

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

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

March 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 Resource 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
Ms. Gloria Cardenas Cudia
Mr. Paul Gorski

Mr. Richard Kennedy
Mr. John Nelson (arrived 5:20 p.m.)
Nico Mikos, Student Trustee

The following trustees were absent at roll call: Ms. Crystal Soltow, Ms. Kristen Simpson.

Also in Attendance: Dr. Howard Spearman, President; 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; Tracy Luethje, Executive Assistant to the Vice President of Operations; Attorney Joe Perkoski, Robbins Schwartz

Board Member Attendance by Means Other than Physical Presence

A motion was made by Trustee Gorski, seconded by Trustee Kennedy to allow Trustee Kristen Simpson to attend the meeting by means other than physical presence. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote, and Trustee Simpson joined the meeting via telephone.

Communications and Petitions (Public Comment)

There were no communications or petitions.

Recognition of Visitors

There were no visitors to be recognized.

General Presentations

There were no general presentations.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Trustee Cudia, seconded by Student Trustee Mikos, to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2025, Committee of the Whole (CotW) meeting and the February 25, 2025, Regular Board meeting. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Action Items

1. BR 8241 – 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 February 1, 2025, to February 28, 2025. The total is \$2,821,111.21.

A motion was made by Trustee Gorski, seconded by Student Trustee Mikos, to approve BR8241. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

2. BR 8242 – A – Purchase Report–A – FY2025 Amendments

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

A. Terracon Consultants, Inc	Downers Grove, IL	\$25,000.00 Not to exceed
B. ComEd	Chicago, IL	\$37,000.00 Not to exceed
C. Helm Service	Freeport, IL	\$50,000.00 Not to exceed

A motion was made by Student Trustee Mikos, seconded by Trustee Gorski, to approve BR8242-A. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

3. BR 8242-B –Purchase Report–B – FY2025 Purchases

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

A. The New Growth Group, LLC	Cleveland, OH	\$50,000.00 Not to exceed
B. S&P Global Ratings	Chicago, IL	\$39,710.00 Not to exceed
C. Your Safety Company	Chambersburg, PA	\$61,990.00
D. Helm Service	Freeport, IL	\$52,000.00 Not to exceed
E. Distinctive Roofing, Inc.	Rockford, IL	\$56,280.00 Not to exceed

A motion was made by Trustee Cudia, seconded by Trustee Gorski, to approve BR8242-B. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

4. BR 8242-C – Purchase Report–C – FY2025 Purchases – Downtown West

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

Note: All items on this Purchase Report pertain to Bid #25-01-D05 Main Package for Downtown Campus for the construction of the Downtown West campus. This bid contained fourteen (14) separate packages, numbered 5.01 to 5.14. The bid was released on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, and 573 vendors were notified of the release. Thirty-eight vendors submitted responses which were opened on February 25, 2025. Bid package 5.10 Automotive Lifts received one response, but upon review the vendor confirmed they had made an error in the scope of work and requested to withdraw their submittal. As a result, this report does not include a recommendation to award package 5.10, and that package will be rebid. All other packages are included in this report. All of the recommended awards have been reviewed and vetted by Ringland Johnson Construction as the project's Construction Manager at Risk. All the recommended awards have confirmed participation in an apprenticeship program approved by and registered with the United States Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship and Training, with the exception of package 5.09, which has confirmed the use of subcontractors who meet the requirement.

A.	Jimmy'z Masonry Corp	Crystal Lake, IL	\$948,000.00 Not to exceed
B.	Ruiz Construction Co	Rockford, IL	\$3,584,000.00 Not to exceed
C.	American Igloo Builders	Libertyville, IL	\$1,911,590.00 Not to exceed
D.	H.C. Anderson Roofing Co	Rockton, IL	\$1,238,857.00 Not to exceed
E.	Cardinal Glass Company	Rockford, IL	\$2,191,000.00 Not to exceed
F.	The Rockwell Group	Freeport, IL	\$2,770,800.00 Not to exceed
G.	Northern IL Terrazzo & Tile Co	Rockford, IL	\$204,200.00 Not to exceed
H.	Boss Carpet One, LLC	Dixon, IL	\$399,826.00 Not to exceed
I.	Boelter LLC	Chicago, IL	\$145,129.00 Not to exceed
J.	Nelson Fire Protection	Rockford, IL	\$216,062.00 Not to exceed
K.	Miller Engineering Co	Rockford, IL	\$1,706,939.00 Not to exceed
L.	Miller Engineering Co	Rockford, IL	\$5,224,300.00 Not to exceed
M.	Helm Electric	Sterling, IL	\$6,685,700.00

A motion was made by Trustee Cudia, seconded by Trustee Gorski, to approve BR8242-C.

Trustee Gorski questioned why the elevator was included in the general contracting bid. As explained by COO Rick Jenks, due to issues with the separate elevator bid, (one bid was incomplete and the second one was changed so much that the college attorney advised not to accept it), it was recommended that the elevator be included in the general contracting bid so that Ringland Johnson, the CMR, could confirm the bid was accurate.

At 5:20 p.m., Trustee Nelson entered the meeting.

The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

5. BR 8243 – 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 Student Trustee Mikos, seconded by Trustee Gorski, to approve BR8243. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

6. BR 8244 – Fundraising Agreement between Rock Valley College Foundation and Rock Valley College for the RVC Downtown West Campaign

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves the fundraising agreement between the Rock Valley College Foundation and Rock Valley College.

A motion was made by Trustee Cudia, seconded by Student Trustee Mikos, to approve BR8244. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

7. BR 8245 – Funding Increase for the Downtown West Construction Project

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees authorizes the funding increase from \$52,165,970 to \$58,000,000 for the construction of the Rockford Downtown West Campus which consists of the Downtown Training Center and the Downtown Learning Center. **Attorney Reviewed.**

A motion was made by Trustee Gorski, seconded by Trustee Kennedy, to approve BR8245. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by majority roll call vote. Trustees Simpson, Gorski, Cudia, Kennedy, and Trojan voted yes. Student Trustee Mikos voted yes (advisory). Trustee Nelson voted no.

Other Business

1. New Business

There was no new business.

2. Unfinished Business

a. President Spearman announced that Rockford's Mayor Tom McNamara will speak at the April 8 Committee of the Whole meeting regarding the City's property tax rebate program and Rockford Promise. In response to a request from Board Chair Trojan, CFO Ellen Olson will check with the mayor's office to determine if the Board could have the related documents prior to the presentation.

b. Vice President Heather Snider reminded trustees of the Downtown West Groundbreaking ceremony to be held at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 27. Those who have not responded to the invitation are asked to RSVP to Ann Kerwitz. Speakers will include Board Chair Trojan, Winnebago County Chair Joe Chiarelli and Mayor McNamara, and photos will be taken with trustees following the ceremony. All local officials and state legislators, as well as groups representing the west side have been invited.

Updates/Reports

1. President's Update

President Howard Spearman reported the following updates

- Dr. Keith Barnes represented RVC well while serving on an equity and inclusion panel at the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) conference held March 14.
- Dr. Spearman will attend the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Annual Conference April 12-16. RVC is a finalist for the Outstanding College/Corporate Partnership Award and the Advancing Equity and Belonging Award. In addition, RVC was awarded the 2024 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award by the Insight Into Diversity magazine.
- Allowing Community College baccalaureate degrees is still a hot topic in Springfield, but the bill was not called for a vote and did not get out of committee. House Bill 3717 represents the governor's proposal and is a good way to increase access for community college students, especially those in AAS degrees. Dr. Spearman also explained some of the erroneous myths regarding the bill such as increased property taxes, and community colleges will not have enough qualified faculty, both of which are not true. He added that many RVC faculty have terminal degrees and professional experience, and that RVC just received re-accreditation with no monitoring from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). To help move this initiative in the positive direction for community colleges, he has spoken to and reached out to the College's legislators.
- Also, the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) has encouraged trustees to submit Witness Slips to the House in support of the bill. Students will have the opportunity to speak with legislators on Student Advocacy Day to be held April 9 in Springfield.
- Trustee Nelson commented that this was discussed at the recent ICCTA meeting, and attendees thought the bill would pass. He added that community colleges and four-year universities have had discussions regarding the pending legislation, but have reached an impasse. He agreed with Dr. Spearman that this is a big disappointment. Mr. Nelson added that although some of the four-year schools are worried about finances, community colleges are on solid financial footing, but there are enrollment concerns, and our industry partners are asking for help to develop educational opportunities for better workers.

2. Leadership Update

- Dr. Amanda Smith, vice president of academic affairs, reported that the RVC music festival will be held this weekend, and the Science Olympiad and juried art show were a great success.
- Mr. Rick Jenks, vice president of operations, congratulated Melissa Gear and Heather Persaud of the IT Department for their successful presentation at the Howard Technology Conference and Expo in Alabama. Their presentation on RVC's laptop loan program for students was well received, and they have been contacted by other schools for further information. Mr. Jenks also provided construction updates:
 - The Health Sciences Center (HSC) remodel of the third floor is expected to be completed this summer, with the new elevator later in the fall.
 - The Power Shed project that began last fall is nearing completion with the final power cutover for buildings E and F being planned for April. Demolition of the old shed and landscaping will take place as the weather gets warmer.
 - The lighting upgrade for the Stenstrom Student Center is almost finished. New LED lights will provide better lighting at a reduced cost.

In response to a question from Trustee Nelson regarding the possible effect of proposed federal tariffs, COO Jenks explained that the tariffs will not affect current projects, but may affect the Classroom Building II and Health Sciences Center renovation projects. Smaller projects may be affected as well, as bids will likely come in higher.

- Dr. Terrica Huntley, interim vice president of human resources, reported that a benefits survey has been sent to all employees to help determine how the HR Department can continue to support employees. She also recognized the benefits team who provided 1095C tax forms for employees before the March 3 deadline. She also reminded trustees that May 1 is the deadline to complete the Winnebago County Statement of Economic Interests form.
- Mrs. Ellen Olson, vice president of finance, announced that the College has received an AA minus bond rating for the upcoming debt certificates. The official preliminary statement for the debt certificates will be issued March 26, with bids expected on April 2, and receipt of the proceeds on April 22. Comments in relation to the bond rating indicated that the rating agency is looking for stabilized enrollment, and is watching the potential for OPEB liability to be passed down to the community colleges.

In response to a question from Trustee Nelson, CFO Olson indicated that her goal is to increase the College's rating to AA, as the College has a good reserve plan and consistent excess revenues, but the state of Illinois' financial situation is a negative.

- Ms. Heather Snider, vice president of institutional effectiveness and communications, provided several updates, reporting that enrollment for the spring semester continues to exceed the budget and is at 103% of the stretch goal. She also recognized Sharla Parsons, Ellen Olson, Leanna Davis, and Carol Kaufman, all who worked to submit the required federal reporting surveys to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)

three weeks early. Jennifer Lindsay in HR also contributed to timely reporting to the state that support the federal IPEDS report.

3. Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) Report

Trustee Nelson provided a report of his experience at the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) conference held March 14-15 at Lisle, IL. Discussion topics included standing firm on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) terms. He also received compliments on Dr. Keith Barnes presentation to the ICCTA representatives. As the regional chair for the Northwest Region, Mr. Nelson serves on the ICCTA Executive Committee, as well as the Finance Committee, and recommended extension of the contract for current ICCTA Executive Director Jim Reed.

4. Trustees Comments

- Trustee Gorski would like to review Board policy regarding loaning of technology, automobiles and college equipment and discuss it at the next meeting.
- Trustee Cudia commented that there is a lot of excitement surrounding the downtown campus and the upcoming groundbreaking. She also inquired about speaking protocol for public officials at the groundbreaking. Dr. Spearman confirmed that all of the speakers have been contacted ahead of time. Dr. Spearman also confirmed that a schedule of upcoming completion ceremonies will be presented at the April 8 Committee of the Whole meeting.
- Board Chair Trojan commented that there were 84 views of the video from the Trustee Candidate Forum held last night, with about 40-50 in the room. He added that trustees need to use their microphones, as it's difficult to hear when participating in a meeting via telephone, which he did for the March Committee of the Whole meeting.

5. Student Trustee Report

Student Trustee Nico Mikos reported on the following on-campus events: First Generation Speaker Series, Mental Health Check-in, Wellness Wednesday, and the Spring Jazz Concert. He also wished the softball and baseball teams the best of luck as they begin their seasons.

6. Rock Valley College Foundation Liaison Report

Trustee Trojan provided an update on the RVC Foundation Board meeting held on March 18, 2025. A record \$800,000 is available for scholarships, and 445 applications have been received. In addition, the Foundation's fundraising goal of \$2.5 million will be announced by Brittany Freiberg at the Downtown West groundbreaking later this week. Also, 14 community leaders have committed to participate in the 60th Anniversary CEO Challenge to be held April 25. The fundraising goal for the day of lunch, fun and games is \$60,000.

7. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Report

The FOIA report was accepted as presented.

Next Meeting

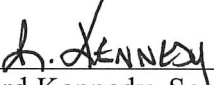
The next Committee of the Whole meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 8, 2025, at 5:15 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Educational Resource Center (ERC) in the Performing Arts Room (PAR), Room 0214 on the main campus.

The next Regular and Reorganization Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 22, 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 on the main campus.

Adjournment

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

Submitted by Ann L. Kerwitz



Richard Kennedy, Secretary



Robert Trojan, Board Chair