

**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, December 2, 2025**

MINUTES

Call to Order

The Rock Valley College (RVC) Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting convened on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, 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	Mr. John Nelson joined at 5:19 p.m.
Dr. Jenna Goldsmith	Ms. Gloria Cardenas Cudia joined at 5:20 p.m.
Mr. Robert (Bob) Trojan	Ms. Crystal Soltow
Ms. Kristen Simpson	

The following Trustees were absent from the roll call: Mr. Isiah Blake, Student Trustee; Mr. John Nelson, joined the meeting at 5:19 p.m.; and Ms. Gloria Cardenas Cudia, joined the meeting at 5:29 p.m.

Also present: Dr. Howard J. Spearman, President; Dr. Keith Barnes, Vice President of Cultural Excellence and Belonging; Ms. Ellen Olson, Vice President of Finance; Ms. Heather Snider, Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Communications; Dr. Hansen Stewart, Vice President of Career and Technical Education and Workforce Development; Mr. Rick Jenks, Vice President of Operations; Dr. Terrica Huntley, Vice President of Human Resources; Ms. Ann Kerwitz, Assistant to the President; Ms. Carly Huotari, Assistant to the President; Ms. Tracy Luethje, Executive Assistant to the Vice President of Operations, Attorney Matthew Gardner, Robbins Schwartz.

Board Member Attendance by Means Other than Physical Presence

There were no Board Members attending by any other means.

Communications and Petitions

A letter was received from Faulk and Foster, on behalf of Total Energies, addressed to the Board of Trustees regarding community solar farms. The letter was passed along to President Spearman for evaluation by his staff.

Recognition of Visitors

There were no visitors to be recognized.

Review of Minutes

There were no comments on the minutes from the November 4, 2025, Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting.

General Presentations

There were no general presentations.

Teaching, Learning & Communications Discussion: Board Liaison Trustee Goldsmith

1. Enrollment Update

Ms. Heather Snider, vice president of institutional effectiveness and communications, provided the enrollment figures for Fiscal Year 2026. Ms. Snider stated that RVC is ahead of FY2025, with Winterim 4% ahead of FY2025, 26% ahead of the budget, and 18% ahead of the stretch goal. Spring is 4% ahead of FY2025, 80% to budget, and 77% to the stretch goal. Combined terms (Winterim and Spring) are 5% ahead of FY2025, 95% to budget, and 91% to the stretch goal. Vice President Snider wanted to point out that since the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) has released its Enrollment Report, the College's monthly Enrollment Report and the ICCB's Fall Enrollment Report differ in two main ways:

- Timing: ICCB reports are a single point-in-time snapshot, while the College monitors Fall Enrollment throughout the entire semester due to late-start classes, and
- Inclusion of Adult Education: The ICCB report includes Adult Education, which the College's internal budget report does not.

Trustee Gorski requested a future, detailed discussion among the Board members to clarify and reach consensus on the appropriate metrics to use from various external and internal enrollment reports.

2. Lobbyist Update

Vice President Snider highlighted two upcoming legislative events:

- Northern Illinois Council of Governments Legislative Luncheon that will take place on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the UMB Pavilion. Ms. Snider listed the regional legislators who will attend.
- RVC Legislative Breakfast will be held on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at 8:00 a.m. in the Health Sciences Center (HSC) lobby. Ms. Snider stated that the purpose of the breakfast is to facilitate an open dialogue on RVC's shared priorities and to share RVC's initiatives with elected officials. The event is co-led by Dr. Litesa Wallace, RVC's lobbyist, and Jennifer Thompson, executive director of college communications. Discussion ensued.

3. Technology (Tech) Bus Update

Dr. Hansen Stewart, vice president of career technical education and workforce development, presented an update on the Tech Bus, noting it has been a community service vehicle but lacks a revenue stream and has become costly to maintain. The bus has been in the shop frequently. The immediate inflection point is a \$34,000 quote for a transmission-related repair that the shop says is only 80% likely to resolve the issue. Dr. Stewart explained that over the past two years, the bus has served hundreds of people across several community locations. Dr. Stewart stated that the Administration proposes moving away from the current bus to a new mobile unit, likely a trailer, that would serve a dual function: community service and workforce development/short-term training to generate revenue. Dr. Spearman clarified that institutional funds would not be used; the Administration would seek grant funding to purchase and equip the new unit.

Considerable discussion ensued. Trustee Nelson addressed the issues and requested that his comments be included in the meeting minutes. Trustee Gorski stated that if Trustee Nelson wanted his remarks in the meeting minutes, Trustee Nelson would need to write them down at the end of the meeting and send them to Dr. Spearman first thing tomorrow morning.

Trustees suggested implementing a process to track whether individuals served by the mobile unit ultimately enroll at the College to better measure its marketing/revenue value. President Spearman confirmed the administration will pause the \$34,000 repair, conduct further research, detail the vision for the next mobile unit, and bring the fully researched proposal back to the Board for a discussion and decision.

4. Multiple Measures of Placement (Based on Developmental Education Reform Act- DERA)

Dr. Mark Lanting, dean of communications and humanities, presented the Multiple Measures of Placement presentation on behalf of Dr. Amanda Smith, vice president of academic affairs, who was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Dr. Lanting explained that the goals are to include additional ways for students to satisfy requirements and to place into college-level courses, and that the biggest change is using high school grade point averages (GPAs) as a placement measure. Multiple measures include SAT, ACT, Accuplacer, High School GPA, GED, CASAS, EdReady (English), and ALEKS (Math). Dr. Lanting stated that the number of developmental courses required has been significantly reduced over the last three to four years and that a new approach is to implement a co-requisite support option for gateway courses (e.g., English 101 and gateway math courses). The co-requisite is for students who fall just below the placement threshold. The redesign is significantly improving student outcomes by addressing prior issues of losing confidence, dropping out, and exhausting their financial aid on non-credit courses. The next steps are to explore students' progress through the new pathways, continue monitoring data from the Institutional Research (IR) department, and review the curriculum to refine it where necessary.

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. Software – (IT Administration – Maintenance Services Software Support)

1.	Hyland, LLC	Lenexa, KS	\$ 1,675.37*(1)
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B. Professional Services – (Architect of Record – Other Contractual Services)

2.	OPN, Inc.	Cedar Rapids, IA	\$ 200,000.00*(2)
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Purchase Report B – FY2026 Purchases

A. Proctoring Software – Subscriptions–Web Applications – Online Learning)

1.	Honorlock, Inc.	Boca Raton, FL	\$ 26,390.91*(1)
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B. Electric Vehicle – Capital Instructional Equipment/Furniture – Rev Up EV Grant)

2.	TBD	TBD	\$ 50,000.00*(2)
			Not to Exceed
	Hamblock Ford	Belvidere, IL	\$ 34,467.00
	Middleton Ford	Middleton, WI	\$ 36,722.00
	Huntley Ford	Huntley, IL	\$ 42,456.00

C. Scissor Lift – (Capital Service Equipment – Equipment Replacement

3.	Atlas Toyota Material Handling	Elk Grove Village, IL	\$ 37,771.95*(3)
	Yousuf Parekh Enterprises, Inc.	Sugarland, TX	\$ 44,734.94

D. Fire Alarm Upgrade – (Other Capital Outlay – PHS Fire Alarm Upgrade)

4.	Morse Electric, Inc.	Freeport, IL	\$ 264,230.00*(4)
			Not to Exceed
	P & H Electric Corp.	Stillman Valley, IL	\$ 275,000.00
	Miller Engineering Co.	Rockford, IL	\$ 303,050.00
	Helm Electric	Loves Park, IL	\$ 399,954.50

E. Contractual Services – (Other Contractual Services – Purchasing Card)

5.	UMB Card Services	Kansas City, MO	\$ 740,000.00*(5)
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F. Mechanical Services – (Maintenance Services Plant–Operations Equipment – Boiler House)

6.	Hartwig Mechanical, Inc.	Harvard, IL	\$ 220,000.00*(6)
			Not to Exceed
	Preventive Maintenance Costs (13.01 Boiler and Chiller)		
	Helm Service	Freeport, IL	\$ 23,978.00
	Geostar Mechanical, Inc.	Rockford, IL	\$ 29,800.00
	Hartwig Mechanical, Inc.	Harvard, IL	\$ 29,945.00
	Miller Engineering Company	Rockford, IL (Backflows only)	\$ 6,904.00
	Roof Top Units (13.02)		
	Helm Service	Freeport, IL	\$ 23,668.00
	Hartwig Mechanical, Inc.	Harvard, IL	\$ 30,310.00
	Miller Engineering Company	Rockford, IL	\$ 34,220.00
	LM Sheet Metal, Inc.	Loves Park, IL	\$ 48,120.00
	Geostar Mechanical, Inc.	Rockford, IL	\$ 54,500.00
	Multistack and Liebert (13.03)		
	Geostar Mechanical, Inc.	Rockford, IL	\$ 8,500.00
	Helm Services	Freeport, IL	\$ 10,492.00
	Hartwig Mechanical, Inc.	Harvard, IL	\$ 15,080.00
	Estimated Annual Repair Costs per Hourly Rates		
	Hartwig Mechanical, Inc.	Harvard, IL	\$ 93,700.00
	Geostar Mechanical, Inc.	Rockford, IL	\$ 98,500.00
	Helm Service	Freeport, IL	\$ 99,300.00
	Total Estimated Annual Costs		
	Helm Service	Freeport, IL	\$ 157,438.00
	Hartwig Mechanical, Inc.	Harvard, IL	\$ 169,035.00
	Geostar Mechanical, Inc.	Rockford, IL	\$ 191,300.00

2. Resolution Abating a Portion of the Working Cash Fund

Ms. Olson stated that RVC issued Working Cash Bonds, Series 2024, in the amount of \$14,700,000 that closed on November 18, 2024. The bond issuance was intended to fund alterations, remodeling, and equipment for District facilities, including Classroom Building II (CLII) and the Health Sciences Center (HSC). Administration is asking to permanently abate \$1,635,484.83 for capital expenditures incurred through November 5, 2025, associated with the HSC buildout. This action permanently reimburses operations from the Working Cash Fund. It was noted that the goal is to have the HSC elevator installed by the end of 2025.

3. Summary of Fiscal Year 2026 Estimated Revenues by Source

The College is required to certify the estimated revenues by source for fiscal year 2026. Ms. Olson provided the sources with revenue amounts.

4. Tax Levy Year 2025 Estimated Taxes Required and Certificate of Compliance

Ms. Olson explained that on October 28, 2025, the Board approved the estimated taxes required for the upcoming levy year. The total property taxes represent an increase in the amount of taxes extended and/or abated for the upcoming levy year by 6.50%; therefore, a Truth-In-Taxation Hearing in accordance with the Truth-In-Taxation Law. A Truth-In-Taxation Hearing will be held on December 16, 2025, at 5:15 p.m. A notice was published within 14 days of the Truth-In-Taxation Hearing. Discussion ensued.

5. Cash and Investment Report

Ms. Olson presented the Cash and Investment Report through November 20, 2025. Total operating cash is \$33,467,870. Total operating cash and investments are \$108,741,119. The operating cash and investments have changed by <\$2,777,517> since October 31, 2025. Total capital funds are \$84,334,831. Since October 31, 2025, the change in capital funds has been <\$1,498,970.> Ms. Olson stated that the total operating cash and investment funds were 101.21% of the FY2026 operating budget.

Operations Discussion: Board Liaison Trustee Trojan

1. Downtown West Update

Mr. Rick Jenks, vice president of operations, provided an update on construction at the Downtown West campus. Mr. Jenks stated that several change orders were presented as the project neared completion. The contingency use is slightly over 10% of the \$2.2 million contingency fund, and the project is over 50% complete, which is considered in “good standing.” A reconciliation change order in the amount of \$67,500 was required to address discrepancies between bid packages 4 and 5, a typical process for a project of this size. Dr. Spearman stated that if Trustees attend the December 17th legislative breakfast, they will have the opportunity to tour the HSC afterward. Discussion ensued.

Trustee Trojan inquired about the incident that happened on RVC’s main campus on Saturday, November 15, 2025, with the discovery of chemicals at the Karl J. Jacobs Center for Science and Math (JCSM). An update on the investigation will be provided at the next meeting.

2. Change Order Update

Vice President Jenks discussed the following change orders:

- Securities Upgrade – Phase 1: A change order in the amount of \$8,019.00 to Schneider Electric for waterbug sensors at the Springbrook House, and Support Services Building (SSB) wire and install for Bosch motion sensors.
- Health Sciences Center (HSC) 3rd Floor Buildout: In the process of closing out the project. The elevator installation should be completed by the end of December 2025.
- Exterior Tuckpointing: Unused funds in the amount of \$13,771.00 are being credited back to RVC.

3. Personnel Report

Vice President Jenks reported that there are four placeholders for faculty positions: one chemistry instructor, one English instructor, and two aviation maintenance technology instructors. Discussion ensued.

4. RVC Events Calendar

Mr. Jenks discussed the December 2025 RVC Events Calendar. Final exam week and graduation ceremonies were highlighted.

New Business/Unfinished Business

There was no new or unfinished business.

Adjourn to Closed Session

At 6:49 p.m., Trustee Nelson made a motion, seconded by Trustee Simpson, to adjourn to closed session to discuss: 1) The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting per Section 2 (c) (1); and/or 2) Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees per Section 2 (c) (2), all in accordance with the Illinois Open meetings Act.

The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Reconvene Open Session

At 7:17 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 a unanimous roll call vote. No action was taken as a result of the closed session.

Next Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

The next Regular Board of Trustees Meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, 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, January 13, 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 7:18 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Nelson, seconded by Trustee Trojan, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Submitted by: Tracy L. Luethje.



Dr. Jenna Goldsmith, Secretary
Bob Trojan, Secretary Pro Tempore



Paul Gorski, Chairman