HENRY FORD COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
DEARBORN, MICHIGAN
May 18, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Henry Ford College Board of Trustees was called to order on Monday, May 18, 2026, at the Henry Ford College Administrative Services and Conference Center in the Rosenau Board Room at 7:06 p.m. by Chair Aljahmi.

ROLL CALL

On roll call, the following were present: Trustees Ali Bazzi, Mary Petlichkoff, Adel Mozip, Nasri Sobh, Amer Zahr and Chair Jamal Aljahmi. There being a quorum, the meeting was declared in session. Trustee Patrick D'Ambrosio was absent.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion offered by Trustee Petlichkoff supported by Trustee Mozip, passed with a unanimous vote attached that the following Minutes be approved:

- Regular Board of Trustees Meeting – April 20, 2026
- Regular Board of Trustees Meeting Closed Session – April 20, 2026
- Board of Trustees ad hoc Presidential Contract Committee Meeting – May 7, 2026

III. RECOGNITION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Rhonda DeLong, Vice President of Marketing, Communications, and Admissions, introduced Khalima Smith, who recently earned her associate degree in culinary arts. Khalima plans to return to HFC in the fall to continue her studies at HFC and earn her bachelor's degree in culinary arts. Khalima credits HFC for teaching her discipline, leadership, communication, and how to perform under pressure. As a student worker in the 5101 Restaurant, Khalima worked as a sous chef which gave her confidence in her abilities long before she graduated. Khalima has started her own local baking business. Her training at HFC gave her the foundation to grow her business into something successful and long-lasting. Khalima has also been able to join the American Culinary Federation as a certified culinarian. Khalima is currently the vice president of HFC's all women's Ice Carving Club.

- Congratulations to the student staff of The Mirror News and faculty advisor Dr. Peter Kim on a record-breaking awards season. The student-run newspaper won a historic 40 awards at the Michigan Community College Press Association conference in late March, followed by 21 awards from the Michigan Press Association in May, where it was named the Division 3 College Newspaper of the Year.

- HFC Respiratory Therapist students swept the top two spots at the state-wide Michigan Society for Respiratory Care Sputum *[pronounced spew-tum]* Bowl in Kalamazoo. Two HFC teams defeated 17 other competitors to reach an undefeated final round against each other, with the “Mast Cell Stabilizers” taking first place and the “Notorious A.B.G.s” taking second. The Mast Cell Stabilizers will represent the College nationally in New Orleans in November.

- Electrical engineering technology major Jasmine Hardy was recently selected as one of 10 students in North America to join the Cisco Networking Academy U.S. Dream Team. Hardy is the first woman from HFC to receive this prestigious honor. She will travel to Las Vegas this June to provide hands-on technical support for the *Cisco Live* global conference.

- A team of HFC honors pre-engineering students has been named a finalist in the National Community College Innovation Challenge for their development of SuClara, a portable, all-in-one water-testing and adaptive filtration system that integrates A.I.-based image analysis to interpret contaminant levels. The team includes Hector Fugon-Garcia, Nicholas Krot, Ahmeyah Martin, and Jordan Williams. This team is the only finalist from a Michigan Community College. They will attend a specialized Innovation Boot Camp in Washington, DC, in June.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ITEMS

- President Gonko congratulated the following faculty who have reached tenure: Adriza Caesar, Emily Pawlowski, Gregory Ward, John-Michael Sefel, Keith Davis, Kenetra Young, Max Bilodeau and Thomas Hopkins.
- President Gonko thanked the Trustees for their attendance and speaking at the many end of semester events such as the Ford Asset Graduation Dinner, Nursing Pinning Ceremony, Phi Theta Kappa Induction Ceremony and commencement ceremonies.
- President Gonko shared the summer and fall 2026 enrollment numbers to date. Our summer census date is July 8 and we expect to see these numbers shift upward. We are actively taking steps to tackle new challenges and are watching the enrollment numbers closely.
- President Gonko shared this year’s commencement ceremonies had 300+ graduates each. President Gonko thanked everyone who helped make these events successful. She noted that HFC’s graduation rate has increased from 6% to 25% due to a concentrated effort of faculty, staff and the Board.
- President Gonko shared that the college recently held their Caring Campus kickoff. This event was for all frontline staff. On June 5 they will present their ideas to leadership.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Winter 2026 Proposed TIF Projects – Board Report #4809
Mr. Bob James, Chair, Technology Investment Committee

Listed below is a summary for a project recommended for funding by the Technology Investment Committee (TIC).

Project Director Division/Department	**Nature of Request**	**Approved Funding**
Seth Amadei	This initiative seeks funding to replace the outdated stage lighting system in the Adray Auditorium with a modern, energy-efficient, and industry-standard lighting infrastructure. The current system, including the control board and its operating software, is built on obsolete technology that has become increasingly unreliable. The control board is temperamental, difficult to service, and replacement parts are no longer available, creating a significant risk of system failure. In addition, the existing lighting fixtures are outdated and require specialized lamps that are both costly and difficult to source. These fixtures consume excessive energy and generate substantial heat, contributing to higher operating costs and an uncomfortable working environment. The proposed upgrade will replace the current system with a networked DMX lighting control system, along with modern LED lighting fixtures and updated distribution equipment. This transition will significantly improve system reliability, reduce energy consumption, and lower long-term maintenance costs. LED technology will also minimize heat output, enhancing safety and comfort for performers and technical crews. Beyond operational improvements, this upgrade will have a direct and meaningful impact on student learning. Students in theatre, performing arts, and technical production courses will gain hands-on experience with current, industry-standard lighting technology, better preparing them for careers in the entertainment and events industries. The new system will allow for more sophisticated lighting design, programming, and creative expression, elevating the quality of campus productions and community performances.	$250,897

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>Ultimately, this investment will modernize a critical campus performance space, support academic programs across the college, reduce ongoing costs, and provide students with the tools and experience necessary to succeed in a competitive, technology-driven field.
<table>
<tr><td>1</td><td>ETC Ion XE-20 Lighting Console</td></tr>
<tr><td>Priority</td><td>Item to Purchase</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Dell P2424HT Monitor</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>ETC ColorSource Spot</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>ETC Lens Tube</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>ETC Colorsource Fresnel V</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>ETC ColorSource Par</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>ETC ColorSource Cyc</td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td>25' DMX Cable</td></tr>
<tr><td>8</td><td>10' DMX Cable</td></tr>
<tr><td>9</td><td>ETC PowerCon Jumper</td></tr>
<tr><td>10</td><td>25' Extension Cord</td></tr>
</table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Carolyn Attard</td><td>I propose to utilize the Promethean board during classroom lecture to encourage student engagement, create interactive assignments, and allow students to demonstrate radiographic image evaluation with touch-screen technology both in the classroom and the adjoining energized radiology lab.
Purchase 2 boards, $3500 each</td><td>$7,000</td></tr>
<tr><td>Brian Kirchner</td><td>Historically, among the most challenging earth science concepts for students are those that involve 3-D visualization: topography, geologic structures, river systems and water flow in general, glacial and volcanic landforms, and the like. TopoBox is a teaching tool that would greatly assist students in overcoming this obstacle. It consists of a large table with low walls on all four sides which contains a large quantity of sand. The heart of the tool is the dynamic projection system: an overhead camera that reads the topography of the sand below and feeds the data through a computer to a projector, which projects contour lines and color coding onto the sand. The result is a three-dimensional map that allows users to easily visualize the relationship between contours and colors, and actual topography. The system is dynamic because the projection responds in real time when users move the</td><td>$18,260</td></tr>
</table>

	sand around. They can make anything they like with the sand, and the projection will change accordingly. In addition, users can tell the projection system to create digital "water" that will flow naturally around the existing topography, and the flow will change if the topography changes. Not only is this useful for teaching about water flow but seeing the movement of water around topography helps users better understand the topography itself. I propose to incorporate TopoBox into the laboratory activities for the following GEOL 131 (Physical Geology) labs: topographic maps, geologic structures, plate tectonics, the ocean floor, shorelines, glaciers, river systems, and volcanoes. In PSCI 131 (Intro to Physical Science), the labs focused on the ocean floor, waves and shorelines, and atmospheric pressure will incorporate TopoBox. In addition, I will create demo videos of various concepts using TopoBox to post online for the benefit of online GEOL and PSCI students. TopoBox will also have application to lab activities in the SCI 212 (Earth Science for Educators) course, which runs several labs that are similar to those in GEOL 131 and PSCI 131. The request is to purchase two topoboxes, at $9,130 each	
Carla Serfas, Aaron Ramey	The Anatomage Table (Virtual Cadaver) was originally purchased in 2018 through a TIF grant. The newest updates to the software have not been utilized because the current computer cannot run them. Even with the installed software version, the table runs very slowly. The computer's internal hardware (motherboard, CPU, RAM, SSD, GPU, and power supply) needs to be upgraded to accommodate more demanding software versions. The ability to run the updated programming can assist us in teaching our students better. The table allows us to show different views of anatomical parts that cannot be seen in lab with models. It also allows us to show that different bodies have variations. It increases students' understanding of the material.	$6,000
Fadia Cudry	The chemistry dept currently has one aging drying oven. This requires coordinating lab	$6,282

	activities between multiple courses and the oven to be physically moved between three rooms. This project seeks 3 drying ovens to be used for CHEM141, CHEM142, and CHEM243/244. The new ovens will stay in designated labs (J-027, J-023, and G-006). The other two labs would need to have the ovens moved from one of the other labs; thus 5 ovens will be purchased, so each of the rooms will have a dedicated oven. The request will purchase 5 ovens, so each room will have one, and help prevent potential damage from moving.	
	Total Funds	**$317,264**

The Technology Investment Committee held an open meeting on March 27, 2026, to hear presentations from Schools/departments requesting funds. The fund's beginning balance for the Winter 26 meeting was $392,020. With the holding of 10% in case of overages, there is $352,818 available for projects. The committee recommended the proposals for funding. The projects have also been reviewed by College administration which offers its support. The total value of the TIF projects for which the committee is recommending is $317,264.

Trustee Petlichkoff expressed concern about whether the Topobox being purchased will function properly. Trustee Petlichkoff cited a purchase made several years ago but the item never functioned properly. Bob James agreed to get more specific information from Brian Kirchner about this item and send it to the Board.

VI. ACTION ITEMS

A. Citizen Participation

- Eric Rader, Local 1650 President, spoke to the Board about newly tenured faculty.

B. Special Consideration of an Action Item

None

C. Action to Approve Action Items

Motion to approve action items numbered 1-8, offered by Trustee Petlichkoff, supported by Trustee Mozip, passed with a unanimous roll call vote attached.

D. At this time, the Secretary will return to any agenda items which Board members had asked to discuss and vote on separately. These will be considered one at a time.

None

BIDS AND CONTRACTS

1. MillerKnoll Furniture- BEPD – Board Report #4810
   Vice President Mitchell

   Move to approve a contract award to American Interiors for $148,022.00 for the purchase and installation of MillerKnoll furniture as requested by the Dean of the School of Business, Entrepreneurship, and Professional Development (BEPD), in accordance with Quote dated March 26, 2026.

2. Mechanical/Electrical Upgrade– Board Report #4812
   Vice President Mitchell

   Move to approve a contract award to R Simon Electric for the electrical portion of this project for $115,658.00 and a contract award to Lee Contracting for the mechanical portion of the project for $262,250.00 for the Battery Lab Mechanical/Electrical Upgrade project, as requested by Facility Services in accordance with the specifications of Sealed Bid #24362.

3. Residential Plumbing Training System Platforms - Board Report #4813
   Vice President Mitchell

   Move to approve a contract award totaling $66,400.00 to Toolkit Technologies for Residential Plumbing Training System Platforms, as requested by the Dean of BEPD in accordance with Toolkit Technologies quote dated May 7, 2026.

4. Residential Electrical Training System Platforms - Board Report #4814
   Vice President Mitchell

   Move to approve a contract award totaling $84,330.00 to Toolkit Technologies for a Residential Electrical Training System Platforms, as requested by the Dean of BEPD in accordance with Toolkit Technologies quote dated May 7, 2026.

5. Medication Dispensing System - Board Report #4815
   Vice President Mitchell

   Move to approve a contract award totaling $98,899.00 to Medical Shipment for a Medication Dispensing System, as requested by the Dean of BEPD in accordance with Medical Shipment quote #S133883 dated April 21, 2026.

HUMAN RESOURCES

6. Exempt Personnel Positions
   President Gonko

   Several positions at Henry Ford College are non-union, exempt positions (Cabinet, Deans, Human Resources staff, and administrative assistants) and require renewal by the Board of Trustees.

   Move to approve the extension of positions of all non-union, exempt staff personnel for two years through June 30, 2028.

BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

7. Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget – Board Report #4805
   Vice Presidential Mitchell

   Move to approve the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget as presented in Board Report #4805 at the April 20, 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting.

8. Board of Trustees Policy Updates
   Trustee Sobh

   The Henry Ford College Office of Legal Services is in the process of reviewing, rescinding, and updating (if necessary) current Board policies and bylaws. This office is also preparing new policies and bylaws as dictated by changes in local, state and federal guidelines.

   On March 16, 2026, the HFC Board of Trustees Policy Committee discussed and reviewed changes to the following policies:

   - Allowability, Reasonableness and Allocation of Costs for Sponsored Projects Policy

   Move to approve the changes to the Allowability, Reasonableness and Allocation of Costs for Sponsored Projects Policy.

VII. BOARD OF TRUSTEES BUSINESS

A. Acknowledgements of Correspondence

   None

B. Board Committee Reports

- Trustee Zahr provided an update from the Contract Negotiation ad hoc Committee. Trustee Zahr reviewed the timeline that resulted with the contract discussion at tonight's meeting. The Committee has been going back and forth with Mr. Knezek and his attorney about the contract. The Committee sent Mr. Knezek some contract proposals over the weekend. Mr. Knezek accepted the proposals. Today, Vice President Moss Ferguson put together a draft of the employment agreement between the College and Mr. Knezek. This draft was sent to the full Board today at about noon. Ms. Moss Ferguson sent an updated draft to the Board at about 3:00 p.m. today. Ms. Moss Ferguson provided the Board with a hard copy of this agreement for tonight's Board meeting.

  Trustee Petlichkoff stated that she has not had time to fully review the updated contract. She also plans to submit a question to Ms. Moss Ferguson for some data.

  Trustee Mozip stated he too has not had time to review the updated contract. He expressed having an issue with the starting salary as the posting contained a specific range and the contract is being presented to the Board with a figure outside that range. Also, Trustee Mozip felt that when a new president comes in, the professional obligations spending allowance should not come in where the previous president left off. Trustee Mozip stated he also has concerns with termination for no cause portion of the contract that would require the College to provide up to 12 months of salary to Mr. Knezek. Trustee Mozip would like to find out what is standard in the industry. Trustee Mozip stated he had no issues with the request for the lease vehicle.

  Chair Aljahmi asked if there are any questions the Board might have that would be limited to a closed session. Trustee Zahr stated that there are no exceptions to discussing the terms in a closed session or to negotiate a contract. These discussions should be done in an open session. However, if a term of discussion has legal or liability ramifications for the College, this would be an allowance to go into a closed session. Ms. Moss Ferguson confirmed. Prior to the two recent meetings the subcommittee held, Ms. Moss Ferguson provided a written opinion to the subcommittee members. Ms. Moss Ferguson stated she could provide that same information to the remaining Board members in a closed session and it could help to facilitate this process.

  Motion offered by Trustee Zahr, supported by Trustee Bazzi, that the Board enter a closed session per OMA MCL 15.268(1)(h) to consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute and to receive a written legal opinion from Counsel, passed with a unanimous roll call vote attached.

  Board of Trustees meeting suspended: 8:05 p.m.
  Board of Trustees meeting resumed: 8:28 p.m.

Trustee Zahr, reviewing the updated contract, read aloud the sections by their numeral. He asked the Board to respond whether they accepted the item or had suggested changes. If the Board has any recommended changes to the contract, it must afterwards be sent back to Mr. Knezek for review and/or approval.

Subsection:
1. No objections at this time
2. No objections at this time
3. No objections at this time

Trustee Petlichkoff stated she was not prepared to make any recommendations at the moment as she wanted time to digest the updated contract.

Trustee Zahr stated that the Board could schedule a special meeting and take care of this at that meeting. Chair Aljahmi agreed. However, he suggested that if any Board members had questions tonight, they could voice their questions now and save some time in the process.

Trustee Zahr continued:
4. No objections at this time
5. Trustee Mozip raised his concern about respecting the posted salary range. Trustee Zahr shared that the salary was posted as $275,000-$300,000. Mr. Knezek's request is currently higher. Ms. Moss Ferguson shared that these numbers were discussed at the open subcommittee meeting on May 15. She further added that after a figure was provided by Mr. Knezek, the subcommittee countered with a much lower figure, which was then accepted by the subcommittee and was the figure the Trustees were seeing in the contract now. Trustee Sobh stated that the subcommittee did their research and this is how they arrived at the salary stated in the contract tonight.
6. Trustee Mozip raised his concern about the budget for professional obligations. The previous president started at a lower amount and received an increase after multiple years of effective ratings and proving the spending value. Trustee Petlichkoff shared her conversation with the previous president about his method of tracking the funds. Trustee Petlichkoff shared this is always a concern of hers and would like to know if someone is overseeing these monies. Ms. Moss Ferguson shared that Mr. Knezek did offer a reporting structure that would require expenditures over a certain amount to be reported to the Board. Chair Aljahmi asked what is the common practice. Ms. Moss Ferguson stated that for this item specifically, Mr. Kavalhuna was able to use the funds at his discretion. Trustee Sobh stated he would like to receive a proposal or idea about how to handle the oversight and then discuss with Trustee Zahr. Trustee Petlichkoff shared how Mr. Kavalhuna handled the

oversight of his spending of these monies even though he was not obligated to do so.

7. No objections at this time
8. No objections at this time
9. No objections at this time
10. No objections at this time
11. No objections at this time
12. No objections at this time
13. No objections at this time
14. Trustee Mozip raised his concern about t suggested the term of 6 months instead of 12 months.
15. No objections at this time. Trustee Zahr shared that this item requires the president to reside within the district. As Mr. Knezek lives about 1 mile outside the district, the Board is waiving this requirement.
16. No objections at this time
17. No objections at this time
18. No objections at this time
19. No objections at this time
20. No objections at this time

Chair Aljahmi shared that as the Board received the most recent contract version about 3:00 p.m. this afternoon, he understands that the Trustees want time to review the document.

The Board agreed to hold a Special Meeting on Friday, May 22, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. to discuss the presidential designate contract terms.

- Trustee Mozip shared that, regarding the Superintendent, he has drafted an initial contract based on Dr. Maleyko's 2015 contract and reviewed it with the attorney. The attorney sent Trustee Mozip a redlined version and a draft which Trustee Mozip will send to the Board tonight for review. The attorney's advice is that Trustee Mozip could set times for each Trustee to talk to him about their suggestions or concerns. Trustee Mozip could then take these back to the attorney for input. If all goes well, the subcommittee will send the draft contract to Mr. Esseily for consideration. Chair Aljahmi asked Trustee Mozip to also send the Board Dr. Maleyko's 2015 contract as a baseline. Trustee Mozip shared that a lot of things have changed since 2015 both in statute and standards. The subcommittee added things to the current draft contract in order to update the document.

C. Requests for Information and/or Future Agenda Items

None

D. Board Member Commentary

- Trustee Mozip noted that Memorial Day is coming up. Remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice and the veterans who have served.

- Trustee Zahr shared that next week is Eid and wished everyone Eid Mubarak.
- Trustee Zahr shared that there was a shooting today at a mosque in California. He reminded everyone to stay supportive of our students.

VIII. FUTURE MEETING DATES

A. Friday, May 22, 2026, **HFC** Board of Trustees Special Meeting, 5:00 p.m. at the Administrative Services and Conference Center in the Rosenau Board Room.

B. Monday, June 15, 2026, **HFC** Board of Trustees Policy Committee Meeting, 6:00 p.m. at the Administrative Services and Conference Center in the Cabinet Conference Room.

C. Monday, June 15, 2026, **HFC** Board of Trustees Meeting, 7:00 p.m. at the Administrative Services and Conference Center in the Rosenau Board Room.

D. Monday, June 22, 2026, **P-12** Board of Education Meeting, 7:00 p.m. at the Administrative Service Center in the Frank Franchi Board Room.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion offered by Chair Aljahmi was unanimously approved by those members present that the meeting be adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

____

Amer Zahr, Secretary