

**SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

Meeting held at  
1122 Lady Street, Suite 300  
Columbia, S.C. 29201  
12:45 p.m.

***Minutes of the Meeting***  
**December 5, 2019**

**Commissioners Attending**

Mr. Wes Hayes, Chair	Ms. Linda Dolny	Mr. Ben Satcher
Mr. Paul Batson	Mr. Edgar Dyer	Ms. Terrye Seckinger
Mr. Jim Battle	Mr. Devron Edwards*	Dr. Cleveland Sellers
Ms. Julie Godshall Brown	Dr. Bettie Rose Horne	Mr. Mark Smith
Mr. Charles Dalton	Mr. Chuck Munns*	Mr. Patrick White

**Commissioners Absent**

**Guests Attending**

Ms. Melanie Barton, Governor's Office	Ms. Elisabeth Kovacs, Dept. of Employment & Workforce
Ms. Beth Bell, Clemson University	Mr. John Massengill, Hannah News Services
Dr. John Catalano, University of South Carolina Union	Dr. Lucas McMillan, Lander University
Dr. James Colbert, Lander University	Mr. Paul Patrick, College of Charleston
Dr. Tena Crews, University of South Carolina Columbia	Dr. Jeff Perez, South Carolina Independent Colleges & Universities
Dr. Mark Del Mastro, College of Charleston	Dr. Karen Roof, The Citadel
Mr. Tim Druke, Winthrop University	Dr. Darlene Shaw, Medical University of South Carolina
Dr. Dan Ennis, Coastal Carolina University	Ms. Sandy Singletary, Lander University
Dr. Clif Flynn, University Center of Greenville	Dr. Michael Sonntag, University of South Carolina Sumter
Rep. Doug Gilliam, District 42	Dr. Suzanne Thomas, Medical University of South Carolina
Mr. Scott James, Lander University	Dr. Holisa Wharton, Lander University
Ms. Taylor Johnston, Lander University	
Dr. Jeremy King, Clemson University	

\*Attended by phone.

**Commission Staff Present**

Dr. Rusty Monhollon	Ms. Julissa Nixon
Dr. Argentini Anderson	Mr. Andrew Roof
Ms. Laura Belcher	Mr. Georges Tippens
Ms. Monica Goodwin	Ms. Bunnie Ward
Mr. Samuel Grubbs	Mr. Bryce Wilson
Ms. DaVaris Hatten	Dr. Karen Woodfaulk
Dr. John Lane	Dr. Lishu Yin
Ms. Yolanda Myers	

Chair Hayes convened the meeting at 12:47 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance. It was confirmed that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

## **1. Introductions & Roll Call to Establish Quorum**

Ms. Belcher introduced the guests in attendance. A quorum was confirmed.

## **2. Approval of Minutes of November 7, 2019 Meeting**

**Wes Hayes**

Chair Hayes called for a motion to approve the minutes of the Commission's November 7, 2019 meeting. Commissioner Seckinger motioned and Commissioner Satcher seconded to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

## **3. Chairman's Report**

**Wes Hayes**

Chair Hayes thanked Commissioner Smith for his attendance, given his recent health challenges. Commissioner Smith provided an update and thanked the Commissioners for their thoughts and support.

Chair Hayes asked Dr. Monhollon for his report.

## **4. President and Executive Director's Report**

**Rusty Monhollon**

### **A. Presentation by Ms. Melanie Barton, Governor's Office**

Dr. Monhollon invited Ms. Melanie Barton to give her presentation to the Commission. Ms. Barton announced she would give an overview of the Governor's education priorities as the legislative session gets underway.

Ms. Barton thanked Chair Hayes and Dr. Monhollon and relayed Governor McMaster's appreciation of the Commission's work.

She recounted that she began working as the Governor's education advisor in September. She emphasized the Governor's commitment to improving education outcomes for rural South Carolinians, belief in the technical colleges' role in workforce retraining, and determination to make postsecondary education more affordable.

Ms. Barton reviewed executive budget requests and identified from these major issues which the Commission could lead. She highlighted the need for the state to increase its percentage of adults holding postsecondary education degrees and workforce certificates and added that achieving this will require collaboration between institutions. She emphasized that increased automation and leveraging of artificial intelligence will drive the workforce need for higher skills. Because of this reality, she stated, the state must increase post-secondary completion.

Ms. Barton briefly touched on some means of advancing this goal, namely expanding dual enrollment and faster transition policies regarding articulation and partnerships.

Ms. Barton said that state funding for higher education in coming years will be a significant point of conversation. She stated total appropriations for the upcoming fiscal year (2020-21) will be the largest ever, with an increase of about \$907 million in recurring general funds and an increase of about \$985 million in non-recurring funds. She stated that, of the total \$1.9 billion dollars in increased available funds, \$2.5 billion in requests had been made.

Because requests outstripped available funds, Ms. Barton emphasized that the state must prioritize its spending. She relayed common higher education budget requests made to the Governor:

- mental healthcare services;
- campus safety and security;

- cybersecurity; and
- tuition mitigation funding.

Commissioner Seckinger asked if any the Governor's budget appropriated any funds for a uniform data system. Ms. Barton stated the Governor's office is working on making a longitudinal data system a reality, but she did highlight the difficulty of its coordination. Commissioner Smith commented that dual credit had tremendous cost savings benefits.

As Ms. Barton's presence was required at another meeting, her ability to field questions and comments from Commissioners was limited. Chair Hayes thanked Ms. Barton for addressing the Commission. Dr. Monhollon thanked Ms. Barton as well and resumed his report.

Dr. Monhollon recounted the Commission's October discussion of nonpublic post-secondary institutions' licensure; more specifically, that of Southeastern Institute. Dr. Monhollon stated he reviewed the Commission's statutory authority in licensing nonpublic institutions. Citing a 2018 legal opinion, a 1984 opinion from the Attorney General, and Section 59-58-40 of the 1976 Code, he stated the Commission's licensing of nonpublic post-secondary institutions is dependent on whether the applying institution is accredited, has sufficient facilities and staff, is financially sound, and can fulfill its obligations to students. He added that the Commission has the authority to amend its existing regulations.

Commissioner Seckinger agreed with Dr. Monhollon's assessment. Supporting nonpublic post-secondary institutions' right to operate, she expressed concern for the costs of their programs to students. She voiced that she would like the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL) to publish nonpublic institution program costs alongside costs for similar programs at public institutions. Commissioner Munns supported Commissioner Seckinger's suggestion but emphasized the importance that not too many roadblocks be put in place. Commissioner Munns informed the Commission of the criteria he personally uses when making licensing determinations:

- Whether the student gets value out of the program;
- Whether the program is of quality;
- If the program is truthfully and accurately marketed to the public; and
- Whether a teach out mechanism exists if the company should fail in the marketplace.

Commissioner Batson, commenting that the agency had already developed an education cost calculator for student and family use, suggested nonpublic post-secondary institutions' tuition and fees also be included. Commissioner Seckinger agreed.

Commissioner Battle asked if students received automatic approval for student loans. Dr. Karen Woodfaulk stated that students' abilities to repay were reviewed before approval; but essentially, she added, all students are eligible for federal loans. Dr. Woodfaulk further explained that the federal criteria for a student's repayment ability are different from those of private commercial lenders.

Commissioner Battle stated the Commission should not impede the operations of for-profit/nonpublic post-secondary institutions; if those institutions are too expensive, he added, students and families could make the decision to attend elsewhere. Commissioner Dyer asked whether any financial bonds to protect students were required of nonpublic post-secondary institutions in the event of a closure. Dr. John Lane answered that these are required and that students must apply to draw funds from the bond.

Vice Chair Horne asked how students are informed of their financial relief options after the closure of their institution. Dr. Lane described this process. Vice Chair Horne asked Dr. Lane to estimate the percentage of affected students reached with this information. Dr. Lane estimated that over 90 percent are reached.

Commissioner Brown stated that should any change to the Commission’s policy be made, it should not be founded in the contemporary board’s opinion.

Commissioner Seckinger reiterated that she simply wants students to understand what they are paying for when they attend a nonpublic post-secondary institution. Chair Hayes asked if she would like for the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL) to undertake the task of researching and conveying to students and families the costs of programs offered by nonpublic post-secondary institutions operating within South Carolina. Commissioner Seckinger stated she would.

Commissioner Munns recommended Chair Hayes determine the sense of the Commission regarding Commissioner Seckinger’s suggestion and task CAAL accordingly. Chair Hayes determined the Commission was in favor of this recommendation and so tasked CAAL.

Dr. Monhollon continued with his report.

**B. Review of Council of Presidents Guidelines**  
*(For Information, No Action Required)*

He announced the Council of Presidents will convene on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, and that an agenda, along with recommended bylaw language, will be distributed in the upcoming week. He stated the intent of the bylaws is to create a formal structure for the Council’s operation.

Dr. Monhollon provided an update on the agency’s search for new office space.

Dr. Monhollon announced the Commission’s 2019 Statistical Abstract is nearing completion and that copies will be provided to Commissioners at the January meeting.

Lastly, Dr. Monhollon informed the Commission that the US Census Bureau enlisted the agency’s help in partnering with institutions to recruit college students to help execute the census. He stated that South Carolina was asked along with four other states—Texas, Wisconsin, Colorado, and Michigan—to participate in a project regarding post-secondary graduates’ employment outcomes.

**5. Legislative Report**

**Bunnie Ward**

Ms. Bunnie Ward informed the Commission that the agency had fielded a substantial number of informational requests from legislators, their staff, other state agencies, and media. Ms. Ward briefly overviewed some pre-filed legislation pertaining to higher education. Chair Hayes inquired about the activities of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (S.298) working group. Ms. Ward stated the group had been meeting weekly and that amendment language had been drafted. She added that she had been trying to secure a senior Senate staffer to attend the working group’s next meeting to discuss the drafted amendment.

**6. Committee Reports**

**6.01 Report of the Executive Committee**

**Wes Hayes**

The Committee had no report.

**6.02 Report of Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing**

**Charles Munns**

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **A. Program Proposals**

1. University of South Carolina Upstate, B.S., Cybersecurity
2. University of South Carolina Upstate, M.S.N., Nursing Leadership
3. University of South Carolina Upstate, M.S.N., Nursing Education
4. University of South Carolina Columbia, Ed.D., Educational Practice and Innovation
5. University of South Carolina Columbia, M.S.N., Master's Entry Practice Nursing
6. Midlands Technical College, A.A.S., Engineering Fundamentals
7. Medical University of South Carolina, M.S., Speech-Language Pathology
8. Lander University, B.Des., Graphic and Interactive Media
9. Lander University, B.S., Health Promotion and Wellness
10. Lander University, B.S., Human Services
11. Lander University, B.S., Paralegal Studies
12. Lander University, M.F.A., Visual Art
13. Horry-Georgetown Technical College, A.A.S., Teacher Education
14. Coastal Carolina University, B.A., Religious Studies
15. Clemson University, M.S., Agriculture
16. Clemson University, Ph.D., Agriculture
17. Clemson University, M.W.F.R., Wildlife and Fisheries Resources

### **B. Consideration of University of South Carolina System Mission Statement Change**

### **C. Consideration of University of South Carolina Mission Statement Changes**

1. University of South Carolina Columbia
2. University of South Carolina Lancaster
3. University of South Carolina Sumter
4. University of South Carolina Salkehatchie
5. University of South Carolina Union

Commissioner Seckinger requested that items 6.02.A.4, University of South Carolina Columbia, Ed.D., Educational Practice and Innovation, and 6.02.A.14, Coastal Carolina University, B.A., Religious Studies, be pulled from the Committee's consent agenda. Chair Hayes asked if there were any objections. Commissioner Dyer stated he objected to the removal of 6.02.A.14. Commissioner Seckinger motioned and Commissioner White seconded to remove both 6.02.A.4 and 6.02.A.14 from the consent agenda for individual discussion. With all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion except Commissioner Dyer, who opposed, the two items were removed from the consent agenda for individual discussion.

Before discussion of those two items began, Commissioner Munns reviewed the program proposal process and provided brief summaries of the items put forward on CAAL's consent agenda. The consent agenda, which was brought forward as a motion from the Committee and therefore did not require a second, passed unanimously.

Commissioner Munns invited Dr. John Lane to briefly explain item 6.02.A.4. Dr. Lane informed the Commission the program was already in existence and that the item at hand simply made changes to that program. Commissioner Munns added that he and other Committee members thought a clear need for the program existed. Chair Hayes called for a vote to approve the program. With all present Commissioners approving except Commissioner Seckinger, who opposed, program 6.02.A.4 was passed.

Continuing, Commissioner Munns asked Dr. Lane to briefly explain item 6.02.A.14. He described the proposed program as an expansion of Coastal Carolina University's current religious studies offering into a standalone undergraduate degree. Commissioner Munns recommended approval and relayed business leaders' sentiments that knowledge is needed in the area addressed by the proposed program. Commissioner Dyer stated the proposed program supported intelligence and national security efforts. Commissioner Seckinger stated she surveyed other religious studies offerings in the state and discovered they had a noticeable Judeo-Christian

perspective. She expressed issue with public funds being used to train people to become religious ministers of any creed. Commissioner Dyer responded that public universities are prohibited by law from approaching any program from any specific religious perspective. Vice Chair Horne stated that it is outside of an institution's role to proselytize or advocate for any specific religion. Chair Hayes called for a vote to approve the program. With all present Commissioners approving except Commissioner Seckinger, who opposed, program 6.02.A.14 was passed.

**D. Report on Program Modifications, May 9 – October 30, 2019**  
*(For Information, No Action Required)*

Commissioner Munns presented the item for information purposes only.

**6.03 Report of Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services**

**Paul Batson**

Commissioner Batson stated his Committee had no report but would meet after the Commission adjourned its meeting.

**6.04 Report of Committee on Finance and Facilities**

**Charles Dalton**

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**A. Permanent Improvement Project Approvals**

1. College of Charleston
  - A. Addlestone Library Envelope Repairs & Interior Modifications
    - Establish Phase I
  - B. Multicultural Center Renovation
    - Establish Phase I
  - C. Silcox PE & Health Center Envelope Repair & First Floor Renovation
    - Establish Phase I
  - D. Wentworth Parking Garage Renovation
    - Establish Phase I
2. Lander University
  - A. Field House II Development
    - Establish Phase I
  - B. Intramural Field Renovation
    - Establish Phase I
3. Spartanburg Community College
  - A. Powers Building Renovations
    - Phase II Budget Increase, Change Project Name

Commissioner Dalton discussed the purposes, costs, and funding sources of the seven proposed capital projects. Chair Hayes asked for discussion. There was none. The consent agenda, which was brought forward as a motion from the committee and therefore did not require a second, passed unanimously.

**B. List of Permanent Improvement Projects Processed by Staff during October 2019**  
*(For Information, No Action Required)*

**C. 2019-20 CPIP Analysis**  
*(For Information, No Action Required)*

**D. Approval of 2020 Finance & Facility Committee Meeting Dates and Project Submission Deadlines**

*(For Information, No Action Required)*

Commissioner Dalton announced the Committee on Finance & Facilities passed its 2020 meeting calendar. Commissioner Seckinger asked whether the repair and maintenance of current assets is on the CPIP report. Mr. Tippens answered that such a report stands apart from the CPIP itself and is conducted by the Commission every three years. With the previous report having been completed in 2017, he stated it would again be provided in the fall of 2020.

**7. Other Business**

Commissioner Munns asked that, in the future, Commissioners who plan to pull items from consent agendas notify the Commission in advance, so institutional stakeholders could be apprised and given the opportunity to prepare responses to concerns.

Commissioner Smith thanked Commissioner Seckinger for expressing her beliefs and standing strong in them. He also commented on the prevalence of religious persecution of Christians in Asia.

**8. Public Comment**

There were no comments from the public.

**9. End of Business Meeting**

With a motion (Seckinger), second (Satcher), and unanimous vote, Chair Hayes adjourned the meeting at 2:36 p.m.