, the board adopted Board Policies 3250, 4070, and 5052 as presented.

Vote: 6/0/0
Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Merchat, Pedroza, Simon
Abstentions: None
Absent: Crosbie

IX. SECOND READ – BOARD POLICIES (Action Required,

A. Board Policy 7110 – Delegation of Authority – Human Resources

By motion of Trustee Conklin, seconded by Trustee Pedroza, the board adopted Board Policy 7110 as presented.

Vote: 6/0/0

Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Merchat, Pedroza, Simon
Abstentions: None
Absent: Crosbie

B. Board Policy 7150.1 – Evaluation – Academic Administrators

By motion of Trustee Clendening, seconded by Trustee Pedroza, the board approved the deletion of Board Policy 7150.1 as presented.

Vote: 6/0/0
Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Merchat, Pedroza, Simon
Abstentions: None
Absent: Crosbie

C. Board Policy 7160 – Professional Development

By motion of Trustee Clendening, seconded by Trustee Simon, the board adopted Board Policy 7160 as presented.

Vote: 6/0/0
Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Merchat, Pedroza, Simon
Abstentions: None
Absent: Crosbie

IX. COLLEGE-RELATED REPORTS

A. Trustees Activities

Trustee Merchat attended the Carlsbad Chamber Business Achievement Awards, participated in a meeting of the San Dieguito Alliance, and attended the Knox Williams Memorial, honoring his legacy and contributions. He will be deeply missed.

Trustee Conklin attended her first MiraCosta College Foundation Board Meeting, a CCLC federal update webinar, and the Ribbon Cuttings for Chemistry & Biotechnology and Media Arts.

Trustee Pedroza recently returned from New York, where she presented at a national negotiation conference focused on empowering Classified Professionals, and she actively listened to federal policy webinars and acknowledged MiraCosta's focus on student-centered priorities amid national developments.

Trustee Simon attended the Scholarship Celebration in February, visited the Cardiff Farmers Market to celebrate its second anniversary at MiraCosta College's San Elijo site, and represented that college at the Encinitas State of the City.

Trustee Clendening participated in the January meeting of the MiraCosta College Foundation Board, where she heard more about the impactful workforce development initiatives at the Technology Career Institute (TCI). She also attended the North County African American Women's Association Annual Conference, where Dr. Sunny Cooke was honored with the Living Legacy Award for her community leadership. And finally, she attended a student-led play at Oceanside High School honoring Willie Buchanon, a MiraCosta College alum.

Board President Cassar spoke at both the Media Arts and Chemistry & Biotechnology Ribbon Cuttings, represented the College at the State of the City in Encinitas, and also attended the play at Oceanside High School honoring Willie Buchanon.

B. Students

Student Trustee Rahime Demirci was absent. However, Dr. Wojcik reported on her behalf that the men's and women's Rugby teams both won 2nd place in the national tournament in which they competed against four-year universities.

C. Classified Employees

Classified Senate President Omar Jimenez, announced the beginning of election season for the Classified Senate. He will name the newly elected Vice President, Secretary, and Senator representatives at the upcoming April Classified Senate meeting. He thanked all who participated in the nomination and voting process.

In addition to celebrating new leadership, the Senate is actively supporting advocacy efforts at the state level to modify Title 5 of the California Education Code. This change would formally recognize classified professionals' role in participatory governance, aligning policy with the collaborative practices across our campuses.

C. Faculty

Academic Senate (AS) President Curry Mitchell thanked Professor Zaman for her sabbatical presentation and congratulated Professor Leila Safaralian for being honored with the prestigious Hayward Award for her outstanding teaching and dedication to students.

He reported the week before spring break featured a full schedule of professional development activities centered around Accessibility Week. This week-long series focused on instructional design, accessibility practices, and strategies to create more inclusive learning environments. The Academic Senate has met once this semester and actively engages in elections and committee assignments. Subcommittees continue to take on critical initiatives, including implementing Common Course Numbering—a significant and collaborative effort.

Additionally, the Equivalency and Sabbatical Leave Committees are working on thoughtful revisions to policies and internal practices to enhance fairness and better meet faculty needs. He thanked all those who contribute to shared governance and academic excellence at MiraCosta.

D. Assistant Superintendents/Vice Presidents

1. Instructional Services

Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Pescarmona reported that we are in the home stretch of the spring semester, with late-start eight-week classes now underway in both credit and noncredit, and enrollment remaining steady. She reported that we are currently in faculty hiring season, and offered her sincere thanks to faculty chairs, deans, and the HR team for their commitment to a smooth and thoughtful process.

We continue to monitor and address fraudulent enrollment in late-start classes. Meanwhile, we're preparing to launch the summer and fall 2025 class schedule on April 9. Thanks to Curry Mitchell's leadership, the proposed compressed academic calendar is advancing through governance and the concept is expected to go informationally to the Board in April.

From April 28 through May 22, the Learning Commons will extend its hours to 9 p.m., Monday through Thursday. This pilot aims to gather data on evening usage to inform future planning for student support services.

2. Student Services

Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Wojcik announced that the ASG elections are underway, with strong student engagement. At least five students are running for Student Trustee and six for ASG President. Commencement planning is in full swing with letters sent two weeks ago and already over 300 students that have RSVP'd.

The CARE and Food Pantry continues to serve many students, with a consistent line of individuals seeking support. The department launched a Canvas course to help faculty and staff better understand how to connect students with essential resources.

Service Learning is actively collaborating with CSU San Marcos and will host a César Chávez Day event on Friday, April 11.

Lastly, the Girlfriends' Closet event is on Saturday, March 29, at the Oceanside Campus. Open to the entire community, this outreach and service-learning partnership currently accepts donations from the Outreach and Equity Office.

3. Administrative Services

Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Flood reported that Fiscal Services and Purchasing teams have been busy as they prepare for the end of the 2025 fiscal year, and the development of the 2026 fiscal year budget. Kudos and sincere thanks to all the individuals involved for their hard work and attention to detail during this critical period.

On the Facilities front, the solar panel installation project is now underway, and he announced that the campus bridge will reopen by the end of April—an entire month ahead of schedule. He thanked the facilities team and contractors for keeping this project on track.

4. Human Resources

Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Schwartzkopf reported that we have officially launched a new employee onboarding program. The program includes an orientation session next week and a newly developed Onboarding Hub, designed to support new hires with essential resources and information. This platform will continue to grow over time, and she welcomes all feedback to ensure it remains useful and impactful for our campus community.

The Annual Spring Celebration of Excellence will be held on April 18 from 3–4:30 p.m. when we recognize employee achievements and honor our retirees in a meaningful celebration of service and dedication.

E. Superintendent/President

Superintendent/President Cooke reported that yesterday's Media Arts Center Ribbon-Cutting was a tremendous success. She thanked everyone who helped bring this beautiful building, and event, to life. With a strong turnout, an inspiring student speaker (a filmmaker who shared a moving personal story), and engaging displays from faculty artists, the event showcased the vibrancy of our growing Arts Hub, which includes Dance, Theater, Fine Arts, Music, and Media

Arts. KUSI News was onsite and interviewed Dean Jonathan Fohrman, helping to share our story with the broader community.

Last week, she attended the CEO Symposium in Monterey, where statewide college leaders engaged in important discussions on the state budget, legislation, and federal actions. The consensus was clear: we must continue doing the work we're committed to—supporting students and communities across California.

Over the weekend, she participated in the San Diego Regional EDC's planning retreat, engaging in deep conversations about inclusive economic growth, focusing on increasing the number of thriving households, workforce training providing access to good jobs, and supporting small businesses.

Faculty hiring is in full swing and will continue daily through May. Thank you to everyone participating in interviews and for the HR team's support.

The MiraCosta College Foundation hosted a special event to expand its reach and engage potential new donors, further strengthening support for our students and programs.

In all our traditional events celebrating student success, our event planners are taking great care to ensure that celebrations remain meaningful, celebratory, and respectful while prioritizing safety.

An email was recently sent regarding updated guidance from the U.S. Department of Education. As a reminder, MiraCosta remains committed to our core values of equity, inclusion, and student-centered support and complies with California Prop 209 non-discriminatory practices. We continue to advocate for the important functions for community colleges under the Department of Ed such as federal financial aid, grants, quality assurance, and accountability.

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVAL:

Rick Cassar
President

Sunita V. Cooke, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President