



**Minutes of the Council of Presidents  
October 16, 2024  
USC Alumni Center  
900 Senate Street  
Columbia, SC 29201**

**Council of Presidents Members Present:**

Dr. Luther (Fred) Carter, Francis Marion University, *Chair, presiding*  
Dr. Michael Benson, Coastal Carolina University  
Dr. Jim Clements, Clemson University (Virtual)  
Dr. Walter Collins, Palmetto College  
Dr. April Cone, University of South Carolina Salkehatchie  
Col. Alexander Conyers, South Carolina State University  
Mr. Dan Cooper for Dr. Galen DeHay, Tri-County Technical College  
Dr. Richard Cosentino, Lander University  
Dr. Susan Elkins, University of South Carolina Palmetto College (Virtual)  
Dr. Jermaine Ford, Florence-Darlington Technical College  
Dr. Marilyn Fore, Horry-Georgetown Technical College  
Dr. Daniel Heimmermann, University of South Carolina Aiken  
Dr. Andrew Hsu, College of Charleston (Virtual)  
Dr. Patricia Lee, Williamsburg Technical College  
Dr. Gregory Little, Midlands Technical College  
Dr. Randy Lowell, University of South Carolina Union  
Dr. Forrest Mahan, Aiken Technical College  
Dr. Michael Mikota, Spartanburg Community College  
Dr. Keith Miller, Greenville Technical College  
Dr. Stacey Moore, York Technical College  
Dr. Al Panu, University of South Carolina Beaufort  
Dr. Eric Reisenauer, University of South Carolina Sumter  
Dr. Hope Rivers, Piedmont Technical College  
Dr. Edward Serna, Winthrop University (Virtual)  
Dr. Suzanne Thomas for Dr. David Cole, Medical University of South Carolina (Virtual)  
Dr. Jason Tisdal for Dr. Kevin Pollock, Central Carolina Technical College  
Dr. Walt Tobin, Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College  
Dr. Willie Todd, Denmark Technical College (Virtual)  
Dr. Vicky Wood, Trident Technical College



**CHE Board of Commissioners & Staff:**

Commissioner Wes Hayes, *Chair*  
Commissioner Jenni Bryson  
Commissioner Edgar Dyer (Virtual)  
Commissioner Gene Fant  
Commissioner Hugh Mobley  
Commissioner Terry Seckinger (Virtual)  
Commissioner Oran Smith  
Commissioner Doug Snyder  
Commissioner Dino Teppara  
Commissioner Mick Zais  
Dr. Jeffrey Perez, President & Executive Director  
Ms. Laura Belcher

**Other Guests Present**

Ms. Beth Bell, Clemson University  
Mr. Darryl Bridges, Francis Marion University  
Ms. Angie Leidinger, Clemson University  
Mr. Craig Parks, University of South Carolina Columbia  
Mrs. Elizabeth Shefton, Francis Marion University  
Mr. Adam Taylor, Lander University  
Mr. Graham Tew, Francis Marion University

**I. Welcome****Fred Carter and Jeff Perez**

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m.. Chairman Carter and Dr. Perez welcomed everyone. Dr. Perez asked Commission Chairman Hayes to introduce the CHE Commissioners. Chairman Carter asked the presidents and chancellors to introduce themselves.

The meeting agenda was posted on the Commission on Higher Education (CHE) website with proper notice of the meeting. The meeting was held in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). There were no public guests or media present.

**II. Approval of Minutes****Fred Carter**

Dr. Carter introduced the draft minutes for the May 1, 2024, Council of Presidents (COP) meeting, and asked whether there were any additions or corrections. Dr. Mahan made the motion to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded by Dr. Cosentino. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**III. Discussion Topics:****Tuition Mitigation Funding****Fred Carter**

Dr. Carter reported that the subject of tuition mitigation funding came up when the human resources officers met over the summer. At the meeting, they suggested that the COP put together a template to guide the presidents with tuition mitigation funding.

Dr. Carter proposed that COP assemble a tuition mitigation workgroup. The workgroup will come back to the council in February and talk about their observations relative to tuition mitigation and what has unfolded during the course of the first part of the budget session. Dr. Carter asked Ms. Angie Leidinger, Mr. Craig Parks, Mr. Adam Taylor and Mr. Darryl Bridges to sit on the workgroup and for Ms. Leidinger to be the chair.

**Workforce Development Commission****Richard Cosentino**

Dr. Cosentino explained that the Coordinating Council for Workforce Development was formed in response to the need for improved coordination of workforce development efforts. The centerpiece of project is the Workforce Portal. The portal is a software solution that utilizes AI to assess a users profile and identify the needs of the user, to help them secure current job openings in the state. One of the challenges is that there is not a 4-year representatives on the executive committee. Dr. Cosentino proposes that the sectors have a representative on the commission, to share their knowledge of program needs and requirements.

Dr. Carter asked the council to give consideration to request a representative from the research sector and a representative from the comprehensive sector be added to the executive committee. Dr. Cosentino made a motion to to accept and Dr. Panu seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Cyber Security****Richard Cosentino**

Dr. Cosentino brought up the discussion of cyber security at the universities and colleges. Cyber intrusions are becoming a major problem, that can cause reputational and financial nightmares for institutions. Dr. Cosentino suggests that cyber security needs to be a critical discussion topic for the COP.

Dr. Carter requested that the topic of cyber security be added to the agenda for the next COP meeting.

**Dependent Tuition****Angie Leidinger**

Ms. Angie Leidinger presented an opportunity that Clemson and the College of Charleston are looking at with dependent tuition. The discussion entails seeking legislative changes, in the form of budget provisos and a permeant statute change. These changes would allow instutions the opportunity to offer dependent tuition to both spouses and children. The council discussed that the proposal would allow individual instutions the flexibility to decide the limits of what they are willing and able to offer. A draft of the legislation would be shared with the council to make sure everyone was comfortable with the language and that it reflected the permissive nature.

Dr. Carter proposed that Ms. Leidinger work with the HEEAPA group to develop a proviso that could be shared with the COP.

**Emergency Response Protocols****Dan Heimmermann**

Dr. Heimmermann explained that the South Carolina code provides for when the governor declares a state of emergency, he may authorize up to five days of paid leave when an agency is closed. Currently, state universities and colleges must follow the same hazardous weather decisions as their county. If an institution decides to close in advance of the county decision, employees would have to take annual leave. The council discussed two issues. The first being who has the authority to forgive the five day leave and the second issue is who has the authority to suspend classes and close the institutions.

The recommendation of the COP is that presidents and chancellors are given the authority to close their campuses when they deem circumstances warrant the closing of the campus. The council agrees that the authority to forgive leave, at the request of the instiutions, should remain with the governor. Dr. Cosentino made a motion to accept the recommendation. The motion was seconded by Dr. Benson. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### **IV. Old Business**

No old business to discuss.

#### **V. New Business**

##### **Council of Presidents/CHE Mission and Purpose**

**Jeff Perez**

Dr. Perez opened up the discussion of what the COP would like CHE to be doing.

Dr. Carter brought up the possibility of a conference, bringing together the campus CIOs to begin to talk about cyber security across the campuses. Another issue that was raised, was to bring back the campus security conference. These are two areas in which the council and commission could work together.

Dr. Hardee acknowledged CHE's role in providing and sharing data with the institutions and being advocates for higher education. One of CHE's primary roles is to bring the data together and underscore its importance to higher education.

Other issues the council would like to work with commission on:

- AI – positive and negative influences
- Student Health
- Childcare

#### **VI. Adjournment**

The Council of Presidents meeting adjourned at 2:52 p.m.