SUMMARY OF MEETING

A meeting of the Massachusetts Community Colleges Trustees’ Association (MCCTA) was held in the North Café at Mount Wachusett Community College on Tuesday, December 8, 2015.

I. Meeting Convenes and Introductions:
At 4:32 p.m., Ms. Tina Sbrega, President of the MCCTA and Chair of the Board of Trustees at Mount Wachusett Community College, called the meeting to order. Trustee Sbrega thanked everyone for making it to the meeting and started by reminding many of the new trustees and appointees what role the MCCTA had in advocacy, educational opportunities, and the exchange of information. She alerted the members about the recent departure of Jennifer Perkins from the Department of Higher Education in the Office of Trustee Relations. She mentioned that Jennifer was a close friend to the MCCTA and she wishes her well in her new endeavor. She then welcomed Mike Mizzoni from DHE who will be taking over for Jennifer on an interim basis. Ms. Sbrega continued that with Stacy Luster resigning from her trustee role at QCC, that there would be an election of the next BHE Segmental Representative at the end of the Meeting. She mentioned the two extremely qualified candidates that the community college board chairs were able to choose from. Furthermore, she described the expert speaker that they brought in to discuss the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) and the impacts it could have on community colleges. Before she moved on to the rest of the agenda, however, she wanted to allow Joseph Leblanc from the MCCC to address the membership on behalf of the faculty union and recent contract negotiations.

Mr. Leblanc described his personal background and then went on to describe the current “work-to-rule” realities on community college campuses due to the lack of a new collective bargaining agreement. He went over the different parameters that the union was requesting and admitted that the negotiators were at an impasse. Since they did not want “work-to-rule” to continue, he urged the members of the MCCTA to contact the Commissioner of Higher Education, the Secretary of Education, and the Governor to move toward settlement. Ms. Sbrega thanked Mr. Leblanc for his comments and he then departed the meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes:
Upon a Motion duly made and seconded, the May 5, 2015 MCCTA Minutes were approved unanimously as presented.

III. Presentation and Discussion:
Trustee Sbrega introduced the featured guest speaker, Jee Hang Lee, the Vice President of Public Policy and External Relations at ACCT (Association of Community
College Trustees). Ms. Sbrega invited Mr. Lee up and described how the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) will affect community colleges just as many ways as state policy does.

Mr. Lee made remarks covering the potential Reauthorization of the HEA, and ideas such as “risk-sharing” and the movement toward “Free Community College.” He provided a presentation and handouts for the members and discussed that the area of most concern would be the potential of “risk-sharing” in future versions of the HEA, since many community colleges could face penalties from the U.S. Department of Education. Mr. Lee answered questions on several federal policy related subjects. He then mentioned that ACCT would be hosting their annual National Legislative Summit from February 8-11 in Washington, DC.

IV. Executive Officer’s Report: Bill Hart, Executive Officer, Massachusetts Community Colleges Executive Office (MCCEO)

Trustee Sbrega then introduced Bill Hart, the Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Community Colleges Executive Office (MCCEO) to offer remarks on the final FY16 state budget and other statewide initiatives. Mr. Hart thanked Trustee Sbrega for the introduction. Mr. Hart first thanked the many new board chairs and trustees he has been able to meet thus far. He mentioned the coordination with the Congressional Delegation to push against any type of “risk-sharing” proposal that comes up in Congress. He continued by discussing the recent work that he and the Presidents have done with MassINC and the Gateway Cities Legislative Caucus to underline the colleges’ important role in the long-term revitalization of these communities. He provided an update on the FY2016 GAA and the concern over potential 9C mid-year spending cuts. Mr. Hart then continued by discussing an update on capital projects from the Administration, and the Capital Investment Plan the Governor released in the summer. He finished by discussing the recent negotiations with the MCCC, and the hope that it would be resolved in a timely manner. He then answered questions from the MCCTA members.

V. Treasurer’s Report:

Trustee Sbrega thanked Bill for his report. Ms. Sbrega reminds the members that longtime MCCTA Treasurer President Carole Cowan retired last year, and Dr. Mabry has taken her position as the MCCTA Treasurer. She invited him up to offer remarks on the final MCCTA FY15 budget and an update via the Treasurer’s Report.

Dr. Mabry gave an update on the MCCTA budget over the past year. He told the members that the reserve heading into FY15 was $17,979. The FY15 expenses totaled $32,521. With a balance forward of $17,979 and an assessment of $2,000 per campus, the balance forward at the end of FY15 was $15,458.

He continued by describing that with $15,978 as a reserve heading into FY16, and an assessment of $2,000 per campus (totaling $30,000), the projected balance forward for the MCCTA would be approximately $7,458 into FY17. He answered any questions from the MCCTA members.

Upon a Motion duly made and seconded, the report was approved unanimously as presented.

VI. Trustee Forum:

Trustee Sbrega mentioned that in order to continue to engage with community college trustees, she wanted to provide a forum for general discussion on salient and timely trustee issues.
Dr. Asquino, as chair of the Labor Relations Committee on the Council of Presidents, was asked to provide a brief update on the MCCC contract from the Presidents’ point of view.

A few questions from members were asked to Jee Hang Lee – one on risk-sharing and another on additional revenue sources for campuses. Other discussion topics in the forum were on campus pension liability concerns and GASB68.

VII. New Business:

After the discussion in the Trustee Forum was completed, Ms. Sbrega moved on to New Business.

- **Election of Segmental Representative to the BHE**

Trustee Sbrega mentioned that the meeting can now move on to the election of the next BHE segmental representative. She provided an overview of the process, subject to M.G.L. Chapter 15A, Section 4. According to the statute, the 15 board chairs of the community colleges are able to elect the segmental representative. Ms. Sbrega went over the steps taken by the MCCTA to solicit candidates:

The MCCTA announced the vacancy via E-Flash and solicited nominations. Additionally, the notice was sent to every board clerk to notify their respective trustees. Each nominee was advised to submit a letter of interest/cover letter by Monday, November 23, 2015 at 5PM.

After the deadline passed, only two candidates emerged: Trustee Board Chair J.D. LaRock from North Shore Community College, and Trustee Miguel Lopez from Quinsigamond Community College. Letters from MCCTA President Tina Sbrega were sent to board chairs reminding them of the upcoming MCCTA Meeting on December 8th and that a vote for segmental representative would take place. The board chairs were emailed a packet that included a letter from me explaining the process, and the cover letter/résumé for each candidate. If a trustee board chair was unable to make the meeting, they were sent an electronic ballot.

Ms. Sbrega then provided both candidates a few minutes to address the members. Mr. LaRock spoke briefly for a few minutes on his interest in the position. Ms. Sbrega then provided ballots for the board chairs present and reminded the members that the MCCTA will tally the votes and announce the winner to all MCCTA members.

VIII. Old Business:

Trustee Sbrega entertained any questions from MCCTA members, and asked if there was any old business to discuss. Hearing none, Trustee Sbrega thanked the members and the guests at the meeting.

IX. Adjournment:

Trustee Sbrega then provided closing remarks. With no further items to come before the Association, there was a motion for adjournment duly made and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

David Koffman
Massachusetts Community Colleges Executive Office