

## **MINUTES**

### **WEST VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION**

**February 14, 2025**

#### **I. Call to Order**

Chairman Andrew A. Payne convened a meeting of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission on February 14, 2025, at 9:00 a.m., by Zoom video and teleconference. The following Commission members participated: Michele Blatt, Ex-Officio; James W. Dailey; James Denova; Michael J. Farrell; Diane Lewis Jackson; Andrew A. Payne, and E. Gail Pitchford. Absent was Christina Cameron, Ex-Officio. Other participants included university representatives, Chancellor Sarah Armstrong Tucker, Higher Education Policy Commission staff, and others.

Chairman Payne secured a quorum.

#### **II. Chairman's Report**

Chairman Payne welcomed all participants to the meeting. He introduced and welcomed new Commission employees Chris Rasmussen, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and Joe Jenkins, General Counsel.

#### **III. Chancellor's Report**

Chancellor Tucker shared that the Interagency College-Going Rate Workgroup and subcommittees have continued to meet and are working on recommendations. She expects that through their work, the next Legislative Session will be busy and productive.

#### **IV. Update from Advisory Council of Classified Employees**

Jenna Derrico, an employee at West Virginia Northern Community College, provided a report on behalf of classified employees.

#### **V. Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Jackson moved to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2024 Commission meeting. Commissioner Pitchford seconded the motion. Motion passed.

#### **VI. Update from the Division of Student Affairs**

Mr. Jason Luyster, Senior Director of Student Affairs, provided an update on GEAR UP events and other activities and initiatives.

**VII. Update on the West Virginia Nursing Workforce Expansion Grant Program**

Ms. Amanda McCarty, Senior Director of Health Sciences, presented the update.

**VIII. Update on Campus Mental Health Impact Grants**

Dr. Candace Layne, Behavioral Health Program Specialist, presented the update.

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

Mr. Brian Weingart, Senior Director of Financial Aid, presented the agenda item.

Commissioner Farrell 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 Dailey seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**X. Approval of Fiscal Year 2026 Distribution Plan for the West Virginia Higher Education Grant Program**

Mr. Weingart presented the agenda item.

Commissioner Farrell moved approval of the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Distribution Plan for the West Virginia Higher Education Grant Program.

Commissioner Pitchford seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**XI. Approval of Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity**

Dr. Corley Dennison of the Division of Academic Affairs presented the agenda item.

Commissioner Farrell moved approval of the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity program at West Virginia State University for implementation in fall 2025.

Commissioner Dailey seconded the motion. Motion passed.

## **XII. Approval of Annual Reauthorization of Four-Year Degree-Granting Private Institutions**

Dr. Beez Schell, Academic Officer, presented the agenda item.

Commissioner Jackson moved approval of the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves annual reauthorization for Appalachian Bible College, Bethany College, Catholic International University, Davis and Elkins College, Future Generations University, University of Charleston, Valley College, West Virginia Wesleyan College, Wheeling University, American Public University, Salem University, and Strayer University.

Commissioner Pitchford seconded the motion. Motion passed.

## **XIII. Additional Board Action and Comment**

Commissioner Denova inquired about the impact of federal funding freezes on state institutions.

## **XIV. Adjournment**

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



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Andrew A. Payne, Chairman



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Diana Lewis Jackson, Secretary

