

**Rock Valley College
Community College District No. 511
Advanced Technology Center (ATC), 1400 Big Thunder Blvd., Belvidere, IL 61008**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
5:15 p.m. Tuesday, October 14, 2025
MINUTES**

Call to Order

The Rock Valley College (RVC) Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting convened on Tuesday, October 14, 2025, at the Advanced Technology Center (ATC), Room 1300, Belvidere, IL 61008. The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by Chairman Paul Gorski.

Roll Call

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

Mr. Paul Gorski

Mr. Robert Trojan

Dr. Jenna Goldsmith

Mr. John Nelson joined the meeting at 5:16 p.m.

Ms. Kristen Simpson

Mr. Isiah Blake, Student Trustee

Ms. Gloria Cardenas Cudia

Ms. Crystal Soltow

Also present: Dr. Howard J. Spearman, President; Dr. Patrick Peyer, Vice President of Student Affairs; Dr. Terrica Huntley, Vice President of Human Resources; Ms. Heather Snider, Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Communications; Dr. Hansen Stewart, Vice President of Career and Technical Education and Workforce Development; Dr. Amanda Smith, Vice President of Academic Affairs; Ms. Ellen Olson, Vice President of Finance; 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 Joseph Perkoski, Robbins Schwartz.

Board Member Attendance by Means Other than Physical Presence

No Board Members attended by any other means.

Communications and Petitions

Mr. Mark Bjelland from Peterson Cleaning, a Kleen-Tech Company, was recognized by Trustee Gorski regarding the Janitorial Services Bid #25-21. Mr. Bjelland was voicing his displeasure that Rock Valley College (RVC) was recommending that Bid #25-21 be awarded to EBM. Mr. Bjelland felt that due to dates/timing, Kleen-Tech was not awarded the bid. Trustee Gorski stated that RVC would review the bid responses again and have Legal verify that there were no inconsistencies. Trustee Gorski reminded everyone that RVC is obligated to go with the lowest responsible bidder.

Recognition of Visitors

There were no visitors to be recognized.

Review of Minutes

There were no comments on the minutes from the September 9, 2025, Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting.

General Presentations

1. Rock Valley College Foundation Update

Ms. Brittany Freiberg, the RVC Foundation's chief development officer, presented the RVC Foundation Update. Ms. Freiberg stated that from FY2020 to the present, the Foundation has raised \$10.6 million; from 1979 to the present, there have been a total of 190 unique scholarships, of which 40 new scholarships were created in calendar year 2025. Ms. Freiberg discussed the growth in scholarship funding over the years and the actions taken in Fiscal Year 2025 to promote scholarship awareness. Ms. Freiberg reminded the Trustees that the Foundation is more than scholarships; it provides programmatic support to academic programs, student clubs, athletics, the Center for Learning in Retirement (CLR), and Whiz Kids. Trustee Trojan gave accolades to Ms. Freiberg and the Foundation for their hard work, time, and money raised for RVC.

2. Studer Education Quarterly Update / Dr. Julie Kunselman

Dr. Julie Kunselman from Studer Education provided the Quarterly Leadership Update. Dr. Kunselman reviewed the current Strategic Plan and Scorecard to determine what remains and realign as needed to continue advancing a culture of engagement and future priorities. Dr. Kunselman stated that Studer Education and the Administration will continue to advance and move to “consistently hardwire” the 90-day strategy implementation and review and adjust the cycle with the President and the Administration. Dr. Kunselman reviewed the 2025 Culture and Employee Experience Survey, focusing only on the items with the lowest and highest means, noting that all subjects improved in their scores. Trustee Gorski reminded Dr. Kunselman and the Administration that the Trustees are only with RVC for fiduciary and policy responsibilities, not to promote the college, and he wants to see more of the Strategic Plan at the next quarterly update.

Teaching, Learning & Communications Discussion: Board Liaison Trustee Goldsmith

1. 14th Day Census Enrollment Data Brief and Student Profile

Ms. Heather Snider, vice president of institutional effectiveness and communications, presented the 14th Day Census Enrollment Data Brief and Student Profile presentation. Ms. Snider explained that the data in the 14th Day Census Report is submitted to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). Fall census enrollment counts the number of students officially enrolled in credit courses at the College at the end of fall registration. Ms. Snider stated that from Fall 2021 to Fall 2025, the College experienced a 9.50% increase in unduplicated headcount, with an annual increase of 0.63% between Fall 2024 and Fall 2025. Over five years, headcount increased faster than credit hours and fulltime equivalent (FTE), indicating that students are taking fewer credits on average. Ms. Snider discussed and provided charts summarizing age, gender, highest level of education, race, and ethnicity among students. Discussion ensued.

2. Early College Enrollment Summary

Dr. Hansen Stewart, vice president of career and technical education and workforce development, presented the Early College Enrollment Summary. Dr. Stewart discussed recruitment and District program participation with the Early College programs, including Running Start, Dual and Articulated Credit, Senior Semester, and the Career Pathways Jump Start Program. He discussed the student profile across all credit-bearing Early College programs, stating that 55.8% of students identify as white, 39.3% of participants identify as a race other than white, 5% did not report a race, 54.5% of participants identified as female, 42% identified as male, and 3% did not report their gender. Dr. Stewart said that nine school districts participate in the Running Start Program, 13 in the Dual and Articulated Credit Program, three in the Senior Semester Program, and two in the Career Pathways Jump Start Program. Dr. Stewart stated that there were other programs with the Early College opportunities, such as transitional math and English, Articulated Credit, Summer Manufacturing and Readiness Technology (SMART) Camp, and Trade Review and Career Exploration (TRACE) Trade Grant. Dr. Stewart provided enrollment data for each program. Discussion ensued.

3. Strategic Plan Goals Update: Adult Learner Enrollment Strategies

Ms. Snider and Dr. Patrick Peyer, vice president of student affairs, presented the Adult Learner Enrollment Strategies. Ms. Snider stated that environmental challenges led RVC to focus on recruiting and retaining adult learners. Adult learners are defined as adults aged 25-45. The focus includes students enrolled in RVC's Adult Education programs. RVC is creating dashboards that allow the College to track enrollment in those programs and progression into workforce training and credit offerings. Several departments have been working together to make improvements that will enhance transitions in adult education. Next steps include enhanced staffing at the Downtown West campus, additional marketing and communications targeted at adult learners, and improvements to the data dashboard. RVC will operate under a new model for adult education that focuses on pathways to higher education and workforce training. Dr. Peyer discussed the statistics on the adult education registrations by department and subject and provided a timeline for the processes. Discussion ensued.

4. Lobbyist Update

Ms. Snider provided a verbal update on hiring a lobbyist, and had a "kickoff meeting" with Dr. Litesa Wallace and her team at LITE Strategies on October 9, 2025. Dr. Wallace's team, the RVC Team, which included Trustee Goldsmith as the Trustee Liaison, discussed four priorities for Dr. Wallace to work on: supporting RVC's efforts with Downtown West, community college baccalaureate degrees, strengthening RVC's relationships with key legislators, and providing insights on key legislation and its impact on RVC as it develops. Dr. Wallace will provide RVC with regular updates.

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. Accounting Services – (Other Contractual Services – ISBE State Performance)

1.	Entre Computer Solutions	Machesney Park, IL	\$ 122,134.80*(1)
			Not to Exceed

Purchase Report B – FY2026 Purchases

A. Forklift – (Capital Service Equipment – Equipment Replacement)

1.	Atlas Toyota Material Handling	Elk Grove Village, IL	\$ 44,083.12*(1)
	Technology International, Inc.	Lake Mary, FL	\$ 62,000.00

B. Sno-Pushers – (Capital Service Equipment) – Equipment Replacement)

2.	Westside Tractor Sales Co.	Rockford, IL	\$ 32,500.00*(2)
	Alta Construction Equipment Illinois	South Elgin, IL	\$ 34,494.00

C. Janitorial Services – (Custodial Maintenance – Maintenance Services Building)

3.	EBM	Minneapolis, MN	\$ 615,937.41*(3)
			Not to Exceed
	Interstate Maintenance Premier Services	Horsham, PA	\$ 701,099.00
	HES Facilities Management	Knoxville, TN	\$ 719,214.23
	RJB Properties	Chicago, IL	\$ 877,062.00
	Kleen-Tech	Rockford, IL	\$ 932,069.00

	Advanced Cleaning Systems	Rockford, IL	\$ 1,004,728.00
	Contract Service Solutions	Clearwater Beach, FL	\$ 1,050,910.67
	Smith Maintenance Company	Chicago, IL	\$ 1,084,933.28
	A Better Choice, LLC	Rockford, IL	\$ 1,133,608.00
	Building Services of America	Woodridge, IL	\$ 1,256,624.00
	Metro Facility Solutions	Forest Park, IL	\$ 1,270,447.03
	UG2	Boston, MA	\$ 1,294,859.23
	Eco Clean Maintenance	Elmhurst, IL	\$ 1,352,388.00
	GSF	Loves Park, IL	\$ 1,440,827.27
	Service Master Clean	Carol Stream, IL	\$ 1,482,000.00
	Perfection Plus, Inc.	Hopkins, MN	\$ 1,649,332.85
	Squeaky Clean Janitorial, Inc.	Loves Park, IL	\$ 2,475,280.00

D. Mechanical Services – (Maintenance Services Plant-Op Equipment – Boiler House)

4.	Hartwig Mechanical, Inc.	Harvard, IL	\$ 220,000.00*(4)
			Not to Exceed
	Preventative Maintenance Costs	13.01 Boiler and Chiller	
	Helm Service	Freeport, IL	\$ 23,978.00
	Geostar Mechanical, Inc.	Rockford, IL	\$ 29,800.00
	Hartwig Mechanical	Harvard, IL	\$ 29,945.00
	Miller Engineering Company	Rockford, IL (Backflows only)	\$ 6,904.00
		13.02 Rooftop Units	
	Helm Service	Freeport, IL	\$ 23,668.00
	Hartwig Mechanical	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
		13.03 Multistack and Liebert	
	Geostar Mechanical, Inc.	Rockford, IL	\$ 8,500.00
	Helm Service	Freeport, IL	\$ 10,492.00
	Hartwig Mechanical, Inc.	Harvard, IL	\$ 15,080.00
	Estimated Annual Repair Costs Per Hourly Rates		
	Hartwig Mechanical	Harvard, IL	\$ 93,700.00
	Geostar Mechanical	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

E. Tuckpointing Turret Repair – (Other Capital Outlay – Bridge Turrets)

5.	Mike Harris Mason Contractor	Rockford, IL	\$ 257,280.00*(5)
			Not to Exceed
	Otto Baum Company	Morton, IL	\$ 482,428.50
	Berglund Construction Company	Chicago, IL	\$ 812,800.00

F. Consulting Services – (Other Contractual Services – Tort)

6.	Illumination Consulting, LTD	Cherry Valley, IL	\$ 153,600.00*(6)
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Discussion ensued on Purchase Report B, Items C, D, E, and F.

Item C. Janitorial Services. EBM came in as the lowest responsible bidder, but because Kleen-Tech would like RVC to review the bids, Chairman Gorski requested that RVC do so to ensure everything was calculated correctly. Legal would review the bid from start to finish to ensure it was consistent with RVC's bidding and state policies.

Item D. Mechanical Services Preventive Maintenance. Trustee Nelson wanted to know how much cheaper Helm Service was than Hartwig Mechanical, Inc. Chairman Gorski asked for confirmation if Helm was unable to provide satisfactory service on the units at the Advanced Technology Center (ATC). Ms. Olson confirmed, and Chairman Gorski asked Attorney Perkoski if Helm were unable to provide satisfactory service at the ATC, it would make them an irresponsible bidder; Attorney Perkoski confirmed.

Item E. Turret Repair Tuckpointing. Trustee Nelson wanted to know the reason why the bids for Tuckpointing were wildly variant. Vice President Jenks stated that Mike Harris was the original contractor who won the Tuck Point bid, so he is the most familiar with the issue at hand and what has occurred. Mr. Jenks said he was unsure why Berglund Construction Company came in so high, and Otto Baum Company was high because of their unfamiliarity with the wall and because it was a rubble wall that needed to be replaced. Mr. Jenks said that RVC is confident in Mike Harris' numbers and that they are accurate.

Item F. Consulting Services for Technology Cybersecurity. Chairman Gorski asked if Item F had gone out for bid. Ms. Olson responded that it had not and that it wasn't required to go out for bid. Mr. Jenks stated that Illumination Consulting, Ltd. was the same company that did the penetration testing for the College. Chairman Gorski noted that he felt like Illumination Consulting, Ltd. is taking advantage of RVC. Discussion ensued, and Chairman Gorski stated that he would not make any changes before the Regular Board meeting, but he wanted quotes for consulting services in the future.

2. Cash and Investment Report

Ms. Ellen Olson, vice president of finance, presented the Cash and Investment Report through September 30, 2025. Total operating cash is \$44,967,644. Total operating cash and investments are \$113,034,422. Operating cash and investments have increased by \$10,512,725 since August 31, 2025. Total capital funds are \$89,501,970. Since August 31, 2025, the change in capital funds has been \$4,979,451. Ms. Olson stated that the total operating cash and investment funds were 105.21% of the FY2026 operating budget.

3. 2025 Tax Levy

Ms. Olson presented the 2025 Tax Levy and stated that the increase is \$2,694,107, representing 6.50%, and the tax levy rate decreased by 0.0088 over Levy Year 2024. Ms. Olson stated that the Truth-in-Taxation Hearing is scheduled for December 16, 2025, at 5:15 p.m. in the Educational Resource Center (ERC), Performing Arts Room (PAR), Room 0214, on the main campus of RVC. Ms. Olson reminded Trustees that there was an amendment to the notice requirements for the Illinois Truth-in-Taxation law that required taxing districts to post a website notice for a period of not less than 30 consecutive days. The law still requires the notice to be published in a newspaper for not more than 14 days, and not less than seven days, before the date of the public hearing. Discussion ensued.

Operations Discussion: Board Liaison Trustee Trojan

1. Board Policy Manual Update: Article 2-Operations (Second Reading)

Mr. Rick Jenks, vice president of operations, introduced the second reading of the Board Policy Manual Update: Article 2-Operations. Mr. Jenks stated that Article 2 was brought before the Board last month for the first reading, as per policy guidelines. Mr. Jenks asked if there were any questions, and Chairman Gorski asked whether any questions had been asked and whether there were any tonight. There were none.

2. Review of the Athletic Turf Fundraising Agreement Between Rock Valley College and the Rock Valley College Foundation

Vice President Jenks stated the RVC Foundation has the opportunity to secure three \$500,000 named field donors for the three newly approved athletic turf fields. The turf fields will support competitions and practices for the RVC baseball, softball, and soccer teams. All funds raised will be designated to the RVC Student Athlete Annual Scholarship fund to support the College's Division II student athletes. Each field will carry a five-year naming opportunity, allowing donors to name the field for five years with pledge installments spanning one to five years. Mr. Jenks explained that after the five-year commitment, the donors will have the opportunity to renew the named field, if applicable and approved by the College. Discussion ensued.

3. Downtown West Construction Budget Update

Mr. Jenks discussed the construction cost tracking for the Downtown West building and stated that the project is on budget and on schedule. To date, the College has spent \$13,874,428.07, which is 24.5615% of the total cost of \$58,000,000. Mr. Jenks stated that to date, the contingency total is \$97,488.19, which is 4.3869% of the contingency fund of \$2,222,239.00. Mr. Jenks reviewed the change orders to date for the construction and shared pictures and a video of the construction progress.

4. Classroom Building II Update

Mr. Jenks gave a verbal update on the construction of Classroom Building II. Mr. Jenks stated that the College continues to meet with the architects and the various College divisions in discussions. Mr. Jenks explained that this is the programmatic phase, and the next phase will be the schematic design phase. Discussion ensued.

5. Change Order Update

Vice President Jenks discussed Change Order Updates for the second elevator and the third-floor buildout of the Health Sciences Center, phase one of the security upgrade, and exterior stone tuckpointing on the damaged turret of the Stenstrom Student Center (SSC) bridge.

6. Personnel Report

Mr. Jenks reviewed the October 2025 Personnel Report and noted one faculty departure. Trustee Nelson asked whether the departing position would be an adjunct or a full-time faculty position, and Dr. Smith answered that it would be a permanent full-time faculty position.

6. RVC Events Calendar

Mr. Jenks presented the October 2025 RVC Events Calendar. Mr. Jenks acknowledged the RVC Golden Eagles Family Breakfast on October 16, 2025, in the Stenstrom Student Center (SSC) Atrium at 8:00 a.m. The Rockford Mass Transit District Promotion will take place in the SSC Hub at 10:00 a.m. on October 22, 2025,

featuring a presentation on the district's free pass program. The Private Illinois College University Transfer Fair (PICU) will be held at 10:00 a.m. in the SSC Atrium the same date.

New Business/Unfinished Business

1. New Business:

Dr. Spearman stated he would be taking the OSF Third Amendment to the lease of the Health Sciences Center to the October Regular Board meeting. Because of the third-floor renovations, OSF lost square footage in the space they were leasing, so RVC had to reduce the square footage.

2. Unfinished Business:

Dr. Spearman stated that at the September Board meeting, he had presented Chairman Gorski with a proposal from Cultivate Power to place a solar field on RVC property, and that Chairman Gorski asked the College to bring back its recommendation. RVC reached out to IMEG to determine if this was a good opportunity for the College. IMEG stated that they do not recommend that RVC move forward with the proposal, as RVC will not generate enough power to offset the campus utility usage.

Dr. Spearman said that the Fire Tower Agreement will be coming from Loves Park, and the attorneys have agreed to all changes. To move forward, Dr. Spearman will also be bringing the Fire Tower Agreement to the October Regular Board meeting.

Adjourn to Closed Session

A closed session was not held.

Reconvene Open 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, October 28, 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, November 4, 2025, at 5:15 p.m., in the Performing Arts Room (PAR), Room 0214, of the Educational Resource Center (ERC) on the main campus.

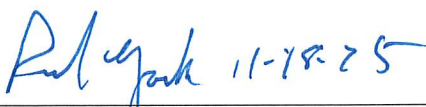
Adjourn

At 7:41 p.m., a motion was made by Trustee Trojan, seconded by Trustee Nelson, 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, Chairman

