The following is a summary of the highlights of the SMC Board of Trustees meeting of March 2, 2009. The Board summaries are posted at http://www.smc.edu/apps/docs.asp?Q=586.

In addition, the meeting minutes, which provide all the official actions of the Board, are posted at http://www.smc.edu/apps/Pub.asp?Q=544.

Podcasts of the meeting are available at http://www.smc.edu/itunes.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Superintendent/President Dr. Chui L. Tsang and members of his administrative team reported on several items:

• **Enrollment**: Tsang reported that the current semester’s enrollment is at an all-time high. The overall fill rate for classes is 91 percent, and Tsang commended faculty members for accommodating more students than required by their contract. He said the college has been able to maintain costs by trimming some sections of some classes.

• **Budget**: Tsang reported that the college is facing a gloomy budget outlook because of the state budget crisis. He said despite the state’s recently enacted 2008-09 budget corrections and the 2009-10 budget bill, community colleges and state-funded institutions still face uncertainties because of several statewide ballot measures that go to voters in May. Depending on the outcome of the vote, the state’s fiscal situation could change significantly, including a mandated state-spending cap. One bright light on the horizon, he said, is the recently passed federal stimulus package that is expected to generate $5.5 billion to California for K-12 and higher education. However, Tsang said, it is not known how that money will trickle down because Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has the discretion to disburse those funds as he sees fit.

• **Statewide Accreditation**: Tsang reported that though a federal government-initiated push for accountability in higher education is “good,” the movement has created a “troubling trend” in California. He said that of the 110 state community colleges that have gone through accreditation in the past five years, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges – the accrediting agency for California’s community colleges – has issued 41 formal sanctions. In the rest of the nation, five other accrediting commissions have issued sanctions to just 15 of 756 community colleges. Tsang said the college will continue to monitor this trend.

• **Expo Line Phase 2**: Senior Director of Government and Institutional Relations Don Girard informed the Board in both written and verbal reports that the college is continuing to monitor and take action on the proposed Exposition Corridor Transit Project Phase 2, a proposed commuter light-rail service from the Westside of Los Angeles to Santa Monica, including a stop near SMC, at 17th Street either at Olympic Boulevard or Colorado Avenue. The Board had directed that the college support the Colorado Avenue location, and Girard said the college has organized two rallies to support the light-rail extension service to Santa Monica – one at Tuesday’s Santa Monica City Council meeting and one at a meeting of the Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority. He said buses have been rented to transport as many as 100 students and faculty members to attend the meetings.
**Big Blue Bus:** Tsang reported that Big Blue Bus officials have informed the college that since the spring semester began two weeks ago, ridership has reached a record high.

**ASSOCIATED STUDENTS:** Associated Students President David Chun reported that the organization has achieved several major accomplishments in the past several months, including:

- A.S. has allocated $100,000 for scholarships, most of it designated to help students, particularly underrepresented minorities, to go on SMC Study Abroad trips. But scholarships are also available to such groups as outstanding student employees and disabled students.

- A.S. has subsidized the Big Blue Bus-SMC “Any Line, Any Time” program that allows SMC students and employees to ride any Big Blue Bus for free.

- A.S. has established a new board position, director of sustainability, who is working on a “zero waste” program for A.S. activities. The organization has also adopted a new policy on zero waste.

- A.S. has sponsored 30-plus events since the beginning of the school year, ranging from a Day of the Dead festival to free feasts.

- A.S. allocated $60,000 for the campaign to support Measure AA, the $295 million SMC bond measure passed by Santa Monica-Malibu voters in November 2008.

**GOVERNMENT & COMMUNITY RELATIONS:** Community Relations Director Judy Neveau gave a report on the large number of offerings of cultural events, lectures and other special programs sponsored by the college this semester.


**BOARD POLICIES:** The Board voted unanimously to approve a first reading of two new board policies and two revisions to existing policies. The new policies have to do with use of the name of the college and personal use of college property. The revisions deal with alcoholic beverages at public events and claims against the college. In addition, the Board voted unanimously to give final approval to new and revised policies having to do with a code of ethics and employee political activities.

**CLOSED SESSION:** Board of Trustees Chair Louise Jaffe reported three actions out of closed session:

- The Board voted unanimously to release an academic administrator and authorized the college president to provide the administrator with notice on or before
March 15 that his employment will not be renewed at the conclusion of the 2008-09 fiscal year.

• The Board voted unanimously to suspend without pay for 14 workdays a classified bargaining unit employee. The suspension went into effect Tuesday.

• The Board voted unanimously to approve a settlement agreement in Jimenez et al. v. Santa Monica Community College District (Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC390540). The agreement calls for the college to pay $75,000 to the plaintiffs and their attorney, as well as non-monetary agreements concerning college policy and training.