

## **APPROVED**

### **MORAIN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE 9000 West College Parkway Palos Hills, IL 60465**

The Governing Board of Moraine Valley Community College, District No. 524, Regular Meeting was held on Thursday, February 19, 2026, in Building D, Board Room D219, 9000 West College Parkway, Palos Hills, Illinois, 60465.

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Beth McElroy Kirkwood asked meeting attendees to rise and join her in reciting The Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was called to order by Chair Beth McElroy Kirkwood at 6:00 p.m.

#### **II. ROLL CALL**

Present: Beth McElroy Kirkwood, Chair; Eileen Kerlin Walsh; Patricia Joan Murphy; Jaclyn O'Day; Diane Shaar; Tracy M. Sullivan; Garrett Weigel, Student Trustee

Absent: Dr. Walter Fronczek

#### **III. MINUTES**

Trustee Sullivan requested a minor edit to the minutes to clarify that she said the college was not required to bid out lobbying services during the Special Meeting/Board Retreat on January 20, 2026. The meeting minutes were amended to reflect the change. It was moved by Vice Chair Murphy and seconded by Trustee Shaar to approve the unapproved minutes of the Public Hearing on Tax Levy on December 18, 2025; the unapproved minutes of the Regular Meeting, December 18, 2025; the unapproved minutes of the Special Meeting/Board Retreat on January 20, 2026, as amended; and the unapproved minutes of the Closed Session of the Special Meeting/Board Retreat on January 20, 2026.

ROLL CALL VOTE taken on the unapproved minutes of the Public Hearing on Tax Levy on December 18, 2025; the unapproved minutes of the Regular Meeting, December 18, 2025; the unapproved minutes of the Special Meeting/Board Retreat on January 20, 2026, as amended; and the unapproved minutes of the Closed Session of the Special Meeting/Board Retreat on January 20, 2026:

Yes: Kerlin Walsh, McElroy Kirkwood, Murphy, O'Day, Shaar, Sullivan  
Absent: Fronczek  
Student  
Advisory: Yes.

Motion carried.

**IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

None.

**V. BOARD REPORTS AND/OR REQUESTS**

**3.1 Student Trustee Report - G. Weigel**

Student Trustee Weigel presented the Student Trustee Report. He noted that Student Life hosted a Club and Organization Fair, which provided students with opportunities to explore the wide variety of clubs on campus. He also reported on a graduation and transfer event held in the S Building, which connected students directly with representatives from four-year institutions. Application fees for students interested in transferring were waived, and many received their admissions decisions immediately. He reported on a voter registration drive that was conducted in collaboration with the Democracy Commitment and the League of Women Voters. He said the initiative aimed to increase student participation in the electoral process and emphasized the importance of voting and helping students make their voices heard. He also noted that a Chinese New Year celebration took place, and that students received traditional red envelopes containing chocolate coins, adding a festive cultural touch to the month's student events.

**3.2 ACCT National Legislative Summit Report - D. Shaar**

Trustee Shaar reported on the ACCT National Legislative Summit held in Washington, D.C., from February 8 – 11. She noted that she was joined at the summit by Trustee Fronczek, Trustee O'Day, Trustee Sullivan, Secretary Kerlin Walsh, Dr. Haney and Steve Pappageorge, vice president of Workforce, Strategy and External Affairs. Trustee Shaar reported that they met with Congressmen Sean Casten and Jonathan Jackson to discuss several federal priorities.

Their discussions emphasized full funding for Workforce Pell and Pell Grants, including eliminating taxation on these grants and increasing the maximum Pell Grant to help keep pace with economic needs. They also highlighted the importance of continued support for the Adult Basic Education Program and the need to sustain the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, noting that reductions in federal funding significantly would hinder these programs. They also discussed the TRIO programs, which support low-income, first-generation students and students with disabilities. They advocated for maintaining support for the American Opportunity Tax Credit to ensure low-income students can benefit fully. Trustees also met with Senators Richard Durbin and Tammy Duckworth, who expressed alignment with these funding priorities and support for maintaining strong educational programs. Trustee Shaar noted that one of the summit's featured speakers was Nicholas Kent, the U.S. under secretary of education. He discussed the policy developments shaping the Workforce Pell Program and reported that FAFSA submissions were tracking well this year, with over 5 million submitted toward a national goal of 17–20 million. He also noted an ongoing shift of certain programs from the U.S. Department of Education to other federal agencies. Trustee Shaar also discussed the keynote address from CNN senior congressional correspondent Manu Raju. She said he shared his compelling personal story, including his upbringing in Darien, Illinois, as the son of Indian immigrants, his academic and athletic achievements and his career path through multiple media outlets.

Secretary Kerlin Walsh shared that she was pleased to have had the opportunity to meet with Congressman Jackson and noted that he was apologetic for not having time to visit the campus. She said he asked his staff to look into scheduling a future visit to campus she stated that the conversation felt productive and meaningful. She believes the college successfully gained the Congressman's attention and engagement moving forward.

Trustee Sullivan reported that while other trustees were meeting with Congressman Jackson, she, along with Trustee O'Day and Steve Pappageroge, met with Congressman Casten. She described the conversation as very positive and noted that Congressman Casten is a strong supporter of education. During their discussion, she asked him what direction he would recommend for a community college president, given his knowledge of national trends. Congressman Casten responded with embracing Artificial Intelligence (AI), emphasizing that AI is influencing every industry, every classroom and every academic program. He encouraged the college to continue integrating AI into its curriculum and career pathways, stressing that AI is not going away. Trustee

Sullivan said it was a valuable trip and that she was grateful to be part of the experience.

Trustee O'Day stated that he agreed with Trustee Sullivan's comments regarding Congressman Casten's strong emphasis on AI. She noted that AI is becoming highly significant across many career fields. She suggested that the Board should carefully consider how the growing importance of AI will affect students pursuing different career pathways in the future.

Dr. Haney expressed her appreciation to the Trustees for attending the National Legislative Summit and for sharing the story of Moraine Valley along with the college's goals and strategic priorities. Dr. Haney thanked the Trustees for their expertise, support and thoughtful talking points. Trustee Sullivan added that Steve Pappageorge did a wonderful job representing the college during the conference.

## **VI. REPORTS OF ADMINISTRATION**

### **6.1 President's Report**

- The League for Innovation in the Community College Terry O'Banion Student Technology Award Recipient, Brandon Mardoian: Brandon Mardoian accepted the Community College Terry O'Banion Student Technology Award. Michelle August, Computer Information Systems faculty, presented the League for Innovation in the Community College Terry O'Banion Student Technology Award to Brandon Mardoian. Ms. August noted that there are more than 300 League member institutions, and only one nominee is allowed per college. She noted Brandon's strengths in coding, analytical work and problem-solving. She concluded by expressing confidence in his future success and congratulated him on receiving the award. Mr. Mardoian expressed his gratitude to everyone at Moraine Valley, noting that the college has been open, supportive, and accessible while offering an affordable education. He emphasized that his success was made possible not only by his instructors but also by the entire campus community. The Board congratulated Mr. Mardoian on receiving the award.
- College Updates: Dr. Haney provided updates from around the campus. She noted that the NextGen Business Leaders Club hosted a successful Young Entrepreneur Fair on February 7 in the M Building. The one-day marketplace featured students ages 6 to 14 who showcased and sold their

handmade products. She said the event was outstanding and thanked Chair McElroy Kirkwood and Vice Chair Murphy for attending, as well as the many community sponsors and volunteers who supported the fair. She also acknowledged that Steve Papageorge was absent from the meeting because he was receiving the Chairman's Excellence Award from the Southland Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Haney noted that he has been active with the chamber for eight years and will serve as Board chair elect next year. The college will formally recognize his accomplishment at the next board meeting. Dr. Haney then announced that the college received state approval to begin enrolling nursing students at the Southwest Education Center. She expressed gratitude to Dr. Ryen Nagle, vice president of Academic Affairs, and Dr. Kelli Harris, dean of Nursing, as well as the Executive Leadership Team, Campus Operations, Institutional Research, Nursing staff, Academic Services, Information Technology, Multimedia Services and Marketing for their extensive work on this major effort.

## **VII. COMMUNICATIONS**

Chair McElroy Kirkwood announced that the College received a Certificate of Recognition from the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), confirming that the institution meets ICCB standards and remains eligible for state grant funding. She noted that the recognition is valid through December 31, 2030, and reminded Trustees that the official letter was included in their Board packets.

Kelly Grab, compliance officer, explained that colleges are required to apply for state recognition every five years to demonstrate compliance with state statutes, administrative rules and performance standards. She noted that the process involves an extensive self-evaluation along with a formal state review and that Moraine Valley's most recent cycle was a 16-month effort involving collaboration across nearly every area of the college. She reported that, at its December meeting, the ICCB approved the college's extended recognition status through December 31, 2030. Dr. Haney thanked all the college employees who assisted in the recognition process.

## **VIII. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

**For DECEMBER 2025:**

8.1(a) Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report showing an ending balance of \$138,776,906.29 will be filed for audit. (DOCUMENT A - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

8.1(b) Budget Report

(DOCUMENT B - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

8.1(c) Investments

(DOCUMENT C – SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

**For JANUARY 2026:**

8.2(a) Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report showing an ending balance of \$139,308,765.80 will be filed for audit. (DOCUMENT D - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

8.2(b) Budget Report

(DOCUMENT E - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

8.2(c) Investments

(DOCUMENT F – SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

**CONSENT AGENDA (IX – XII):**

Vice Chair Murphy asked that agenda item 12.10, 2026 LED Lighting Replacement Project Bid, be pulled from the agenda for discussion. Trustee O'Day asked that agenda items 12.11, Approval of Facilities Master Plan, and 12.12, Approval of Updated 2025-2030 Strategic Plan, be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion.

It was moved by Trustee Sullivan and seconded by Trustee O'Day to approve the following consent agenda items:

**IX. WARRANTS**

**For DECEMBER 2025:**

The warrant summaries are presented to the Board.

9.1	Account Expenditure Summaries	
9.2	Education Fund	\$ 6,359,718.97
9.3	Operation & Maintenance Fund	814,228.16
9.4	Operation & Maintenance Fund (Restricted)	836,531.12
9.5	Bond & Interest Fund	-0-
9.6	Auxiliary Enterprise Fund	717,065.40
9.7	Restricted Purpose Fund	771,449.72
9.8	Working Cash Fund	-0-
9.9	Trust and Agency Fund	8,285.35
9.10	Audit Fund	-0-
9.11	Liability, Protection & Settlement Fund	-0-

(DOCUMENT G - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

**For JANUARY 2026:**

9.1	Account Expenditure Summaries	
9.2	Education Fund	\$7,519,562.17
9.3	Operation & Maintenance Fund	982,872.63
9.4	Operation & Maintenance Fund (Restricted)	835,556.39
9.5	Bond & Interest Fund	-0-
9.6	Auxiliary Enterprise Fund	1,939,332.90
9.7	Restricted Purpose Fund	1,455,043.52
9.8	Working Cash Fund	-0-
9.9	Trust and Agency Fund	6,776.90
9.10	Audit Fund	35,500.00
9.11	Liability, Protection & Settlement Fund	1,890.71

(DOCUMENT H - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

**X. REPORT OF PERSONNEL**

Chair McElroy Kirkwood publicly identified the nature of the agenda items contained in the Report of Personnel.

10.1-1 Full-Time

Thomas Burton - Maintenance Mechanic III - Effective: 1/12/26

Sandra Grening - Secretary II - Effective: 1/12/26

Coleen Kowalski - Director, Disability Services - Effective: 1/12/26

Cecilia Muniz Acosta – Custodian - Effective: 1/12/26

Remonia Murrell - Accounting Clerk II - Effective: 1/12/26  
Ernesto Vazquez - Admissions Recruiter - Effective: 2/9/26  
LaVance Walker - Student Success - Effective: 1/12/26  
(DOCUMENT I - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

10.1-1(a) Tenure Contract for Bargaining Unit Members

Pursuant to the terms of the negotiated Agreement for the Faculty Association, Article 4.3, Non-Tenured Faculty, it is recommended that a contract for the following non-tenured bargaining unit members be renewed for the 2026-2027 academic year.

Tracy Hall	Sleep Technology
Amy Lubke	Art
Alicja Zoladek	Radiology

(DOCUMENT J - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

10.1-1(b) Third-Year Contract for Bargaining Unit Members

Pursuant to the terms of the negotiated Agreement for the Faculty Association, Article 4.3, Non-Tenured Faculty, it is recommended that a contract for the following non-tenured bargaining unit members be renewed for the 2026-2027 academic year.

Marc DiPaolo	Humanities
Andrew Hufnagl	Fire Science
George Lam	Economics
Michael Mason	Radiologic Technology
Sheila Moran	Emergency Medical Services
Aminah Salah	Counselor
Gina Williams	Nursing

(DOCUMENT K - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

10.1-1(c) Extension of Contract for Bargaining Unit Member

As a result of leave of absence, it is recommended that Guillaume Ngonmeudje's probationary period be extended by six months before eligibility for a third-year contract.  
(DOCUMENT L - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

10.1-1(d) Second-Year Contract for Bargaining Unit Members

According to Article 4.3 of the Faculty Agreement, first-year faculty are to be notified in writing of the decision to continue or terminate employment for the upcoming academic year no later than 60 days prior to the end of the first academic year. The following employees are being recommended to be given a contract for the 2026-2027 academic year.

Joseph Gleeson	Developmental Mathematics
Kelly Hand	Library
Maysa Jibawi	Academic Advising
Daniel Maurer, Jr.	Nursing
Adrienne Provax	Basic Nursing
Elizabeth Shaffer-McCarthy	Biology
Dana Wail	Counseling

(DOCUMENT M - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

10.1-2 Part-Time/Supplemental/Other

(DOCUMENT N - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

10.1-3 Salary Revisions

None.

10.1-4 Leave of Absence (LOA)

Laurene Kirby - Professor, Mathematics – Effective: 4/2/26 – 5/8/26  
Jerimi Walker - Associate Professor, Mathematics – Effective: 4/20/26 – 5/8/26  
(DOCUMENT O - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

10.1-5 Resignations/Terminations

Allyssa Grayson - Human Resources Assistant - Effective: 12/17/25  
Sebastian Vega - P.T. User Support Services Specialist - Effective: 12/22/25  
(DOCUMENT P - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

10.1-5(a) Retirements – Administrative, Confidential, Managerial and Supervisory

Chauntai Mack - Career Connections, Youth Program Manager – Effective: 3/31/26

(DOCUMENT Q - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

10.1-5(b) Retirement – Support Staff

Judy Bernier - Accounting Clerk/Cashier - Effective: 3/31/26

Dianne Donovan - P.T. Departmental Assistant - Effective: 4/30/26

(DOCUMENT R - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

10.1-6 – Reclassifications

Esmeralda Diaz - from Secretary II to Administrative Assistant - Effective:  
1/26/26

William Theres - from Senior Maintenance Mechanic IV to Warehouse Worker  
- Effective: 2/9/26

Michael Vazquez - from Technical Engineer to Applications Support Specialist  
- Effective: 2/2/26

(DOCUMENT S - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

**XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**XII. NEW BUSINESS**

Chair McElroy Kirkwood identified the nature of the agenda items contained in New Business.

12.1 Affiliation Agreement with Bedford Park Fire Department (Emergency Medical Services Program)

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the Affiliation Agreement with Bedford Park Fire Department (Emergency Medical Services Program).

(DOCUMENT T - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

12.2 Affiliation Agreement with Bedford Park Fire Department (Fire Science)

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the Affiliation Agreement with Bedford Park Fire Department (Fire Science).

(DOCUMENT U - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

12.3 Affiliation Agreement with North Palos Fire Protection District (Fire Science)

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the Affiliation Agreement with North Palos Fire Protection District (Fire Science).  
(DOCUMENT V - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

12.4 Affiliation Agreement with Oak Forest Fire Department (Fire Science)

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the Affiliation Agreement with Oak Forest Fire Department (Fire Science).  
(DOCUMENT W - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

12.5 Affiliation Agreement with Posen Fire Department (Fire Science)

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the Affiliation Agreement with Posen Fire Department (Fire Science).  
(DOCUMENT X - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

12.6 Amendment to Affiliation Agreement with Sinai Health Systems (Sleep Technology)

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the Amendment to Affiliation Agreement with Sinai Health Systems (Sleep Technology).  
(DOCUMENT Y - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

12.7 Affiliation Agreement with Crestwood Fire Department (Fire Science)

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the Affiliation Agreement with Crestwood Fire Department (Fire Science).  
(DOCUMENT Z - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

12.8 Palos Hills Request for Use of College Property and Intergovernmental Agreement

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees authorize the City of Palos Hills to use college property as specified above for their annual Palos Hills Friendship Festival 2026 to be held July 9-12, 2026.  
(DOCUMENT AA - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

12.9 2026 Network Closet and Core Infrastructure Purchase

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the 2026 Network Closet and Core Infrastructure purchase request as presented.

(DOCUMENT AB - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

12.13 Letter of Support for 143rd Street - Will Cook Road To Southwest Highway Improvements Project

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees authorize the college to send a letter of support on behalf of Moraine Valley Community College for the 143rd Street Will Cook Road to Southwest Highway Improvements Project, proposed by the Village of Orland Park, Illinois.

(DOCUMENT AC - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES).

ROLL CALL VOTE TAKEN on Consent Agenda Items 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 9.6, 9.7, 9.8, 9.9, 9.10 and 9.11 (including travel reimbursements); 10.1-1, 10.1-1(a), 10.1-1(b), 10.1-1(c), 10.1-1(d), 10.1-2, 10.1-4, 10.1-5, 10.1-5(a), 10.1-5(b), and 10.1-6; and 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, 12.6, 12.7, 12.8, 12.9, and 12.13:

Yes: McElroy Kirkwood, Kerlin Walsh, Murphy, O’Day, Shaar, Sullivan

Absent: Fronczek

Student

Advisory: Yes.

Motion carried.

12.10 2026 LED Lighting Replacement Project Bid

Vice Chair Murphy thanked staff for explaining the LED lighting replacement project bid and the overall bidding process. She acknowledged that the college performed its due diligence and confirmed that all procedural requirements had been met. However, she noted that after researching the bidding company on her own, she was unable to find enough information to feel fully confident in supporting the bid. She stated that while she trusts the college’s process, she wanted to express her personal concerns about the vendor and ensure her viewpoint was part of the record.

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the 2026 LED Lighting Replacement Project Bid as presented.

(DOCUMENT AD - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

ROLL CALL VOTE TAKEN on Agenda Item 12.10, 2026 LED Lighting Replacement Project Bid:

Yes: McElroy Kirkwood, Kerlin Walsh, O'Day, Shaar, Sullivan  
No: Murphy  
Absent: Fronczek  
Student  
Advisory: Yes.

Motion carried.

12.11 Approval of Facilities Master Plan

Trustee O'Day thanked Dr. Haney and the college for the work that has gone into the Facilities Master Plan. She asked what the next steps for the plan are after Board approval. Dr. Haney explained that the plan will be submitted to the ICCB as required every five years. She said we need to submit the plan to ensure we are in compliance and noted that it's more of a snapshot of the college's plan moving forward but emphasized that it could change. Trustee O'Day asked if any of the information we submit to ICCB is used to calculate the square footage of the college for any dollars and requests for capital. Trustee O'Day asked whether the college and its leadership team can adjust priorities within the facilities master plan as needs evolve — particularly as academic programs change, new initiatives emerge or certain fields become more in demand due to shifts in the economy. She emphasized the importance of maintaining flexibility so the plan can remain aligned with evolving strategic and workforce priorities. Dr. Haney said the college can adjust the plan. Trustee O'Day asked if it would be possible to receive periodic updates on the status of the facilities master plan and suggested twice per year. Dr. Haney said it would be possible to provide the Board with updates on the plan. Trustee Sullivan said she likes the idea of periodic updates on the plan's status, as long as they do not create too much additional work for employees. She said it would be beneficial to present the information periodically, especially when new Trustees join the Board. Chair McElroy Kirkwood asked what the deadline is to submit the Facilities Master Plan. Dr. David Dammon, vice president of Administrative Services, said the deadline passed in December, but noted that ICCB is aware that we will be submitting the plan soon.

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the Facilities Master Plan as presented.

(DOCUMENT AE - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

#### 12.12 Approval of Updated 2025-2030 Strategic Plan

Trustee O'Day asked if the college could highlight the changes in the updated 2025-2030 Strategic Plan compared to the current version. Dr. Haney explained that the primary update to the strategic plan involves a renewed focus on the college's core values: integrity, responsibility, respect and fairness. She noted that these values will guide the institution moving forward. During the retreat, she and her team demonstrated how these values align with the college's broader strategic priorities and how this work is being carried out across the institution. She emphasized the importance of fostering respect for students, ensuring respectful interactions among employees and consistently upholding the values that define Moraine Valley within both the campus community and the broader community it serves. Trustee O'Day noted that she liked one of the goals under the core value of technology, which discussed identifying and promoting effective and responsible methods for using AI to improve student learning and employee effectiveness.

Trustee Sullivan asked how the updates will be communicated and embedded in what students and college employees see daily. Dr. Haney said the college normally meets with union representatives to inform them and to distribute the update in college news. Trustee Sullivan suggested posting the mission and core values in multiple locations around campus, so they are always on display and easy to find. Trustee O'Day agreed with Trustee Sullivan and said it is important to display the core values everywhere, so they become part of the culture. Dr. Haney said the college does have its mission, strategic priorities and core values displayed throughout the campus and noted that the current signs will be updated. Trustee O'Day suggested having periodic updates on the strategic plan twice per year.

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the updated 2025-2030 Strategic Plan and Mission, Vision and Core Values as presented.

(DOCUMENT AF - SUPPLEMENT TO MINUTES)

ROLL CALL VOTE TAKEN on Agenda Item 12.11, Approval of Facilities Master Plan, and Agenda Item 12.12, Approval of Updated 2025-2030 Strategic Plan:

Yes: McElroy Kirkwood, Kerlin Walsh, Murphy, O’Day, Shaar, Sullivan  
Absent: Fronczek  
Student  
Advisory: Yes.

Motion carried.

**XIII. CLOSED SESSION**

It was moved by Trustee O’Day and seconded by Trustee Sullivan to adjourn to closed session to discuss the purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired pursuant to Section 2(c)(5) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act.

ROLL CALL VOTE taken on motion to move to a closed session:

Yes: McElroy Kirkwood, Kerlin Walsh, Murphy, O’Day, Shaar, Sullivan  
Absent: Fronczek  
Student  
Advisory: Yes.

Motion carried.

Chair McElroy Kirkwood indicated that there would be no additional Board business after the closed session.

The Board moved to closed session at 6:40 p.m. The Board returned to open session at 7:04 p.m.

**XIV. MISCELLANEOUS**

**14.1 Referendum Discussion**

Dr. Haney noted that she is following up with the Board regarding the referendum and asking for guidance. She asked if the referendum is something the Board would like to pursue and whether additional discussion was required. Chair McElroy Kirkwood stated she is concerned that the community survey did not have enough responses for her to feel confident that the community is

interested in the college constructing a new building. She said we may need an additional survey with more feedback to move forward. Student Trustee Weigel said it would be beneficial to get a wider range of opinions and more members of the community to participate.

Trustee O'Day asked how many years the bonds would be for the referendum. Mr. Cipolla said the bonds are typically for 20 years. Trustee O'Day said it is important to make a decision based on economic data. She said AI rapidly is changing career fields and said she would like to see an economic analysis for this region with the outlook for the next five or ten years. She said it would be a good investment to gather economic data points before spending taxpayer dollars.

Trustee Sullivan said she agreed with Chair McElroy Kirkwood's comments regarding the community survey. She said that although the professional who presented the survey said there were enough favorable responses to pursue a referendum, it is possible that the right voters were not surveyed. She noted that getting more input by strategically reaching out to students, faculty and people who live around the community could be more intentional rather than hoping someone responds to a mailer. She said it may be important to think of different strategies to communicate and get more feedback.

Secretary Kerlin Walsh pointed out that the Board paid and hired experts to conduct the survey and report their findings to the Board. She asked if the Board trusted the results that were presented to them. Trustee Sullivan said she does not trust the results of the survey. Chair McElroy Kirkwood said it is unfortunate that there were not more responses to the survey. Secretary Kerlin Walsh said the experts stated the number of responses we received was enough and that they have been successful in passing referendums in the past. She said she thought the Board would have trusted their results, but if that is not the case, then maybe a wider survey is necessary. Vice Chair Murphy said the climate regarding taxes has changed in the community and said she wonders if the survey may come back with different results if conducted now as opposed to when it was conducted in November. Chair McElroy Kirkwood asked the Board if they would like to conduct a different survey. Trustee Sullivan and Chair McElroy Kirkwood said it may be beneficial to have students participate in the survey.

Trustee Shaar asked what the potential tax increase would be for the referendum. Mr. Cipolla said the college will make the last payment on our current bonds in November 2026. He said if they issue new bonds, the tax

increase would depend on the funding level. Mr. Cipolla said the potential tax increase was around \$40 per year for a \$160 million referendum and \$20 per year for a \$130 million referendum.

Trustee O'Day said if the Board chooses to pursue a referendum, it should be done in November. She said she is hearing that the Board would like to gather more input from students and a broader range of community members.

Trustee O'Day said that information is important, but she also would be interested in hearing from economists who can identify which jobs are expected to be available in the areas our community has pinpointed. She stressed the importance of reviewing the economic data to back up the construction of the building and ensuring the jobs in the programs will continue to be in demand 10 to 20 years from now. She said it also is important to consider smaller, emerging jobs that are likely to arise in our region over the next five to ten years.

Chair McElroy Kirkwood asked if the college could provide recommendations to conduct another survey. Dr. Haney said they could bring back recommendations to the Board.

#### 14.2 Discussion of Lobbyist Selection by Board

Dr. Haney said the Board recently discussed the potential appointment of a lobbyist during the Special Meeting/Board Retreat on January 20, 2026. She reviewed some topics raised during the retreat and asked the Board for its feedback.

Trustee Sullivan said hiring lobbying services at this point would mainly be useful for the fall veto session, as it likely is too late in the legislative calendar to accomplish anything meaningful in the spring. She recommended the Board move forward with discussions about hiring a state lobbyist to ensure a contract is in place with clear expectations before the veto session begins. She noted that, given current circumstances and what the Board learned in Washington, D.C., there does not seem to be much benefit in engaging a federal lobbyist right now. However, it may be worth considering in the future.

Trustee O'Day stated that an effective lobbyist should ultimately pay for themselves through the value they bring back to the institution. She emphasized that lobbying is highly specialized, noting that state and federal lobbyists play distinct roles. She said even within the federal level, some lobbyists focus

specifically on Congress while others specialize in agencies. Trustee O'Day said the college's needs at the state level may require a lobbyist who can target specific entities, including the Governor's Office and the Capital Development Board, to secure the release of capital funds. She noted that this type of work is not tied to the legislative session calendar and said it may be beneficial to move quickly in selecting a state lobbyist. She added that planning for the legislative session begins in August, so starting the process early also could be beneficial. Trustee O'Day added that legislation often appears unexpectedly late in the session, so it may be helpful to have a state lobbyist in place before the end of May. Trustee O'Day said the college would need more specific requests for the federal lobbyist. She explained that with potential shifts in control after the November elections, early engagement via a lobbyist could position the college well regardless of future political changes. Trustee O'Day suggested that beginning federal lobbying efforts now also would be advantageous.

Secretary Kerlin Walsh said hiring a state lobbyist to pursue the release of the 43 million dollars approved by the Capital Development Board is crucial. Trustee Sullivan noted that she previously wrote a scope of work for state-level lobbyists and offered to share it as a starting point for developing Moraine Valley's own expectations. She emphasized that a well-defined scope is critical to ensure that lobbyists clearly understand their responsibilities, deliver the required deliverables and remain accountable. She said she believes the college should move quickly to engage a state-level lobbyist to address outstanding capital funding. She added that any firm considered should be vetted for availability and potential conflicts of interest and noted the importance of finding a lobbyist who is familiar with Moraine Valley. Trustee Shaar agreed that the college should move quickly with the process.

Dr. Haney asked which Trustee would serve as her contact for the lobbyist selection process. Trustee O'Day said she was interested in being the contact person. Trustee Sullivan, Trustee Shaar, Vice Chair Murphy and Secretary Kerlin Walsh all noted that they would be happy to assist in any way that they can. Chair McElroy Kirkwood suggested that the Board begin moving forward with the process immediately and asked Dr. Haney to set up meetings with Trustees interested in assisting with the process.

Chair McElroy Kirkwood noted that the Board has received an updated schedule of important dates and events for the spring and summer semesters in their meeting materials. She reminded the Board of the ICCTA meeting on Friday, March 20, at Moraine Valley.

Trustee Sullivan said the U.S. Women's Olympic Hockey team won a gold medal in overtime. She congratulated the team, specifically the local players, Abbey Murphy of Evergreen Park, and Kendall Coyne Schofield of Orland Park.

**XV. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.