

## MINUTES

### WEST VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION

February 7, 2020

#### I. Call to Order

Chairman Michael J. Farrell convened a meeting via conference call of the Higher Education Policy Commission on February 7, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. The following Commissioners participated: James W. Dailey, Michael J. Farrell, Diane Lewis Jackson, Dale Lowther, Andrew A. Payne, and Donna L. Schulte. Absent were Commissioners Robert L. Brown, (Ex-Officio) and Steven L. Paine, (Ex-Officio). Others who participated were Interim Chancellor Sarah Armstrong Tucker, institutional presidents and their staff, Commission staff, and members of the statewide higher education system.

#### II. Chairman's Report

Chairman Farrell welcomed Commission members and the audience to the meeting. He addressed the proposed transfer of the West Virginia Regional Technology Park to the City of South Charleston. He added that legislative officials are working with Commission staff drafting the necessary legislation for consideration by the Legislature.

Chairman Farrell reported that Commission staff along with the institutional presidents are developing a funding formula at the request of the legislative leadership.

Chairman Farrell further reported that he received a letter from Reverend Mark Brennan, Bishop of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, responding to the Commission's inquiry regarding the Diocese's relationship with Wheeling University. Bishop Brennan wrote that the Diocese will provide the University \$5 million over the next five years to help it maintain financial stability as it develops a plan for long-term viability. He welcomed Chairman Farrell's and Chancellor Tucker's invitation to meet with him.

#### III. Chancellor's Report

Dr. Sarah Armstrong Tucker, Interim Chancellor, reported that she met with the Council of Presidents in January to discuss the funding formula. She added that the presidents submitted a letter to legislative leadership stating their commitment to work directly and cooperatively with each other, with their colleagues in the Legislature, and the Commission to develop a new funding model.

Chancellor Tucker reported that the Commission is developing a new campaign to market financial aid opportunities to students. Of concern to higher education officials is the continued decrease of the college-going rate in the state.

Chancellor Tucker introduced Dr. Juliana Serafin as the new director of the Division of Science and Research and EPSCoR. Chairman Farrell welcomed Dr. Serafin. Dr. Serafin addressed the Commission to express her joy over the opportunity to help advance and develop science and research in her native state.

#### **IV. Council of Presidents' Report**

Ms. Jacqueline Sikora, General Counsel at Fairmont State University, reported on behalf of the Council's Chair, President Mirta Martin, who was absent due to the passing of a family member. Ms. Sikora reported that the presidents have agreed to pursue these three goals during the current legislative session: funding for deferred maintenance and capital projects, visibility marketing campaign, and funding of baccalaureate schools on the basis of their contribution as economic engines that bring prosperity to their communities. She added that the Council continues to collaborate with the Commission and legislative representatives in the development of a permanent funding formula.

#### **V. Consent Agenda**

- A. Commissioner Lewis Jackson moved to approve the minutes of the Higher Education Policy Commission meetings held on December 5, 2019 and January 7, 2020. Commissioner Payne seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- B. Commissioner Dailey moved to approve Shepherd University's new program post-audits for the Bachelor of Arts in Global Studies and the Bachelor of Science in Data Analytics. Commissioner Schulte seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- C. Commissioner Lowther moved to accept a report on the goals of the new Underwood-Smith Teaching Scholars Program, including the budget and enhancements, as well as the requirements for students, and the number of applications to-date. Commissioner Lewis Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- D. Commissioner Dailey moved to accept a presentation of the new 2019 Higher Education Almanac, formerly the Higher Education Report Card. Commissioner Lowther seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- E. Commissioner Payne moved to accept the 2019 Financial Aid Comprehensive Report with descriptions of and changes, policy recommendations for West Virginia student financial aid programs, and longitudinal data about recipients of state financial aid and outcomes of these recipients. Commissioner Schulte seconded the motion. Motion passed.

#### **VI. 2020 Census Update**

Mr. Matthew Turner, Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration, provided an overview of the undergoing preparation for the 2020 Census. Mr. Turner

announced the grant awarded to the Commission by the Benedum Foundation, in the amount of \$25,000, for the 2020 Census Awareness and Complete Count events on West Virginia college campuses to encourage students to complete the census survey. In addition, Governor Jim Justice has allocated \$1 million in contingency funds to the Census Awareness Program. Mr. Turner added that a census committee has been formed at the Commission office and that it is working with the Student Government Associations, the institutional presidents and their provosts to raise awareness among the students of the importance of filling-out the census questionnaire. He further added that the money from the Benedum grant will be distributed to the institutions in the coming weeks.

**VII. Approval of Fiscal Year 2021 Distribution Plan for the West Virginia Higher Education Grant Program**

Mr. Brian Weingart, Senior Director of Financial Aid, provided an overview of the proposed Fiscal Year 2021 distribution plan for the West Virginia Higher Education Grant Program.

Commissioner Lowther moved approval of the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Distribution Plan for the West Virginia Higher Education Grant.

Commissioner Schulte seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**VIII. Approval of Eligibility Requirements, Annual Award Amount, and Summer Awards for the PROMISE Scholarship Program**

Mr. Weingart provided an overview of the proposed eligibility requirements and award amounts for the PROMISE Scholarship Program.

Commissioner Payne moved approval of the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves proposed eligibility requirements, the annual award amount, and summer awards for the PROMISE Scholarship Program.

Commissioner Lewis Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**IX. Approval of Presidential Search Procedure**

Chancellor Tucker presented an overview of the presidential search procedure proposed by West Virginia State University.

Commissioner Dailey moved approval of the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the Presidential Search Procedure adopted by the West Virginia State University

Board of Governors.

Commissioner Schulte seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**X. Approval of Presidential Contract at Fairmont State University**

Ms. Kristin Boggs, General Counsel, provided an overview of the proposed contract for the president of Fairmont State University.

Commissioner Lowther moved approval of the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission confirms the appointment of Dr. Mirta Martin as President of Fairmont State University and approves her compensation as proposed by the Fairmont State University Board of Governors.

Commissioner Lewis Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**XI. Additional Board Action and Comment**

There were no additional items for approval nor comments.

**XII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Commissioner Payne moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Dailey seconded the motion. Motion passed.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael J. Farrell, Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Diana Lewis Jackson, Secretary