



Meeting of the South Carolina Commission
on Higher Education

Draft Minutes

February 3, 2021, 12:30 p.m.

Zoom

Members

Commissioner Wes Hayes, Chair

Commissioner Paul Batson

Commissioner Julie Godshall Brown

Commissioner Charles Dalton

Commissioner Linda Dolny

Commissioner Edgar Dyer

Commissioner Bettie Rose Horne

Commissioner Hugh Mobley

Commissioner Ben Satcher

Commissioner Terrye Seckinger

Commissioner Mark Smith

Commissioner Patrick White

Members Excused

Commissioner Devron Edwards

Commissioner Charles Munns

Commissioner Cleveland Sellers

Commission Staff Present

Dr. Rusty Monhollon

Dr. Argentini Anderson

Ms. Laura Belcher

Dr. Mariam Dittmann

Ms. Monica Goodwin

Ms. DaVaris Hatten

Ms. Shakara Smith

Mr. Georges Tippens

Ms. Bunnie Ward

Dr. Karen Woodfaulk



Guests

Ms. Christine Brown, Medical University of South Carolina

Mr. Darryl Bridges, Francis Marion University

Dr. John Catalano, University of South Carolina Palmetto College

Dr. James Colbert, Lander University

Dr. Steve Cutler, University of South Carolina Columbia

Dr. Mark Del Mastro, College of Charleston

Dr. Timothy Druke, Winthrop University

Ms. Trena Houpp, University of South Carolina Columbia

Dr. Scott Jones, Lander University

Dr. Peter King, Francis Marion University

Ms. Reinell Thomas-Myers, SC State University

Dr. Jeff Perez, SC Independent Colleges & Universities

Dr. Eric Skipper, University of South Carolina Beaufort

Ms. Nina Staggers, SC Department of Employment & Workforce

Dr. Pamela Steinke, University of South Carolina Upstate

Dr. Rosline Sumpter, SC Technical College System Office

Ms. Macey Webb, SC House Education Public Works Committee

Mr. Doug Snyder, Doug Snyder Digital CPA

All Attended either In-Person, by Phone or Video Conference

Chair Hayes convened the meeting at 12:41 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance.

I. 1. Introductions and Roll Call to Establish Quorum

Ms. Belcher introduced the Commissioners. She confirmed a quorum of the Commission and announced that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2. Approval of Minutes

Chair Hayes introduced the draft minutes of the December 2, 2021, CHE meeting, and asked whether there were any additions or corrections. Commissioner Mobley motioned to approve minutes as presented, and Commissioner Horne seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.



3. Chair's Report

Chair Hayes introduced and welcomed Mr. Doug Snyder and explained that he is in the process of being confirmed as a new Commissioner to the Commission on Higher Education (CHE), replacing Commissioner Devron Edwards. Chair Hayes reported that the Senate Education Committee submitted a favorable report on January 26, and he is now awaiting confirmation by the full Senate. Chair Hayes thanked Commissioner Edwards for his service and commitment to the Commission and to the State of South Carolina. Chair Hayes also expressed appreciation for the legislative manuals provided by the CHE.

4. President and Executive Director's Report

Chair Hayes called on President Monhollon to give his report. President Monhollon announced new CHE hires: Mark Swart, Strategic Communications Manager in the Office of Governmental Affairs and Communications; Daniel Jeng, Director of AmeriCorps in the Office of Student Affairs; and Andrea LaTouche, Administrative Assistant in the Office of the President and Executive Director. He reported that there are currently five positions in the process of being filled.

President Monhollon announced that the SC Department of Education awarded the CHE a 3-year, \$5 million grant through the Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund. He explained that the grant is in response to learning loss as a result of the pandemic. President Monhollon explained that a request for proposals (RFP) was sent to institutions to determine programs that would be most beneficial to students.

President Monhollon reported that on January 26 he attended the confirmation hearing for Mr. Doug Snyder, as well as presented the 2023 budget request to the SC House Ways and Means Higher Education Subcommittee, at which Commissioner Horne and Mr. Snyder attended. President Monhollon reported one amendment to the CHE's budget request, to include funding of a near completers program. He explained that the program would target individuals over 24 years of age and that are within one year of completing a post-secondary degree or credential. President Monhollon said that the Subcommittee



expressed interest in the near completer initiative and in PASCAL conducting a study to determine future library space needs.

President Monhollon reported that the CHE is currently working on provisos 117.152, which directs the Commission to develop a comprehensive credit transfer policy from two-year to four-year institutions; proviso 117.176, a study on historical funding of SC institutions of higher education (IHE); and proviso 11.20, which directs CHE to design and implement a classification system to include doctoral and professional classifications. President Monhollon said that he would like to revisit proviso 11.20 during the March CHE meeting to gain Commissioners' input. Commissioner Seckinger asked whether the CHE plans to collaborate with the SC Department of Employment & Workforce Development when considering how to implement proviso 11.20, to which President Monhollon outlined a plan to conduct the analysis while involving key entities in the process.

President Monhollon made a few announcements: the digital 2021 Statistical Abstract is available on the CHE's website and a hard copy will be made available during the March CHE meeting; reminded Commissioners on the logistics regarding the offsite March CHE meeting; reminded Commissioners to complete the ethics report by March 30; and announced the kickoff Complete College America (CCA) conference at the Columbia Convention Center on February 16.

President Monhollon introduced the CHE's Workforce Development Manager, Mr. Richard Davis, who provided an update on his work related to workforce development. Mr. Davis described current conditions of the US labor market and suggested a path forward including advocating for legislation towards loan forgiveness and stipends in high need professions; developing strategic partnerships; launching Near Completers program; seeking external grants; and supporting SC WINS and Scholarships for the future at technical colleges. Commissioner Smith said that adult learners would be more engaged if a fresh start program were established, which would clear academic records. Commissioner Brown expressed the importance in recognizing existing barriers such as cost of postsecondary education, daycare, and work schedules. Commissioner Horne requested that Mr. Davis share his presentation with Commissioners, to which Mr. Davis agreed. Commissioner Seckinger asked if the workforce guide will be made available on



institutions' websites as a resource for students, to which Mr. Davis said that goal would be to provide a digital version of the guide. President Monhollon thanked Mr. Davis for his presentation and deferred the REACH Act conversation to the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing report.

5. Legislative Report

Chair Hayes called on Ms. Ward to provide the legislative report. Ms. Ward announced that during the CCA conference, student supports and challenges will be addressed as a topic. She reported that there are several active issues relating to workforce development, health care, and teacher recruitment and retention. Ms. Ward described pending legislation: H4869 allows the technical system to authorize accelerated Bachelors of Science and Nursing degrees; H3796 provides a stipend of \$7,500 for LIFE scholarship recipients upon graduation with a Bachelor's in education fields and teacher loan forgiveness for teachers in critical need areas; H4325 prohibits public school districts including IHEs from directing or affirming students to adopt critical race theory (CRT); H4799 prohibits the State, political subdivisions, and public institutions from adopting, directing or instructing on CRT; and H4605 supports ideological freedom. Commissioner Seckinger asked which bills currently have the most traction, to which Ms. Ward said that all bills are being considered by the full SC House Education Committee and that the next meeting is scheduled for February 8 at which testimony will be taken. Ms. Ward said that she will send the meeting link to Commissioners.

6. Committee Reports

6.01 Report of the Executive Committee

Chair Hayes said that there were no new items to report from the Executive Committee.



6.02 Report of the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Commissioner Horne described the process in which syllabi are being reviewed relating to REACH Act compliance. She reported that 152 syllabi have been received and reviewed by CHE staff and said that most submissions are adequate, with only a few institutions requiring further guidance. Commissioner Horne reported that the Committee has created two taskforces to study transfer and articulation and the licensure procedures for non-public institutions. Commissioner Horne reported that CAAL has had preliminary conversations regarding CRT and has requested input from the full Commission to generate a response to the legislature regarding CRT. President Monhollon recommended starting the conversation during the meeting as the hearing would take place next week, Tuesday. He said that the statement would not be a position statement, rather a statement of support for academic integrity.

Commissioner Seckinger expressed concern with the CHE making a statement regarding CRT as the legislature is currently considering the issue. She opined that several institutions have not been compliant with REACH Act requirements, which is a stipulation to receive ESSER funds. Commissioner Horne welcomed any suggestions that Commissioners have regarding the review process. Commissioner Mobley expressed the importance of including IHEs in conversations relating to CRT. President Monhollon confirmed that he has had conversations with presidents and they generally are opposed to any legislation that would prohibit teaching any idea, which they see as a matter of academic freedom. Commissioners engaged in an extended conversation regarding academic integrity.

Commissioner Dyer motioned and Commissioner Batson seconded that the CHE make a general statement on behalf of the Commission; "The Commission on Higher Education values and honors viewpoint diversity; values and honors academic freedom and responsibility for both faculty and students; values and honors intellectual honesty; and expects South Carolina's public institutions of higher education to embrace and protect these principles." Commissioner Seckinger expressed concern with the proposed statement as it may be interpreted as a statement of support of the five CRT pending legislation and



requested a roll call vote and comment should the statement be considered. Chair Hayes requested that CHE staff call the roll.

Commissioner Batson - Yea

Commissioner Brown - Abstained

Commissioner Dalton - Yea

Commissioner Dolny - Yea

Commissioner Dyer - Yea

Commissioner Horne - Yea

Commissioner Mobley - Yea

Commissioner Satcher - Yea

Commissioner Seckinger - Nay

Commissioner White - Yea

Commissioner Hayes - Yea

With a vote of nine Commissioners in favor, one opposed, and one abstained, the motioned passed. Chair Hayes requested that President Monhollon share the approved statement with Commissioners when he responds to the legislature. Commissioner Dalton motioned and Commissioner Batson seconded to amend language in the approved statement, replacing the phrase academic freedom, with academic integrity as follows, "The Commission on Higher Education values and honors viewpoint diversity; values and honors academic integrity and responsibility for both faculty and students; values and honors intellectual honesty; and expects South Carolina's public institutions of higher education to embrace and protect these principles." Mr. Tippens explained that to be compliant with FOIA, Commissioners must take a vote to revise the CHE meeting agenda to include the academic integrity statement consideration. Commissioner Satcher motioned, and Commissioner Dalton seconded to amend the agenda. Chair Hayes called for a vote



and the agenda was amended to include the academic integrity item. Commissioner Dalton motioned and Commissioner Batson seconded to reconsider the vote on the revised academic integrity statement, to which Chair Hayes called for a vote that was approved unanimously. Commissioner Seckinger requested a copy of the statement.

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

Commissioner Batson said that the Committee on Access and Equity and Student Services does not have any items to report, but the Committee would meet immediately following the CHE meeting.

6.04 Report of the Committee on Finance and Facilities

Commissioner Dalton reported that the Committee on Finance and Facilities reviewed ten permanent improvement proposals from eight institutions; Coastal Carolina University, Kimbel Library Renovation; Francis Marion University, Smith University Center Renovations/Improvements; Greenville Technical College, Parking Lot R Construction – Barton Campus; Horry-Georgetown Technical College, Diesel Engine Training Facility Expansion – Building and Land; Orangeburg Calhoun Technical College, OCTech Health Science Building Mechanical/Electrical Upgrades; Piedmont Technical College, Health Science Building Renovations and Expansion; Spartanburg Community College, Powers Building Renovations; and Winthrop University, Music Conservatory & Brynes Auditorium Renovation, Brynes Auditorium Roof Fire Restoration, and Demolition for Wofford Hall. Commissioner Dalton motioned for approval of the consent agenda. Chair Hayes called for the vote and the consent agenda was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Dalton reported that the Committee has three informational items; Permanent Approval Project Staff Approvals during December and January; Fiscal Year 2021-22 Comprehensive Permanent Improvement Plan (CPIP) Analysis; and the CHE Quarter 2 Budget Report.

Commissioner Dalton called on Mr. Tippens to provide a brief overview of the Permanent Improvement Project Staff Approvals for December and January. Mr. Tippens reported that the CHE staff approved 24 institutional requests, of which 18 were establishing projects, four were decreasing budgets, one was closing out an existing project, and one was a project cancellation. Commissioner Dalton asked Mr.

Tippens to provide an update regarding the CPIP Analysis. Mr. Tippens explained that the CHE is required



to provide a recommendation on institutions' five-year permanent improvement projects each year to the Joint Bond Review Committee and the State Fiscal Accountability Authority. Mr. Tippens reported that institutions submitted 342 projects totaling \$3.9 billion and that staff used the same methodology to prioritize institutional projects as was used in the previous two years. Commissioner Dalton then called on Mr. Bryce Wilson to provide the CHE Quarter 2 Budget Report. Mr. Wilson provided a summary of the CHE expenditures.

7. Other Business Announcements

Chair Hayes asked whether there was any other business. Commissioner Dyer requested that the CHE staff coordinate a presentation by Moody's to provide an overview of enrollment trends in South Carolina.

Commissioner Satcher provided an update on the CHE's Foundation. He explained that the Foundation would support key ASCEND 60x30 initiatives. He reported that the Foundation has identified three initiatives to pursue and are currently developing a case for support. He said that the Foundation would like to expand membership of the board to include representation from institutions.

8. Public Comment

Chair Hayes asked whether there was any public comment. There were no comments from the public.

9. Agency Head Salary Training

Commissioners received required annual Agency Head Salary Commission training by Ms. Connie Thompson.

II. 10. End of Business Meeting

Chair Hayes and President Monhollon thanked everyone for their work and for attending the meeting. The Commission adjourned at 4:15 p.m.