

**Illinois Community College District #511  
Rock Valley College  
3301 North Mulford Road  
Rockford, IL 61114**

**Board of Trustees Special Meeting – Decennial Committee  
June 27, 2023, 5:15 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**Call to Order**

The Special meeting of the Board of Trustees of Community College District No. 511, Winnebago, Boone, DeKalb, McHenry, Ogle, and Stephenson Counties, Illinois, convened in Room 0214, known as the Performing Arts Room (PAR), in the Educational Resource Center (ERC) on the main campus on Tuesday, June 27, 2023. Rock Valley President Dr. Howard Spearman called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

**Roll Call**

The following trustees were present:

Ms. Gloria Cardenas Cudia  
Mr. Paul Gorski  
Mr. Richard Kennedy  
Ms. Crystal Soltow

Mr. Bob Trojan  
Ms. Kristen Simpson  
Mr. John Nelson  
Student Trustee Juan Nogueta

Also in attendance: Dr. Howard J. Spearman, President; Mr. Rick Jenks, Vice President Operations/Chief Operations Officer; Dr. Amanda Smith, Vice President Liberal Arts and Adult Education/Chief Academic Officer; Mr. Jim Handley, Vice President Human Resources; Ms. Ellen Olson, Vice President Finance/Chief Financial Officer; Ms. Heather Snider, Vice President Institutional Effectiveness and Communications; Dr. Patrick Peyer, Vice President Student Affairs; Mr. Keith Barnes, Vice President Equity and Inclusion; Dr. Hansen Stewart, Vice President Industry Partnerships and Community Engagement; Ms. Ann Kerwitz, Assistant to the President; Ms. Betsy Saucedo, Interim Assistant to the President; Attorney Joseph Perkoski, Robbins Schwartz.

**Communications and Petitions (Public Comment)**

No public comments were received.

**Charge of the Decennial Committee**

RVC President Dr. Howard Spearman reviewed the duties of the Decennial Committee as outlined in the legislation known as the Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act, a/k/a Public Act 102-1088. He added that as required by the Resolution to Establish the Decennial Committee approved by the Board of Trustees on May 23, 2023, he and Trustee Soltow have been appointed by Board Chair Cudia to serve as co-chairs of the Decennial Committee. The legislation and the resolution also allow the board chair to identify at least two community residents to serve on the committee along with the Board of Trustees. It also allows additional members to be appointed as deemed appropriate by the committee's co-chairs.

### **Appointment of Additional Members**

Dr. Spearman announced that the two community members appointed by Board Chair Cudia to join the Decennial Committee are Ms. Jessica Jones and Mr. Adrian Vasquez. Additional appointed members are Ellen Olson, Heather Snider and Ann Kerwitz, who will serve as secretary. Dr. Spearman welcomed Mrs. Jones and Mr. Vasquez, provided a brief background of each, then introduced Ellen Olson, vice president of finance; Heather Snider, vice president of institutional effectiveness, Ann Kerwitz, assistant to the president, and members of the Board of Trustees. Dr. Spearman added that Student Trustee Juan Nogueta will serve on the Committee in the same capacity as he does on the Board of Trustees, with an advisory vote.

### **Discuss Process, Procedures and Proposed Timeline**

Dr. Spearman explained that the committee will meet every other month, which will give the committee a month to review documents and ask questions. The second month will give administrators time to prepare their presentation and answer committee members' questions. With this process, the meetings should last not more than one hour.

In response to trustees' questions, Dr. Spearman explained that once the committee approves the topics to be reviewed, administration will send the appropriate documents to committee members in advance of the next meeting, so they have time to review the documents and formulate any questions they may have.

In addition, Attorney Perkoski confirmed that the legislation is broad and allows public bodies to adopt the committee's purpose to their needs. Although Attorney Perkoski is not aware of any pending litigation to change the legislation, Dr. Spearman added that he has heard some discussions of not including community colleges in the future.

### **Discuss Possible Topics to be Reviewed by the Committee**

Dr. Spearman explained that each member of the committee has received a packet containing a brief overview of the proposed documents to be studied and that Heather Snider and Ellen Olson would provide further details about each one.

Ms. Heather Snider reviewed the Higher Learning Commission Criteria for Accreditation and described each of the five criteria, noting that the process requires the College to submit reports every 10 years. Following submission of the College's Self-Study Report, the accreditor then provides a report in return, which may require monitoring reports. It is extremely important for the College to meet the five criteria and give sufficient evidence of institutional effectiveness.

Ms. Snider also reviewed some of the required standards outlined by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). Meeting these standards ensures the College is eligible to receive state funding.

Ms. Ellen Olson then reviewed the importance of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), which goes beyond the minimum requirements of generally accepted accounting principles of the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), and is required by the Illinois Community College Act, and the ICCB. The CAFR is available for public viewing on the RVC website and in the Finance Office during business hours.

### **Approve Proposed Topics to be Reviewed by the Committee**

Following the review, Dr. Spearman reminded the committee that they must study at least two topics and asked if they would like to study all three of the recommended topics or just two. He recommended the committee consider studying all three documents, as they center around efficiency and compliance, and affect the entire college in all aspects of its operations. He added that since the county boards do not have oversight over the College, these three topics would be helpful to county board members to learn more about community colleges and how they function.

Following discussion whether to consider two topics, which two topics, all three recommended topics, or completely new topics, Trustee John Nelson made a motion, seconded by Trustee Bob Trojan, to study the HLC and CAFR reports. The motion failed by majority roll call vote. Voting in favor were Kennedy, Nelson, and Trojan. Voting no were Cudia, Gorski, Jones, Kerwitz, Olson, Simpson, Snider, Soltow, Vasquez and Nogueta (advisory).

A motion was then made by Trustee Gorski, seconded by Trustee Soltow, to have the Decennial Committee review all three topics proposed by Dr. Spearman: 1) Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Recognition Report; 2) Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Report; 3) Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The motion was approved by majority roll call vote. Members voting yes were Cudia, Gorski, Jones, Kerwitz, Olson, Simpson, Snider, Soltow, Vasquez, Spearman and Nogueta (advisory). Members voting no were Kennedy, Nelson, and Trojan.

**Approve Proposed Timeline**

A motion was made by Trustee Trojan, seconded by Trustee Soltow, to approve the proposed meeting timeline based on the earlier discussion to meet every other month for approximately one hour. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

**Survey of Residents in Attendance**

Dr. Spearman asked those in the audience to complete the survey, including RVC employees who live within District #511, by using the QR code on the agenda and the screen or by completing the printed copies available near the entrance of the room. He added these surveys are anonymous and meet the requirements of the legislation.

Dr. Spearman confirmed that if something is found to be amiss or should be addressed, the committee will provide the findings in the final report, then transition the issue to a Committee of the Whole or to a regular Board meeting for resolution.

**Date of Next Committee of the Whole Meeting:** July 11, 2023, 5:15 p.m. Meeting to be held in Room 0214, Performing Arts Room (PAR), Educational Resource Center (ERC) on the main campus.

**Date of Next Regular Meeting:** July 25, 2023, 5:15 p.m. Meeting to be held in Room 0214, Performing Arts Room (PAR), Educational Resource Center (ERC) on the main campus.


**Date of Next Decennial Committee Meeting:** August 22, 2023, 5:15 p.m. Meeting to be held in Room 0214, Performing Arts Room (PAR), Educational Resource Center (ERC) on the main campus.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Decennial Committee, at 5:50 p.m., a motion to adjourn was made by Committee Member Gorski, seconded by Committee Member Cudia. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Submitted by Ann L. Kerwitz

  
Ann L. Kerwitz  
Decennial Committee Secretary

  
Howard J. Spearman, Ph.D.  
Decennial Committee Co-Chair