

Rock Valley College

Community College District No. 511
3301 N. Mulford Road, Rockford, IL 61114

BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING 5:15 p.m. Tuesday, April 14, 2026

Call to Order

The Rock Valley College (RVC) Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting convened on Tuesday, April 14, 2026, in the Performing Arts Room (PAR, Room 0214) in the Educational Resource Center (ERC). The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by Board Chair Paul Gorski.

Roll Call

The following members of the Board of Trustees were present at roll call:

Mr. Paul Gorski	Ms. Jenna Goldsmith
Mr. John Nelson	Ms. Gloria Cardenas Cudia
Ms. Kristen Simpson	Mr. Isiah Blake, Student Trustee
Mr. Robert 'Bob' Trojan	Ms. Crystal Soltow joined via Teleconference

The following Trustee was absent from the roll call: Ms. Crystal Soltow.

Also present: Dr. Amanda Smith, Vice President of Academic Affairs filled in for President Spearman; Dr. Keith Barnes, Vice President of Cultural Excellence and Belonging; Dr. Patrick Peyer, Vice President of Student Affairs; Ms. Heather Snider, Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Communications; Mr. Rick Jenks, Vice President of Operations; Ms. Ellen Olson, Vice President of Finance; Ms. Ann Kerwitz, Assistant to the President; Ms. Carly Diciolla (f/k/a Huotari), Assistant to the President; Ms. Tracy Luethje, Executive Assistant to the Vice President of Operations, Attorney Joseph Perkoski, Robbins Schwartz.

Board Member Attendance by Means Other than Physical Presence

Trustee John Nelson made a motion, seconded by Trustee Cardenas Cudia, to allow Trustee Crystal Soltow to participate in the meeting via teleconference. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote. Trustee Soltow entered the meeting via telephone.

Communications and Petitions

There were no public comments, communications, and/or petitions.

Recognition of Visitors

There were no visitors to be recognized.

Review of Minutes

There were no comments on the minutes from the March 10, 2026, Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting.

General Presentation

Due to incoming inclement weather, several non-action items and the general presentation were postponed to a future meeting.

Rock Valley College

Teaching, Learning & Communications Discussion: Board Liaison Trustee Goldsmith

Early College Items: As an introduction to the Early College items on the agenda, Dr. Amanda Smith provided an overview of the Dual and Articulated Credit, Running Start, and Senior Semester programs and agreements with the area high school districts. Discussion ensued.

To provide consistency across school districts and align with the Dual Credit Quality Act, RVC developed the Dual and Articulated Credit Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that offers dual credit for high school courses. These dual credit courses are taught by qualified high school instructors and designed to allow eligible students to earn college credit in high school.

Running Start is a formal program that allows qualified students to attend RVC for their junior and senior high school years. Students may enroll in a two-year degree completion program that takes courses that meet the requirements for both a high school diploma and an RVC associate degree, or a one-year program that meets the requirements for both a high school diploma and one year of RVC credit courses. The Running Start program will be administered through the Early College office at RVC in conjunction with the high schools enrolled in the program.

The Senior Semester Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) allows qualified district students to attend RVC for their final senior year high school semester. Students take dual credit courses that meet the requirements for both a high school diploma and one semester of RVC credit.

1. Dual and Articulated Credit Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

- a. **Boylan Catholic High School**
- b. **Byron Community Unit School District #226**
- c. **Winnebago Community Unit School District #323**

2. Running Start Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)

- a. **Byron Community Unit School District #226**
- b. **Winnebago Community Unit School District #323**

3. Senior Semester Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)

- a. **Byron Community Unit School District #226**

Trustee Trojan requested that the Administration check all regional high schools to identify which ones provide financial assistance to students and which do not. Dr. Amanda Smith is tasked with gathering more information regarding scholarship opportunities for students at high schools (specifically, Byron) that do not provide direct financial assistance for early college programs.

The Board expressed consensus support for maintaining and growing partnerships with the area high schools.

4. Industrial Systems Technology Associate of Applied Science (AAS)

Dr. Smith presented the AAS in Industrial Systems Technology program. A proposal for an Industrial Systems Technology Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree was presented. The degree, designed to meet regional employer needs for cross-functional technical skills, will be submitted for permanent approval to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) approval will authorize submission of the ICCB Form 20 for permanent approval and launch a new stackable pathway connecting existing certificates in welding, automotive, networking, mechatronics, and manufacturing.

Trustee Trojan would like the Administration to develop a monthly enrollment report for workforce/non-credit credits to track revenue alongside traditional credit hours. Trustee Trojan would like the report to resemble the enrollment report that Vice President Snider presents.

Rock Valley College

5. Enrollment Update

Board Chair Gorski stated that the Enrollment Update would be postponed.

Trustee Trojan expressed that he would like an investigation and report on the declining enrollment in the NIU-RVC engineering partnership (specifically, why the scope was narrowed to mechanical engineering).

6. Completion Ceremonies Update

Dr. Smith explained that the Completion Ceremonies Update is a list of graduations and various end-of-year ceremonies scheduled for May 2026. Dr. Smith reminded Trustees to contact Ms. Ann Kerwitz, assistant to the president, about which ceremonies they would attend.

7. Lobbying Update

Board Chair Gorski postponed the Lobbying Update.

8. *Informational Only

The following presentations were presented at the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Conference in Seattle, WA. President Spearman, Vice President Stewart, and Vice President Huntley represented RVC.

- Pioneering a Culture of Excellence for Leaders
- Expanding the Reach of Traditional Customer Relationship Management Systems
- Dual Enrollment – Boosting College Enrollment and Providing Greater Access

Finance Discussion: Board Liaison Trustee Cardenas Cudia

1. Purchase Reports

Ms. Ellen Olson, vice president of finance, presented the purchase reports.

Purchase Report A – FY2026 Amendments

A. Roof Repairs – (Maintenance Services Buildings – Plant Operations and Maintenance)

1.	BP Roofing	Loves Park, IL	\$ 7,000.00*(1)
			Not to Exceed

B. Elevator Inspection and Maintenance – (Maintenance Services Buildings – Plant Operations and Maintenance)

2.	Shumacher Elevator	Denver, IA	\$ 5,000.00*(2)
			Not to Exceed

C. Disposal Services – (Refuse Disposal – Plant Operations and Maintenance)

3.	Rock River Disposal	Rockford, IL	\$ 13,330.00*(3)
			Not to Exceed

D. Consultant Services – Consulting Services – IT – IT Administration)

4.	Ferrilli	Haddonfield, NJ	\$ 31,200.00*(4)
			Not to Exceed

E. Architect Firm – (Other Contractual Services – Downtown Campus)

5.	Demonica Kemper Architects (DKA)	Chicago, IL	\$ 7,000.00*(5)
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Rock Valley College

			Not to Exceed
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F. Insurance Expense and Stop-Loss Coverage – (Group Medical Insurance – Health Self-Insured)

6.	Healthcare Service Corporation	Chicago, IL	\$ 500,000.00*(6)
			Not to Exceed

Purchase Report B – FY2026 Purchases

A. Downtown West Technology – (IT Capital Equipment – Downtown West)

1.	Entre Computer Solutions	Machesney Park, IL	\$ 538,436.22*(1)
	Southern Computer Warehouse	Marietta, GA	\$ 613,292.40
	Tech Advanced Computers	Pensacola, FL	\$ 626,852.00
	Milliard Tek, LLC	Clarksburg, MD	\$ 646,873.40
	Howard Technology Solutions	Laurel, MS	\$ 738,293.00

B. Instructional Video Platform – (Administrative Software – Online Learning)

2.	Yuja Lumina	San Jose, CA	\$ 37,513.90*(2)
			Not to Exceed

C. System Installation – (Remodeling – Security System Upgrades)

3.	Schneider Electric	Rockford, IL	\$ 77,214.00*(3)
			Not to Exceed

Trustee Nelson questioned the \$500,000 increase in health insurance costs, asking for clarification on who projected the expenses and whether the college should reconsider its self-insured status.

Vice President Olson explained to the Board that a Purchase Report C will be presented at the April 28, 2026, Regular Board meeting. The report will be for the moving, rigging, and storage for vacating the Stenstrom Center for Career Education (SCCE). The SCCE has a vacancy deadline of June 1, 2026.

2. Bond Parameter Resolution

Ms. Olson stated that RVC will be altering, remodeling, and equipping District facilities, including Classroom Building II. The Classroom Building II project will be managed by the Capital Development Board (CDB), as the state will partially fund the project. RVC will issue additional debt obligations to fund this capital project, not to exceed \$7,900,000, for the working cash fund. Funds advanced for the CDB trust account will be reimbursed to the operating account once bonds are issued in May.

3. Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2027 and Public Notice

Ms. Olson discussed the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget. Ms. Olson stated that contractual services, materials, and supplies are projected to rise due to contractual obligations and inflationary pressures. Travel and conference expenses are also increasing to support staff and trustee travel. Fixed charges will decrease following the college's vacation of the lease at 99 East State Street, Rockford, in August 2026. The budget plan totals \$227,502,587, factoring in a 9.5% increase in EAV estimates and staffing additions for the Downtown West location (including police and student services).

Rock Valley College

Trustee Trojan raised concerns regarding the tracking of non-credit/workforce development revenue, which accounts for approximately 20% of tuition revenue. Ms. Olson stated that currently, these funds (Fund 5) are tracked separately from credit-hour revenue (Fund 1). Trustees would like Administration to develop a monthly/quarterly enrollment and revenue report for the Workforce Development/non-credit credits.

4. Cash and Investment Report

Vice President Olson presented the Cash and Investment Report through March 31, 2026. Total operating cash is \$15,731,592. Total operating cash and investments are \$98,557,030. The operating cash and investments have changed by <\$1,190,873> since February 28, 2026. Total capital funds are \$64,786,827. Since February 28, 2026, the change in capital funds has been <\$2,594,730>. Ms. Olson stated that the total operating cash and investment funds were 91.73% of the FY2026 operating budget.

Operations Discussion: Board Liaison Trustee Trojan

1. Board Policy Manual Update: Article 3: Human Resources / Second Reading

Mr. Rick Jenks, vice president of operations, presented the second reading of the Board Policy Update: Article 3, Human Resources. The review aims to ensure that College policies support the institution's mission and strategic goals, particularly those related to professional development and cultural excellence. The policy review follows a structured workflow to maintain legal and operational relevance. The policies are initially vetted by legal counsel (Robbins Schwartz) and then refined by the Office of the President and Human Resources (HR) in collaboration with campus leadership. Proposed changes undergo two readings at Board of Trustees meetings (scheduled for March and April), where feedback is solicited. Once approved, HR works with Marketing and Communications to update the College website and inform the campus community.

The administration reviewed or created 48 procedures to clarify institutional expectations. Notable updates include:

- **Structural Adjustments:** Three policies (Sex-based Misconduct, Violence and Disruptive Behavior, and Service Animals) were moved to Article 2 Operations because they apply to the entire campus community.
- **Deletions:** The Corporal Punishment policy is recommended for deletion as it is an outdated concept for higher education. The Problem Resolution Policy for Educational Support Personnel (ESP) is also slated for removal because these protections are now covered by collective bargaining agreements.
- **Legal & Statutory Updates:** Service hour requirements for the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) were updated from 1,250 to 1,000 hours to comply with the FMLA and the Public Community College Act.
- **Background Checks:** Updated to align with the Illinois Human Rights Act, requiring interactive assessments before making final employment decisions based on conviction records.
- **Equal Opportunity:** Added specific protections for pregnant employees and anti-retaliation provisions.
- **Operational Clarifications:** New language for remote work emphasizes the College's right to revoke remote work at any time due to performance or operational needs.
- **Personnel Reports:** The Board now acknowledges personnel reports rather than voting to approve them, per a 2025 amendment.

Rock Valley College

- **Compensation:** The "merit-based" rewarding of performance was removed to reflect current practices where rewards are dictated by collective bargaining or board-approved salary programs.

Following the completion of the Article 3 review, the College will begin the same process for Article 4 (Students) to keep the manual current.

2. 2026 Summer Flex Days for Full-Time Educational Support Personnel (ESP), Support Staff Association (SSA), Professional Staff Association (PSA), and Administrative Staff

Following the precedent set by Board Report #8269 (approved April 22, 2025), the Administration proposes a continuation of the summer flex day program for the 2026 season. The recommendation provides five (eight-hour) summer flex days for the following full-time employee groups:

- Educational Support Personnel (ESP)
- Support Staff Association (SSA)
- Professional Staff Association (PSA)
- Administrative Staff

All days must be utilized between May 18, 2026, and July 31, 2026. The days must be taken in full eight-hour blocks. Any flex days not used by the July 31 deadline will be forfeited. Usage is subject to approval by the employee's appropriate supervisor. If an employee's standard shift exceeds eight hours, they may supplement the remaining time with other available paid leave (vacation or personal hours).

3. Retirement Resolution

The board recognized eight retirees for their years of service at RVC: Linda Buerger, Stephen Donahue, Jeanne Ellis, Carol Griesbach, Betty Hoshaw, Maureen Miller, Cassiopeia Paslick, and Betty Villalobos-Hallmann.

4. Downtown West Update

Mr. Jenks stated that the project remains on schedule for an August 17, 2026, opening. Substantial completion is targeted for July 1, 2026. Installation of furniture, fixtures, and lab equipment is set for late June through July. Six new positions are confirmed for Downtown (two for Plant, Operations, and Maintenance, two for Police, and two for Student Services). A full staffing plan will be presented in the coming months. The Foundation is coordinating with local artists to display work in the new building. Plywood backing was pre-installed in the walls during construction to facilitate hanging art.

Trustees would like a full staffing plan for the Downtown West Building (new hires vs. transfers).

5. Classroom Building II (CLII) Update

Mr. Jenks provided a verbal update on the Classroom Building II project. He stated that the Capital Development Board (CDB) has finalized negotiations for the design and construction phases. The project is moving into the "Design Development" phase to finalize specific program needs.

Trustees would like a tentative schedule for the CLII project development within the next 30 days.

6. Change Order Update

Vice President Jenks discussed the following change orders:

Rock Valley College

- **Athletic Fields Baseball and Softball Turf Installation:** a change order in the amount of \$12,071.41 was requested for additional turf square footage required for the coordination of the final field layouts for the softball field.
- **Bengt Sjostrom Theatre (BST/Starlight):** A change order in the amount of \$26,883.00 was approved for modules and fixtures per PCO-3 and PCO-04-R4.

7. Personnel Report

Mr. Jenks discussed the April 2026 Personnel Report. There is a placeholder for a Philosophy instructor, and the appointment of the new Project Manager, Timothy Tuestad. Mr. Jenks introduced Mr. Tuestad to the Board and welcomed him to RVC.

8. RVC Events Calendar

Mr. Jenks discussed the April 2026 RVC Events Calendar.

New Business/Unfinished Business

Unfinished Business

The Board Chair issued a directive to administration and faculty to maintain and strengthen dual credit programs, stating he would not look favorably on any reductions to these partnerships.

New Business

There was no new business discussed.

Adjourn to Closed Session

A closed session was not held.

Next Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

The next Regular Board of Trustees Meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at 5:15 p.m., in the Performing Arts Room (PAR, Room 0214) of the Educational Resource Center (ERC) on the main campus.

Next Committee of the Whole Meeting

The next Committee of the Whole Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at 5:15 p.m., in the Performing Arts Room (PAR, Room 0214) of the Educational Resource Center (ERC) on the main campus.

Adjourn

At 6:20 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Nelson, seconded by Student Trustee Blake, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Submitted by: Tracy L. Luethje.



Dr. Jenna Goldsmith, Secretary



Paul Gorski, Board Chairman

