

MINUTES

WEST VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION

June 11, 2021

I. Call to Order

Chairman Michael J. Farrell convened a meeting of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission on June 11, 2021, at 9:00 a.m., by Zoom videoconference and conference call. The following Commission members participated: Robert L. Brown, Ex-Officio; Clayton Burch, Ex-Officio; James W. Dailey; Michael J. Farrell; Diane Lewis Jackson; Dale Lowther; Andrew A. Payne, and Donna L. Schulte. Other participants included state college and university representatives, Chancellor Sarah Armstrong Tucker, and Commission staff.

Chairman Farrell secured a quorum and welcomed all participants to the meeting.

Chairman Farrell proceeded to read a resolution thanking Commissioner Lowther for his many years of “magnificent service” on the Commission and to the state’s education system. Commissioner Lowther was presented with a memento.

II. Chairman’s Report

Chairman Farrell commented on the success of the Board of Governors Summit held on June 10. He said that it was well attended, with panelists including members of the West Virginia legislature and representatives from various national organizations who are recognized in the higher education arena. He thanked Chancellor Tucker and all who contributed to setting an interesting program.

A. Nominating Committee Report and Election of Officers

Robert Brown offered a motion to approve the Nominating Committee’s selection of the following Commissioners to serve as officers of the Higher Education Policy Commission from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

Andrew A. Payne, Chair
Michael J. Farrell, Vice Chair
Diana Lewis Jackson, Secretary

Commissioner Dailey seconded the motion. Motion passed.

III. Chancellor’s Report

Chancellor Sarah Armstrong Tucker reported that the Commission’s presentations to Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability (LOCEA) regarding Nursing Career Pathways and to the legislative Joint Technology Committee about using technology to lower the cost of textbooks and other required materials were well

received. She commented on the success of the institutional Board of Governors Summit, which offered 12 sessions hosted by leading national organizations and was attended by more than 170 participants.

Regarding upcoming events organized by the Commission, Chancellor Tucker reported that the Commission's Financial Aid and Student Services Divisions will be holding College Bound Saturday on June 12; there will be 13 sites across the State offering in-person assistance with FAFSA completion and financial aid options. The Student Services Division will hold virtually the Student Success Summit in mid-July. The Underwood-Smith Teaching Scholars Program will be celebrating its second cohort in July. Dr. Tucker mentioned that the agency has two multi-million dollar grants pending: GEAR UP and EPSCoR Track I, which are central to operations.

Chancellor Tucker read a resolution honoring Chairman Farrell for his hard work and dedication to the advancement of higher education during his tenure as the Higher Education Policy Commission's chairman. She presented him with a memento.

IV. Updates from Constituent Groups

A. Advisory Council of Classified Employees

Ms. Jenna Derrico, Chair of the Advisory Council of Classified Employees and an employee at West Virginia Northern Community and Technical College, reported on behalf of classified employees. Ms. Derrico focused on the need for classified employees to have representation on the Commission and various councils to ensure shared governance. She asked the Commission to urge the institutions to grant authorization to their classified staff representatives to attend the Council's meetings, and to support their travel expenses. She announced that the Council will have its annual retreat in July.

B. Advisory Council of Faculty

Dr. Joseph Allen, Chair of the Advisory Council of Faculty and professor at Concord University, reported on behalf of faculty. He stated that plans are underway for the Council's annual retreat in July; faculty are preparing for in-person return to their campuses for the fall semester; and they continue to work on the development of the globalization initiative.

C. Advisory Council of Students

The Council did not report.

V. Update from Council of Presidents

Dr. Mirta Martin, President of Fairmont State University, reported on behalf of the Council of Presidents. Dr. Martin stated that the presidents are working on strategies to increase student enrollment and retention; they are planning to bring students to the campuses for the fall semester; and although not required, their institutions are strongly

encouraging all personnel to get vaccinated. On behalf of the Council, President Martin expressed deep gratitude to Chairman Farrell for his inspiration and leadership during his tenure as chairman.

VI. Update from WVNET

Dr. Carl Powell, Director of the West Virginia Network for Educational Telecomputing (WVNET), updated the Commission about the mission of WVNET, the clients it serves, and services provided. He stated that WVNET has been in operation for 45 years. Recent accomplishments include supporting the state's Kids Connect initiative, in collaboration with the Department of Education and Office of Technology; providing a platform for the WVROCKS online-learning program; and starting a cyber security training program in collaboration with the federal government. Dr. Powell stated that WVNET saves close to \$4.4 million to all schools by purchasing software in bulk.

VII. Update from the West Virginia Regional Technology Park

Mr. Matt Ballard, Executive Director of the West Virginia Regional Technology Park, provided an overview of the Park's history and mission, the tenants it houses, and expansion endeavors. Mr. Ballard mentioned that the Park initially had 550 employees and now has close to a thousand, shared among 23 STEM-focused companies. The Tech Park just broke ground to build a facility for the National Weather Service, and it is developing 14 acres of property to attract businesses. Mr. Ballard reported that so far, 30,000 patents have been created at the Park, generating \$18 billion. He added that the Park collaborates with the I-79 Technology Park, in Fairmont, and the Governor's Office to recruit federal agencies that are a good fit for West Virginia.

VIII. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Lewis moved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on April 30, 2021. Commissioner Dailey seconded the motion. Motion passed.

IX. Approval of Revised Vision 2025: West Virginia Science and Technology Plan

Dr. Juliana Serafin, Director of Science and Research, provided an overview of the proposed revisions to Vision 2025, the West Virginia Science and Technology Plan.

Commissioner Schultz moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the revised Vision 2025: West Virginia Science and Technology Plan.

Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed.

X. Approval of Modifications to State Financial Aid

Mr. Brian Weingart, Senior Director of Financial Aid, provided an overview of the proposed modifications to the state financial aid requirements.

Commissioner Schulte moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves proposed extension of the testing deadline, ability of students to super score for the Promise Scholarship, and waiving the grade point average needed to renew Promise and the West Virginia Higher Education Grant.

Commissioner Lewis seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XI. Approval of Bond Refunding

Dr. Edward Magee, Vice Chancellor of Finance, provided an overview of the proposed bond refunding.

Commissioner Payne moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the refunding of the Fairmont State University Board of Governors Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2012 A and Series 2012 B, and authorizes and confirms the financing of the costs of these refundings and the related expenses through the issuance of refunding revenue bonds in the aggregate principal amount of not more than \$36 million.

Commissioner Lowther seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XII. Review of Tuition and Fees

Vice Chancellor Magee reported that as in previous years, the institutions were asked to align prices with internal strategic and state goals regarding affordability, quality of instruction, retention, and financial strength. These goals were reviewed in relation to the institutions' relative market positions that will affect their pricing. He provided a detailed summary of all the institutions' tuition and fee charges.

XIII. Review of Institutional Operating and Capital Budgets and Approval of Institutional Capital Budgets

Vice Chancellor Magee provided an overview of the institutional operating and capital budgets. He explained that under West Virginia Code, the Commission reviews institutional operating budgets and reviews and approves capital budgets for all governing boards under its jurisdiction, except the governing boards of Marshall University, Shepherd University, West Virginia University, and the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine. For the governing boards of these institutions, the Commission may review and comment upon their operating budgets and capital budgets. The Commission's comments, if any, must be made part of the governing board's minute record.

Commissioner Lewis moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the

Fiscal Year 2022 institutional capital budgets.

Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XIV. Approval of Fiscal Year 2022 Higher Education Policy Commission Division Operating Budgets and Higher Education Resource Assessment Projects

Vice Chancellor Magee provided an overview of the proposed Higher Education Policy Commission division operating budgets and Higher Education Resource Assessment projects for Fiscal Year 2022.

Commissioner Dailey moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the Fiscal Year 2022 division operating budgets and Higher Education Resource Assessment projects.

Commissioner Lowther seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XV. Approval of Annual Reauthorization of Four-Year Degree-Granting Institutions

Ms. Nikki Bryant, Director of Academic Programming, provided an overview of the proposed annual reauthorization of the four-year degree-granting institutions.

Commissioner Lewis moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the Annual Reauthorization for Bluefield State College, Concord University, Fairmont State University, Glenville State College, Shepherd University, West Liberty University, and West Virginia State University; Alderson Broaddus University, Appalachian Bible College, Bethany College, Catholic Distance University, Davis and Elkins College, Future Generations University, Ohio Valley University, University of Charleston, West Virginia Wesleyan College, Wheeling University; American Public University System, Salem University, and Strayer University.

Commissioner Schulte seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XVI. Approval of Master of Business Administration

Ms. Bryant provided an overview of the proposed Master of Business Administration requested by West Virginia State University.

Commissioner Lewis moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the Master of Business Administration at West Virginia State University for implementation in Spring 2022. This approval expires two years from the date of Commission approval if the program is not fully implemented.

Commissioner Payne seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XVII. Approval of Revisions to Mission Statement

Ms. Kristin Boggs, General Counsel, provided an overview of the proposed revisions to West Virginia State University's mission statement.

Commissioner Lewis moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves revisions to the West Virginia State University mission statement.

Commissioner Dailey seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XVIII. Confirmation of Extension of Sunset Date for Series 48 and Series 52

Mr. Matthew Turner, Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration, provided an overview of the proposed extension of sunset date for Series 48 and Series 52.

Commissioner Brown moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission confirms a five-year Sunset Date Extension for Series 48, Legislative Rule, Research Trust Fund and Series 52, Legislative Rule, Annual Reauthorization of Degree Granting Institutions.

Commissioner Dailey seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XIX. Additional Board Action and Comments

There were no additional board action items or comments.

XX. Adjournment

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


Michael J. Farrell, Chairman


Diana Lewis Jackson, Secretary