RockValleyCollege

Rock Valley College Board of Trustees
Advanced Technology Center
1400 Big Thunder Boulevard, Belvidere, IL 61008

Robert "Bob" and Norma Trojan Room, 1300
5:15 p.m., Tuesday, October 20, 2026

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 Room 1300, in the Advanced Technology Center (ATC) at 1400 Big Thunder Boulevard in Belvidere, IL on Tuesday, October 20, 2026. Board Chair Paul Gorski called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Roll Call

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

Mr. Paul Gorski	Mr. Robert (Bob) Trojan
Ms. Kristen Simpson	Ms. Gloria Cardenas Cardia
Ms. Terri Knight	

The following trustees were absent at roll call: Ms. Crystal Soltow, Mr. John Nelson, and Student Trustee Sarah Ortiz Espinoza.

Also in Attendance: Dr. Howard Spearman, President; Ellen Olson, Vice President of Finance; Heather Snider, Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Communications; Dr. Keith Barnes, Vice President of Cultural Excellence and Belonging; Dr. Terrica Huntley, Vice President of Human Resources; Dr. Patrick Peyer, Vice President of Student Affairs; Dr. Amanda Smith, Vice President of Academic Affairs; Ms. Ann Kerwitz, Assistant to the President; Ms. Carly Diciolla, Assistant to the President; Ms. Tracy Luethje, Executive Assistant to the Chief Operations Officer; Attorney Matt Gardner, Robbins Schwartz.

Board Member Attendance by Means Other than Physical Presence

No trustees attended by means other than physical presence.

Communications and Petitions (Public Comment)

None

General Presentations

1. Vice President of Finance Ellen Olson gave a Special Tax Levy Presentation: The Illinois Community College Act, 110 ILCS 805, Section 3-14.3, allows for a one-time property tax levy. The special tax levy would generate an estimated $493,471 additional equity for RVC. There are 14 Illinois colleges eligible to implement the special levy this year, and 13 plan to do so. If the RVC Board of Trustees approves the special tax levy, the College needs to publish the notice in the newspaper within 10 days of the approval. Petitions containing at least 23,594 signatures must be

submitted by November 30 to place the special levy on the April 6, 2027 ballot. If no petitions are received within the 30-day period, the District is authorized to levy the additional taxes. Petitions can be picked up in the President's Office at RVC. Ms. Olson reported reasons to consider the special tax levy: rising healthcare costs; operating deficit for Auxiliary Fund 05 for Starlight Theatre, workforce development non-credit, athletics; increased expenses for Fund 02 Operations and Maintenance; and capital projects with deferred maintenance. This special tax levy would expire in one year.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Trustee Cudia, seconded by Trustee Trojan, to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2026 Special meeting, the September 8, 2026 Committee of the Whole (CotW) meeting, and the September 22, 2026 Regular Board of Trustees meeting. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Action Items

1. **BR8425 – Claims Sheet (Check Register – September 2026)**

The Board Report reads, in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves the claims sheet from the Ellucian check register for the period from September 1, 2026 to September 30, 2026. The total is $5,201,464.21.

A motion was made by Trustee Cudia, seconded by Trustee Trojan, to approve BR8425. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

2. **BR8426-A – Approve Purchase Report-A – FY2027 Amendments**

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves the items marked with an asterisk on Purchase Report 8426-A.

A motion was made by Trustee Trojan, seconded by Trustee Cudia, to approve Board Report 8426-A. There were two changes made since the Committee of the Whole (CotW) meeting: including Item B. Motorola Solutions and the addition of Item D. Sorenson Communications. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

3. **BR8427 – Approve Application for Permanent Approval: Career & Technical Education Curriculum Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Human Services**

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves the submission of a proposal to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) to approve the Associate of Applied Science in Human Services. The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Form 20 proposal includes:

- Part A. Feasibility, Curriculum Quality, and Cost Analysis.
- Part B. Supportive Documentation and Data.

A motion was made by Trustee Trojan, seconded by Trustee Cudia, to approve Board Report 8427. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

4. BR8428 – Levy Year 2026 Estimated Taxes Required and Setting Hearing Date for Truth-in-Taxation (Including Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Certified Special Levy)

The Board Report reads in part: It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approves the following estimates for the amount of taxes necessary to be raised by taxation for the levy year 2026 including the special levy as certified by ICCB as follows:

Educational Purposes – Fund 01	$24,148,564
Equity/Special Levy – Fund 01	493,471
Operations and Maintenance Purposes – Fund 02	4,199,750
Protection, Health, Life, or Safety – Fund 03	1,500,000
Financial Audit Purposes – Fund 11	60,000
Liability Protection Settlement Fund – Fund 12	
Liability Insurance/Tort & Risk Management	1,600,000
Social Security and Medical Insurance	550,000
Total Tax Levy	**$32,551,785**

To provide public disclosure, a hearing on the proposed 2026 Tax Levy under the Truth in Taxation law of the State of Illinois will be held on December 15, 2026, at 5:15 p.m. in the Educational Resource Center (ERC), Room 0214, Performing Arts Room (PAR), on the main campus of Rock Valley College at 3301 N. Mulford Road, Rockford, Illinois. Rock Valley College will publish the Notice of said hearing as required by Statute. **(Attorney reviewed)**

A motion was made by Trustee Cudia, seconded by Trustee Trojan, to approve Board Report 8428. Discussion ensued. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

5. BR8429 – Levy Year 2026 Estimated Taxes Required and Setting Hearing Date for Truth-in-Taxation- No vote taken since Special Tax Levy, BR8428, was approved.

Other Business

Unfinished Business:

1. The Northwest Region of the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) meeting will be held at Sauk Valley Community College on November 4, 2026. Community college presidents and trustees are invited. Chair Gorski, and Trustees Trojan and Cudia plan on attending.

New Business:

1. The Northern Illinois Council of Governments Legislative Luncheon will be held at Hard Rock Casino in Rockford, IL on December 15, 2026. RVC has purchased a table for trustees to attend. Trustees should contact Ann Kerwitz regarding their attendance at this event.

Updates/Reports

1. President's Update- Dr. Spearman

- Community Day celebration at Downtown West on RVC's birthday was a success!
- Campus visits to Downtown West from Congressmen LaHood and Sorenson.
- Golden Tier Academy has begun, led by Dr. Spearman for session 1.
- Marcy Delia, RVC alum and longtime member of the Communications and Marketing department, passed away on October 16, 2026.

2. Leadership Team Update

- Dr. Patrick Peyer announced appreciation for people that helped with enrollment activities and college nights. He also extended thanks to faculty that attended. Dr. Peyer gave an update about Fall sports for RVC volleyball, soccer, and basketball.
- Ms. Heather Snider provided an enrollment update: enrollment is ahead for Winterim when compared to last year by 10%, 92% to budget, and 86% to the stretch goal. She also mentioned the District 3 regional medallions earned by RVC's Communications and Marketing department.
- Dr. Terrica Huntley announced the gratitude breakfast to honor the Operations Division for their contributions in opening the Downtown West campus. The breakfast will be held on October 29, from 9:00-11:00 a.m. in the Stenstrom Student Center Atrium.
- Ms. Ellen Olson provided an update on the audit. She mentioned that the audit report will be presented to the board in December since the November CotW meeting will take place early this year.
- Dr. Amanda Smith gave an update on the RVC student play, *1984*. The play will have performances on November 5-8, as well as a panel discussion on October 26. The production includes 14 students. Also, the First Tuesday Lecture will feature Dr. Liz Brown, on Tuesday, November 3, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

3. Student Trustee Report: Report included in the packet; Student Trustee Sarah Ortiz Espinoza was absent for this meeting.

4. ICCTA Report: none

5. Trustee Comments

- Trustee Cudia - Interested in reviewing the Student Government Association (SGA) student feedback survey.
- Trustee Trojan - Attended the K20 and Workforce Development Collaborative and the Hennig naming of the Community Engagement Center. Trustee Trojan mentioned major regional hiring announcements for PCI Pharma. The Manufacturing Day event hosted at the RVC Advanced Technology Center was created by CEANCI, which featured 15-18 vendors and over 300 high school students. NIU Engineering was part of this event as well.

6. RVC Foundation Liaison Report: Trustee Trojan reported that the RVC Foundation has awarded 479 scholarships as of today. $3.49 million has been raised for the Downtown West Campaign. The RVC Foundation Scholarship Luncheon will have over 400 guests, which will be held at the Hard Rock Casino in Rockford, IL on Friday, October 30.

7. Personnel Report (BR8430) - Information Only

The Personnel Report was accepted as presented with no questions.

8. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Report - Information Only

The FOIA Report was accepted as presented with no questions.

Next Meetings

The next Committee of the Whole meeting will be held on Monday, November 2, 2026, at 5:15 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Hennig Engagement Center (HEC), Room 2012, located in the Downtown Learning Center (DLC) on the Downtown West campus, located at 315 S. Winnebago Street, Rockford, IL. NOTE: CHANGE OF LOCATION.

The next Regular Board of Trustees meeting will be held on November 17, 2026, at 5:15 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Performing Arts Room (PEC) Room 0214, located in the Educational Resource Center (ERC) on the main campus.

Adjourn

At 6:15: p.m., Trustee Trojan made a motion, seconded by Trustee Knight, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Submitted by Carly A. Diciolla

~~Kristen Simpson, Secretary~~
Secretary Pro Temp
Robert Trojan

~~Paul Gorski, Board Chair~~
Vice Chair
Kristen Simpson