

**Illinois Community College District No. 511
Rock Valley College
3301 North Mulford Road
Rockford, IL 61114**

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING
February 25, 2025
Educational Resources Center (ERC), Performing Arts Room (PAR) Room 0214**

MINUTES

Call to Order

The Regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Community College District No. 511, Winnebago, Boone, DeKalb, McHenry, Ogle, and Stephenson Counties, Illinois convened in the Educational Resources Center (ERC), Performing Arts Room (PAR), Room 0214. Board Chair Robert Trojan called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

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

Roll Call

Mr. Robert Trojan	Mr. Richard Kennedy
Ms. Gloria Cardenas Cudia	Mr. John Nelson
Ms. Kristen Simpson	Ms. Crystal Soltow

The following trustees were absent at roll call: Mr. Paul Gorski, Nico Mikos, Student Trustee, joined the meeting at 5:27 p.m.

Also in Attendance: Dr. Howard Spearman, President; Dr. Keith Barnes, Vice President of Equity and Inclusion; Dr. Patrick Peyer, Vice President of Student Affairs; Dr. Terrica Huntley, Vice President of Human Resources/Chief Human Resources Officer; Ms. Heather Snider, Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Communications; Dr. Hansen Stewart, Vice President of Career Technical Education and Workforce Development; Dr. Amanda Smith, Vice President of Academic Affairs/Chief Academic Officer; Ms. Ellen Olson, Vice President of Finance/Chief Financial Officer; Ann Kerwitz, Assistant to the President; Araceli Olvera, Interim Executive Assistant; Tracy Luethje, Executive Assistant to the Vice President of Operations; Attorney Joe Perkoski, Robbins Schwartz

Board Member Attendance by Means Other than Physical Presence

Trustee Nelson made a motion, seconded by Trustee Trojan, to allow Trustee Paul Gorski to attend the meeting via teleconference. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote. Trustee Gorski entered the meeting via telephone at 5:16 p.m.

Communications and Petitions (Public Comment)

There were no communications or petitions.

Recognition of Visitors

Dr. Amanda Smith, vice president of academic affairs, and Dr. Hansen Stewart, vice president of career technical education and workforce development, recognized the following newly tenured faculty members for Academic Year 2025-2026: David Dosier, sociology; Christine Garbe, nursing; Joshua Glovinsky, computer information systems; Drew Hallam, aviation technology; Kari Hearn, nursing; Amanda Hoffland, nursing, Christopher, Joyner, music; Lindsey Kasten, faculty-director of (respiratory) clinical education; Jennifer Kunkel, computer information systems; Ethan Olson, aviation technology; Yousra Salem, chemistry; Tombi Smith, nursing; Norbert Ziemer, mechatronics; and Gwen Zimmerman, nursing.

Before moving to the next item on the agenda, the Board of Trustees and President Spearman had their photograph taken with the newly tenured faculty by Brent Jepsen, multimedia content creator.

General Presentations

There were no general presentations.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Trustee Cudia, seconded by Trustee Soltow, to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2025, Committee of the Whole (CotW) meeting, the January 25, 2025, Special Meeting - Retreat, and the January 28, 2025, Regular Board meeting. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Action Items

1. BR 8232 – Claims Sheet

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves the claims sheets from the Ellucian check register for the period from January 1, 2025, to January 31, 2025. The total is \$2,462,554.18.

A motion was made by Trustee Gorski, seconded by Trustee Soltow to approve BR8232. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Trustee Gorski inquired whether changes have been made to BR8232 Claims Sheet since the February 11, 2025, CotW meeting. VP Olson stated that no changes were made to BR8232.

2. BR 8233 – A – Purchase Report – A – FY2025 Purchases

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves the items on Purchase Report A – FY2025 Purchases.

A. Alpha Controls & Service LLC	Rockford, IL	\$37,100.00 Not to Exceed
B. Johnson Controls Inc	Rockford, IL	\$302,000.00 Not to Exceed
C. Krueger International	Green Bay, WI	\$50,000.00

D. Testing Service Corporation	Carol Stream, IL	Not to Exceed \$70,000.00
E. Barbizon Light of New England, Inc, DBA Barbizon Light of Chicago	Woburn, MA	Not to Exceed \$151,407.00
F. Johnson Controls Fire Protection LP	Addison, IL	\$30,000.00 Not to Exceed

A motion was made by Trustee Gorski, seconded by Trustee Soltow, to approve BR8226-A. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

3. BR 8234 – Resolution to Sell 0.006 Acres of 705 Green Street, Rockford, IL, 61102

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves the Resolution to sell 0.006 acres of 705 Green Street, Rockford, IL, 61102, to the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Attorney Reviewed.

A motion was made by Trustee Gorski, seconded by Trustee Cudia, to approve BR8234.

Trustee Gorski inquired whether changes were made to BR8234 since the February 11, 2025, Committee of the Whole meeting. Vice President Ellen Olson stated that no changes were made to BR8234.

The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

4. BR 8235 – Resolution Calling the Parameters Issuance of Debt Certificates Not to Exceed \$52,400,000

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves the resolution to provide for the issue of not to exceed \$52,400,000 General Obligation Debt Certificates for the purpose of constructing and equipping the Downtown West Facilities. Attorney Reviewed.

A motion was made by Trustee Gorski, seconded by Trustee Cudia, to approve BR8235.

Trustee Gorski inquired whether changes were made to the recommendation for BR8235 since the February 11, 2025 CotW meeting. Vice President Olson stated that no changes were made to BR8235.

The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

5. BR 8236 – Placement Agent Recommendation for 2025 Debt Certificates

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees accepts PMA's recommendation to engage Mesirow as the placement/underwriting agent for the 2025A Debt Certificates.

A motion was made by Trustee Gorski, seconded by Trustee Cudia, to approve BR8236. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

At 5:27 p.m., Nico Mikos, student trustee, joined the meeting.

6. BR 8237 – Review of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Rock Valley College and the Rock Valley College Foundation

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Rock Valley College and the Rock Valley College Foundation.

A motion was made by Trustee Cudia, seconded by Trustee Gorski, to approve BR8237.

Trustee Gorski questioned whether the Memorandum of Understanding has been changed since the February 11, 2025 CotW meeting. Vice President Olson stated that no changes have been made.

The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

7. BR 8238 – Personnel Report

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves the personnel actions noted on the Personnel Report.

A motion was made by Trustee Gorski, seconded by Trustee Cudia, to approve BR8238. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

8. BR 8239 – Request for Special Unpaid Leave of Absence for Full Time Employee

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves an additional special unpaid leave of absence for such employee for one final month starting March 1, 2025 and ending March 31, 2025, during which, the employee will pay the employee's designated portion of the health insurance premium and the College will pay its contribution during the month of March 2025. It is recommended that no further extensions of unpaid leave, College health insurance benefits or any other College compensation or benefits be provided upon the conclusion of this leave, on March 31, 2025. Attorney Reviewed.

A motion was made by Trustee Gorski, seconded by Cudia, to approve BR8239. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

9. BR 8240 – ReUp Education Service Contract

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves a partnership agreement with ReUp Education. The four-year partnership agreement provides no upfront cost to Rock Valley College. ReUp Education Services receives 30% of tuition only upon successful re-enrollment of former RVC students through the ReUp Education partnership. Payment to ReUp Education is based on post-census day enrollment verification. ReUp Education partnership fee may be reduced to 27% upon

signing a consortia agreement including five or more Illinois Community Colleges.
Attorney Reviewed.

A motion was made by Trustee Gorski, seconded by Student Trustee Mikos, to approve BR8240. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Other Business

1. New Business

There was no new business.

2. Unfinished Business

Brittany Freiberg, chief development officer, shared an update on the RVC Downtown West Campaign that will provide access and create educational opportunities for all of the region's residents. The goal is to secure \$2.5 million in scholarship funds for the new Downtown West Campus project by offering visible naming opportunities. The RVC Foundation would like the Board of Trustees to consider allowing external naming opportunities for the Downtown Training Center and the Downtown Learning Center at \$2 million each; external names would be displayed for 10 years with the option to renew.

Discussion followed:

- Trustee Trojan inquired whether the RVC Foundation has a naming policy and how naming opportunities will be distributed, such as starting inside or outside of the Downtown West buildings.
- Trustee Cudia questioned whether the College is able to create a naming policy.
- Trustee Nelson stated that he supports fundraising for naming rights, but the RVC Foundation should consider a higher goal than \$2.5 million.
- Trustee Gorski stated that he is all for fundraising.

Updates/Reports

1. President's Update

President Howard Spearman reported the following updates regarding the proposed federal executive orders, the Dear Colleague Letter from the Department of Education, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), and his participation at recent events/meetings:

- Due to the proposed federal executive orders, the RVC administration is monitoring potential impacts to stay proactive and informed of any changes that may affect the College. Nevertheless, RVC will continue honoring its mission while complying with State and Federal laws.
- He recently attended the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Legislative Summit in Washington D.C. along with Jennifer Thompson, executive director of college communications, and Trustees John Nelson and Kristen Simpson.
- He attended statewide meetings with college presidents coordinated by Deputy Governor Martin Torres and Illinois Council of Community Colleges Presidents (ICCCP).

- He participated in a national call coordinated by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).
- He facilitated the College's Town Hall meeting where he responded to employee inquiries.
- He announced that higher education institutions are changing or abolishing DEI-related themes, and while not federally mandated, it is best practice to modify fundamental changes to avoid being a targeted institution. RVC does not have racist policies but considering the circumstances, the College will make immediate changes such as renaming the Office of Equity and Inclusion, the Strategic Plan: Pillar IV, DEI-related titles and events, and updating webpages and marketing materials.
- He recalled the significance and adoption of RVC's mission and core values, notably Diversity. And, if the Federal administration mandates changes, the College is prepared to do the following: update Board Policy 4:10.260; the reduction, elimination, or adjustment of positions, services, and programs; develop a campus-wide communication plan; and provide clarity on concerns and/or adjustments.

Discussion Followed:

- Trustee Trojan said that the College will react accordingly.

2. Leadership Update

- Dr. Amanda Smith, vice president of academic affairs, reported that RVC hosted the Illinois Council for Teachers of Mathematics High School Math Contest; there was over 400 students from 25 high schools who participated. Dr. Smith recognized English Professor Dr. Mathew Oakes for completing a fellowship with Campus Compact, where he published three audio essays regarding community and civic engagement in the region.
- Dr. Patrick Peyer, vice president of student affairs, provided several updates including: the Men's and Women's bowling teams will be defending their 2024 NJCAA National Championships on Feb. 28; RVC will host the entire Region Tournament for Men's and Women's basketball teams with both teams beginning Region Tournament on Feb. 27. Currently, Women are the #1 overall seed, and Men are #4 overall seed; Summer I and II credit registration starts March 3, Fall priority registration starts on March 17, and open registration begins on March 20; Women's History Month Kick-off event will be held on March 4, starting at noon in the ERC lobby; the First Tuesday Lecture presented by Dr. Martin Quick will be held on March 4, at 5:30 p.m. in the SSC Atrium.
- Heather Snider, vice president of institutional effectiveness and communications, provided several updates including: an update on enrollment for spring semester, reporting that the enrollment continues to exceed the budget by 17% and the stretch goal by 11%; Ms. Snider recognized the 2024 Assessment Award Winners: Dr. Maureen Lowry-Fritz, political science professor and Amanda Zika, manager of first-year experience, received the Emerging Assessment Star award; Chad Roth, fire science coordinator, and Tekkahmah Curry, diversity, equity, and inclusion specialist, received the Assessment Champion award; The Developmental Math Department received the Excellence in Assessment award, and recognized Math

Professors Carl Trank and Dr. Jef Tripp; an article was published by eLearning Industry recognizing RVC's website as an effective higher education website; the RVC Downtown West groundbreaking ceremony will be held on Thursday, March 27, at 3:00 p.m.

- Dr. Keith Barnes, vice president of equity and inclusion, shared the following: the early history of Women's History Month sourced by The National Women's History Museum; the National Women's History Alliance has selected the yearly theme for 2025, "Moving Forward Together! Women Educating & Inspiring Generations"; RVC will have programs and events throughout March to celebrate Women's History Month; Dr. Barnes recognized Tekkahmah Curry as a finalist for the 2025 Women of Achievement Racial Justice Award presented by YWCA Northwestern Illinois. The winner will be announced on Monday, March 3, 2025.

3. Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) Report

Trustee Nelson provided a thorough report of his experience at the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) National Legislative Summit which he attended on behalf of RVC with Dr. Spearman, Trustee Simpson, and Jennifer Thompson. He shared the topics discussed including: Pell grant cuts, the new U.S. secretary of education, presenters, and meetings with Illinois Congressmen and Senators.

4. Trustees Comments

- Trustee Nelson suggested a major fundraising initiative for the college's 65th anniversary.
- Trustee Cudia noted her sincere appreciation for the staff's dedication and hard work and acknowledged that RVC is a finalist for several American Association of Community Colleges awards.
- Trustee Simpson echoed President Spearman and Trustee Nelson's comments regarding the ACCT National Legislative Summit. She said these are fluid times and that we should all be encouraged to contact our elected officials, who represent us in Washington.
- Trustee Trojan commented that he was pleased to hear about the upcoming groundbreaking ceremony for the Downtown West Campus and the multimillion-dollar scholarship campaign; however, the College is cautious of the federal and state funds. He also said that the Board and the RVC administration will move forward strong and thanked faculty and staff for their dedication and commitment to RVC.
- Trustees Soltow and Kennedy had no comments. Trustee Gorski was not present for comments.

5. Student Trustee Report

Student Trustee Nico Mikos reported the following on-campus events: Women's Basketball Game v. Milwaukee Area Technical College was on February 20, 2025, in the Physical Education Center (PEC); Mental Health Check-in was on February 25, 2025, in the Stenstrom Student Center (SSC) Hub; Black History Month Closing Ceremony is on February 27, 2025, at 1 p.m. in the SSC Atrium; Women's History Month Kick-off starts on March 4, 2025, at noon in the ERC lobby.

6. Rock Valley College Foundation Liaison Report

Trustee Trojan announced that the next RVC Foundation Board meeting will be held on March 18, 2025, at noon in the Woodward Technology Center (WTC), room 1308.

7. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Report

The FOIA report was accepted as presented.

Adjourn to Closed Session

At 6:23 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Kennedy, seconded by Trustee Trojan, to adjourn to closed session to discuss security procedures and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public, or public property per Section 2 (c) (8), in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act.

Reconvene Open Session

At 6:45 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Nelson, seconded by Trustee Trojan, to adjourn the closed session and return to open session. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Next Meeting

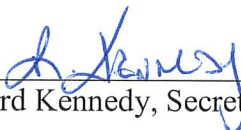
The next Committee of the Whole meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at 5:15 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Educational Resource Center (ERC) in the Performing Arts Room (PAR), Room 0214.

The next Regular Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 25, 2025, at 5:15 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Educational Resource Center (ERC) in the Performing Arts Room (PAR), Room 0214.

Adjournment

At 6:47 p.m., a motion was made by Student Trustee Mikos, seconded by Trustee Nelson, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Submitted by Araceli Olvera



Richard Kennedy, Secretary



Robert Trojan, Board Chair