

**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 Plumley Complex, Room 150, of Mohawk Valley Community College, Rome, New York was called to order at 4:12 p.m. by Chair Waters on Monday, October 27, 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 highlighted several notable accomplishments and recognitions. MVCC proudly inducted 74 students into the Lambda Beta Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa during the Fall 2025 ceremony, celebrating their academic excellence and leadership. The College also hosted visiting faculty from the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo, strengthening international collaboration and showcasing MVCC's innovative STEM education practices. Additionally, MVCC's Marketing team was named a finalist for the American Marketing Association's Higher Education Marketing Team of the Year, alongside Creighton University and San Jose State University—a testament to the team's exceptional work and impact on a national scale. The American Marketing Association will announce the recipient of the Higher Education Marketing Team of the Year around November 12.

Chair Waters then asked for the Treasurer's Report.

3. Treasurer's Report

President VanWagoner, Interim Vice President for Administrative Services, reviewed the College's monthly revenue and expenditure reports. He noted that while revenue is trending upward, the expense report does not yet reflect several large claims related to the College's self-insured health insurance model. These claims are currently in process and, once posted, will increase the College's reported expenses for the period.

President VanWagoner further reported that the fiscal year-end financials are still being finalized. The College's annual audit began earlier today, October 27, and the auditors will be on campus conducting fieldwork for the next two weeks.

In response to Board discussion regarding health insurance, President VanWagoner shared that transitioning to a self-insured model, paired with stop-loss insurance, has proven to be a strategically sound decision for the College, contributing to greater cost control and financial predictability.

4. Student Trustee Report

There was no Student Trustee report for the October meeting.

5. Committees and Affiliations

Student Success Committee

Committee Chair Trustee Tony Colón reported that the committee met on October 6. During the meeting the committee received an update on strategic enrollment management and the strategic initiatives to convert non-matriculated students into degree seeking students. The strategic initiative is anchored in the use of short term playbooks designed to drive specific enrollment strategies over 90-day cycles. Vice President Kahler provided a SUNY Momentum update that focused on credit for prior learning experience as a key tool to accelerate student progression.

Board discussion around financial impact and liability for students who stop out from the SUNY Reconnect effort was discussed.

Audit and Finance Committee

Committee Chair Trustee Elaine Falvo reported that the committee met on October 1. The committee held its annual planning meeting with the College's external auditors to review the scope and approach for the upcoming audit. As part of standard practice, the committee also entered into executive session with the auditors, without College staff present, to allow the Board an opportunity for direct dialogue.

The auditors provided a positive outlook and reiterated their commitment to transparency. Over the years, the Board has valued the candid feedback shared during these executive sessions, especially when important matters requiring attention have been identified.

The auditors are scheduled to conduct their fieldwork on campus from October 27 through November 7, 2025.

Facilities & Campus Safety Committee

Committee Chair Trustee Dana Jerrard reported that the committee met on September 22 just before the groundbreaking for the Applied Technology Center. The committee reviewed risk management and assessing potential risks. Chief Coromato presented at length and talked about issues with filling vacant officer positions as well as engaged in takeaways from the NYCCT Annual conference. The committee talked about license plate readers at all entrances and body cameras for the officers. Chief Coromato gave excellence background on the potential tech investments in the future. Concluding the meeting, Vice President Tom Squires reviewed timelines and several projects and items to keep on the Board's radar.

Auxiliary Services Corporation (ASC)

ASC Board Liaison Trustee Elaine Falvo on the recent meeting of the Auxiliary Services Corporation Board. In the absence of Executive Director Jim Suriano, Jill Heintz facilitated a productive meeting. The Board welcomed Devin Sonne, who has been appointed to fill one of two existing vacancies. Adam Palmer will join at the next meeting to complete the Board's membership. Further updates included:

Barnes & Noble sales were lower this cycle, primarily due to the College's decision to purchase commencement regalia outright rather than rent.

American Dining Services currently has 348 students enrolled on a resident meal plan. ASC is in the process of purchasing new cash registers for the dining area, anticipated to be installed in December.

The Board held an initial discussion regarding the future structure of the College bookstore.

Foundation

Executive Director Ferro-Aurience reported the MVCC Foundation raised a total of \$61,569 during this year's MV Gives campaign, successfully securing a full \$15,000 matching gift. Funds will support a variety of initiatives, including student scholarships, the Laptop Loaner Program, community education summer program scholarships, fashion design program scholarships, and workforce training through ON-Ramp.

On October 14, the Foundation hosted the first-ever MVCC Alumni Day, celebrating alumni impact across the region and engaging local employers in the College's 79th anniversary.

In preparation for its upcoming audit, the Foundation reported \$1.6 million raised from 865 donors in FY2025, with an increased average gift size of \$767. While the donor base is slightly smaller, the average gift amount rose. Like many foundations nationwide, we're seeing fewer overall donors but larger individual contributions. This reflects a broader sector trend of "more dollars from fewer donors."

As of September 30, the Foundation's investment portfolio stands at \$11.78 million.

Upcoming Foundation events include the Holiday Board Gathering on December 2 and the Foundation Board Meeting on December 18.

ACCT/NYCCT

Trustee Tony Colon shared that the ACCT Leadership Congress Reimagining Community College: Innovation for a Changing World recently concluded. MVCC had six Trustees in attendance. Attendees engaged in plenary sessions, educational breakouts, and networking events to explore key topics including digital transformation, workforce alignment, equity and inclusion, rural community college challenges, and board leadership best practices. These insights reinforce MVCC's strategic priorities for student-centric outcomes, data-driving decision making, and stronger regional business partnerships. Key takeaways included the value of trustees and leadership teams staying attuned to institutional agility, enabling adaptation to shifting enrollment, labor market demands and funding models.

Board Chair and NYCCT Chair-Elect Wendy Waters provided an update on NYCCT activities. She shared that NYCCT hosted a successful breakfast during the recent ACCT Leadership Congress, where it was noted that three ACCT Northeast Region board members are from New York State, reflecting strong statewide representation.

Chair Waters encouraged all Trustees to attend NYCCT's upcoming Educational Module titled "Navigating Fiscal Realities: State and City Budget Outlook", presented by Evan Stavisky on Wednesday, November 12 at 4:00 p.m. This session will provide an in-depth and candid overview of the current fiscal landscape in both the state and city, with a focus on advocacy strategies for community colleges in upcoming budget negotiations with the Governor and SUNY leadership. Board Secretary Gloria Karol will circulate registration details.

Chair Waters also noted NYCCT's ongoing efforts to build a closer partnership with CUNY, recognizing the significant influence of New York City on state-level decision-making. NYCCT will host a strategic planning session with CUNY in January, which will include meetings with the Chairs of the Assembly and Senate Higher Education Committees. Additionally, NYCCT now holds regular monthly meetings with Valerie Dent, Interim SUNY Chancellor, and Will Schwartz, SUNY's Director of Government Relations.

In communications and outreach, NYCCT is revitalizing its communications with the support of the Parkside Group for public relations and Impact X for website management. One key priority is increasing engagement with trustees and stakeholders across the state, including through NYCCT's growing Facebook presence. Trustees are encouraged to follow, like, and share NYCCT's social media content to expand its reach—especially among students, legislative staff, and campus communities. A QR code has been shared for easy access to the NYCCT Facebook page.

Chair Waters emphasized the importance of building communication capacity among trustees and maintaining a visible, active presence to support statewide advocacy efforts.

SUNY/NYCCAP

President VanWagoner reported that for the third year in a row, one of the few community college representatives to the SUNY Student Assembly is an MVCC student. President VanWagoner serves as the NYCCAP Student Assembly liaison. Because of our students' continued involvement and representation in Student Assembly, President VanWagoner passed along the latest on the Bronson bill to our student representative who will be taking it to the next student assembly meeting. To date, student assembly has been mostly silent. It's a little unclear in what's sitting on the governor's desk as to whether or not the proposed legislation takes away the students vote, student trustee vote or not. So hopefully they'll be motivated to put a case together to advocate against the Bronson bill.

Board Chair Waters weighed in and said thanks to our lobbyists, we are now having regular meetings with the Governor's Higher Ed Council, who is in charge of the Bronson bill. And that it hasn't made it to the governor's office yet. It's probably going to be in the next batch of two. 100 bills, but he's saying probably not going to be vetoed. What are some palatable amendments that we're working with the presidents right now to suggest he's very honest with us, but he at

least he's meeting with us on a regular basis and we have never had an entree to the governor's office before on such matters.

6. President's Report

President VanWagoner reviewed the Key Performance Indicator *MVCC provides accessible educational opportunities* noting the three metrics: Student Loan Default; Tuition is below the average among SUNY Community Colleges; and Course scheduling is responsive to student needs and facilitates program completion. The Student Default Rate prior to COVID was declining in line with the national trend. During COVID all borrowers had their monthly payment suspended. We continue to feel the COVID impact in the 2025 calendar year as we will not have a true default status for roughly another year from now since collections on defaulted loan statuses just resumed in May of 2025. Our tuition rate remains in the bottom 10 lowest tuition out of all the SUNY Community Colleges. Our course accessibility remains low on class cancellations and strong fill rates.

College Senate

College Senate Chair Christine Miller provided an update on recent Senate activities. The October Senate meeting featured a full agenda, including six new business items and one old business item. The Senate continued its work on charter revisions stemming from ongoing restructuring of committees and councils, and also reviewed several policy proposals and a General Education update.

Chair Miller also shared that she has expanded her regular monthly meetings beyond the President and Senate Advisory to now include each of the three Vice Presidents. This has enhanced information-sharing and coordination between the Senate and campus administration. She highlighted one example in which an early conversation with Vice President Kahler about SUNY's Academic Momentum Campaign provided valuable insight in advance of the recent Faculty Council of Community Colleges (FCCC) Plenary.

Additionally, Chair Miller has been participating in Middle States interviews with standard-specific working groups, providing evidence and context to support the College's reaccreditation efforts.

She also previewed that a more detailed report from the FCCC Plenary—where topics included SUNY transfer initiatives, the Academic Momentum Campaign, and a Q&A session with the SUNY Chancellor—will be shared at the next Senate meeting and in the upcoming Board meeting by FCCC Delegate Amanda Miller.

7. Vice President Reports and Student Affairs Spotlight

There were no questions from the Board regarding the written reports submitted by the Vice Presidents. The Division of Student Affairs was spotlighted with Dean Jennifer DeWeerth providing a Rome Campus update. The Board received a comprehensive update on MVCC's Rome Campus, highlighting a 67% increase in credit enrollment compared to Fall 2024. Strong partnerships continue to grow, including MACNY recruitment efforts, RCSD district training sessions, and MO BOCES PROPEL's use of campus space. The Rome Campus has hosted a range of student and community events, such as Touch a Truck (which drew over 1,000

attendees), Diversity Day, and voter registration. Notable workforce development initiatives include new Teacher Assistant Prep classes, ongoing discussions with Chobani to establish Mechatronics labs, and preparations to support the new Dental Hygiene program and facility.

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

8. Discussion Items

First Reading Board Policy revision 3012. Graduation

On December 5, 2023, the SUNY Board of Trustees authorized the Chancellor to establish a uniform policy governing the awarding of posthumous degrees across all SUNY campuses. This required SUNY to establish consistent procedures for conferring posthumous degrees to matriculated students who pass away before completing their program of study. On July 18, 2025, SUNY Executive Vice Chancellor Dr. Ramasubramanian issued a memorandum providing detailed guidance and mandatory policy criteria for campuses. As MVCC already had an existing policy, the revisions to 3012. Graduation are to align our existing policy and procedures with the SUNY Framework around posthumous degrees. The Board had no further discussion on the policy revisions. The revisions will move to the Consent Agenda at the November meeting.

9. Consent Agenda

Attachment a. Minutes of September 15, 2025 Board of Trustees Meeting

Attachment b. Treasurer's Report

Attachment c. Emeritus, Thomas G. Squires

Attachment d. Seth Zimmer, Peace Officer

Attachment e. Amend Staffing Plan: Shalon Palmer, Technical Assistant

A motion to pull off Consent Agenda 9c Emeritus, Thomas G. Squires for further discussion was made by Trustee Frank Dubeck and seconded by Vice Chair Dana Jerrard. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion to approve Consent Agenda Items 9a, 9b, 9d, and 9e was made by Trustee William S. Calli and seconded by Trustee David Mathis. The motion was unanimously approved.

Discussion on Consent Agenda 9c Emeritus, Thomas G. Squires was discussed. The Board shared their full and unequivocal support for Emeritus status and commended Tom's contributions to the College over his career.

Motion to approve Consent Agenda 9c Emeritus, Thomas G. Squires was made by Trustee Frank Dubeck and seconded by Vice Chair Dana Jerrard. The motion was unanimously approved.

Motion for an executive session with no further action to discuss personnel was made by Trustee William S. Calli and seconded by Trustee Frank Dubeck. Unanimously approved.

The Board of Trustees entered into executive session at 5:27 p.m.
The meeting reconvened at 5:48 p.m.

10. Adjournment

Motion was made by Trustee William S. Calli and seconded by Trustee Anna D'Ambrosio to adjourn the meeting at 5:49 p.m. Unanimously approved.