

Maryland Higher Education Commission
Meeting Minutes

October 25, 2023
10:00 a.m.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) met on Wednesday, October 25, 2023 in the 7th floor boardroom at the Nancy S. Grasmick State Education Building (200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201). The meeting was also livestreamed (and recorded), and some meeting participants (Commissioners and others with speaking roles) joined virtually.

Commission members present:

Catherine J. “Cassie” Motz, Chair	Ray Serrano, Ph.D.
Chike Aguh	Rebecca Taber Staehelin
Mickey L. Burnim, Ph.D.	Sheila D. Thompson, Ph.D.
Charlene Mickens Dukes, Ed.D.	Craig A. Williams, Ph.D.
Barbara Kerr Howe	Cierra M. Robinson, Student Commissioner

Commission member absent:

Janet E. Wormack, Ed.D.	
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Staff members present:

Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.	Emily A. A. Dow, Ph.D.
Geoffrey Newman	Soma Kedia
Anthony Reiner	Barbara Schmertz, Ph.D.
Derrick Coley	Rhonda Wardlaw
Daniel Schuster	Deborah Ing
Parris Jackson	Al Dorsett

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by **Chair Motz** at approximately 10:03 a.m. A meeting quorum was established with ten (10) out of eleven (11) members present.

Chair’s Remarks

Chair Motz welcomed everyone to today’s meeting. She expressed support for the schools, Bowie State University and Morgan State University, where mass shootings recently took place. She and Acting Secretary Rai have been in touch with the leadership of those schools, and are planning a campus safety summit on December 4. The event will be planned in conjunction with the University System of Maryland (USM). Additionally, the agency will host a virtual financial aid open house on November 10. The event will, in particular, feature the recent changes made

to the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). **Chair Motz** then gave an overview of the meeting agenda.

Acting Secretary's Remarks

Acting Secretary Rai thanked everyone for attending today's meeting. He mentioned also the campus safety summit and the virtual financial aid open house. MHEC wants to make the financial aid process easier for students, so they can focus on their education and career.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Department of Finance and Administration – Office of Finance Policy – FY 2025 Higher Education State Operating Budget Recommendations – Action Item

Chair Motz recognized Mr. Geoffrey Newman, Assistant Secretary for Finance and Administration, to present this item. Mr. Newman introduced his colleagues, Mr. Samuel Pandian, Director of Budget and Administration, and Mr. Al Dorsett, Director of the Office of Student Financial Assistance, both of whom assisted in the presentation. The Maryland Higher Education Commission is charged with submitting to the Governor and the General Assembly a consolidated operating budget for higher education. The consolidated budget is to include a recommendation regarding the appropriate level of funding for higher education in order to achieve the goals established in the Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education. The State provided over \$3.2 billion in State funds to higher education in fiscal 2024. 72.2 percent was provided to public four-year institutions. The administration budget for MHEC received 2.2 percent of the total. The Commission received over \$183 million in general fund and special fund support for student financial assistance in fiscal 2024.

Mr. Newman recommended that the Maryland Higher Education Commission adopt the following funding priorities be used in targeting funding for higher education for Fiscal Year 2025:

- Funding to support the Maryland Higher Education Commission General Administration budget as it continues to implement new programs, add new staff, modify existing programs, and examine its operations to increase automation of application and management programs.
- Funding to support new programs of student financial assistance and changes to existing programs brought forward by the Governor and General Assembly as well as to support the development of a new financial aid system.
- Continued support to formula-funded institutions and segments in line with the appropriations provided to the public four-year colleges and universities in accordance with the calculation methodologies provided in statute to the extent possible.

The Commissioners asked questions about the presentation. **Commissioner Howe** made a motion to approve the recommendations and **Commissioner Serrano** seconded the motion. **Commissioner Dukes** abstained. The motion passed.

Department of Finance and Administration – Office of Finance Policy – FY 2025 Consolidated Capital Budget Recommendations – Action Item

Chair Motz recognized Mr. Newman who asked Mr. Daniel Schuster, Finance Policy Analyst, to present the FY 2025 Consolidated Capital Budget Recommendations. The seven segments of the Consolidated Capital Budget for Higher Education include: (1) the Community College Construction Grant Program; (2) Community College Facilities Renewal Grant Program; (3) Baltimore City Community College; (4) University System of Maryland; (5) Morgan State University; (6) St. Mary's College of Maryland; and (7) Maryland Independent College & University Association. Their requests total \$604,266,500. Mr. Schuster gave an overview of each submission and made the following recommendations:

- 1) The Commission staff recommends approval of the \$80,000,000 planned in the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) for the Community College Construction Grant Program.
- 2) The Commission staff recommends approval of the Community College Facilities Renewal Grant funding request of \$4,000,000, consistent with statutory formula.
- 3) The Commission staff recommends approval of FY 2025 funding for projects planned in the CIP for Baltimore City Community College, the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, and St. Mary's College of Maryland.
- 4) The Commission staff recommends redirecting planned funds to deferred maintenance if not needed for other planned projects.
- 5) The Commission staff recommends approval of the \$8,000,000 planned in the CIP for the MICUA FY 2025 capital budget.

Commissioner Howe made a motion to approve the recommendations, and **Commissioner Burnim** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

State Completion Goal – Discussion and Presentation by HCM Strategists

Chair Motz recognized **Acting Secretary Rai** who asked Ms. Martha Snyder, Dr. Jimmy Clarke, and Mr. William Carroll of HCM Strategists to present this item. The team shared a PowerPoint presentation. Maryland's current attainment goal is 55% of all Maryland adults (age 25 to 64) will hold at least an associate's degree by 2025. Currently, Maryland is projected to fall short of this goal (52% by 2025). Some states that recently updated their goals have included non-degree credentials. The example of Texas and its goal was shared. 60% of Texans (ages 25-64) will receive a degree, certificate or other postsecondary credential of value by 2030. The team also shared the process and steps taken to develop a goal, including engaging various stakeholders in the conversation. The next steps will include convening a leadership team to guide the work, as well as engaging institutional leaders and different stakeholders to provide input. The entire process will take about a year. The Commissioners asked questions of the presenters.

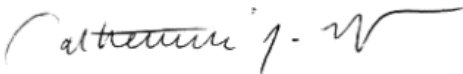
Election of Vice Chair

Chair Motz shared that **Commissioner Aguh** indicated his interest in serving as Vice Chair. **Commissioner Howe** nominated **Commissioner Aguh** to be the Commission Vice Chair and **Commissioner Taber Staehelin** seconded the nomination. The nomination was approved unanimously.

Adjournment

Commissioner Burnim made a motion to adjourn the meeting and **Vice Chair Aguh** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:46 PM.

Approved by the Commission:



Catherine J. "Cassie" Motz, Chair