



Meeting of the South Carolina Commission  
on Higher Education  
12:30 p.m., March 7, 2024  
1122 Lady Street, Suite 400, Columbia, SC, 29403  
& Via Zoom Webinar

**Members**

Commissioner Wes Hayes, Chair  
Commissioner Bettie Rose Horne, Vice Chair  
Commissioner Edgar Dyer  
Commissioner Paul Batson  
Commissioner Jenni Bryson  
Commissioner Gene Fant

Commissioner Hugh Mobley  
Commissioner Terrye Seckinger  
Commissioner Doug Snyder  
Commissioner Dino Teppara  
Commissioner Patrick White, virtual

**Members Excused**

Commissioner Cleveland Sellers  
Commissioner Mick Zais

**Commission Staff Present**

Karen Woodfaulk  
Argentini Anderson  
Jessica Berry  
Laura Belcher  
Kristin Brooks  
Morgan Clinton  
Jamie Covell  
Scheri Eichelberger  
Shardai Figgures  
Monica Goodwin  
Corey Gheesling  
Gerrick Hampton  
Kathryn Harris  
Matthew Hartenstine  
Ellan Jenkinson  
Andrea LaTouche  
Mariana Manic  
Maggie Mason Smith  
Yolanda McCree

Alfie Mincy  
Rick Moul  
Emily McPheron  
Kenita Pitts  
Melissa Price  
Christopher Robinson  
Elizabeth Robinson  
Christina Seale  
Dianne Schaefer  
Nia Simmons  
Kara Smith  
Yarley Steedly  
Mark Swart  
Georges Tippens  
Amy Trepal  
Bunnie Ward  
Tanya Weigold  
Bryce Wilson  
Lishu Yin

**Guests**

Beth Bell, Clemson University  
Christopher Bullock, Francis Marion University  
Frances Burns, Francis Marion University  
Teresa Burns, Coastal Carolina University  
Will Carswell, Francis Marion University  
Aimee Carter, SC Technical College System  
Cheryl Caution-Myers, SC State University  
Zachary Christian, SC Tuition Grants Commission  
James Colbert, Lander University

Walter Collins, University of South Carolina  
Palmetto College  
Chris Day, Post and Courier Pee Dee  
Mark Del Mastro, College of Charleston  
Beth Dinndorf, GSSM Foundation  
Timothy Drueke, Winthrop University  
Christen Engel, University of South Carolina  
Aiken  
Frederick Evans, SC State University

Stephen Evans, SC Institutes of Innovation & Information  
Jermaine Ford, Florence-Darlington Technical College  
Karen Gitting, Francis Marion University  
Jenna Hallman, CERRA  
Tim Hardee, SC Technical College System  
Julian Harris, Office of the Inspector General  
Mark Harris, Citizen  
Katie Harrison, SC Tuition Grants Commission  
Debbie Himes, Citizen  
Dana Homesley, Parent  
Trena Houpp, University of South Carolina  
Callum Johnston, Francis Marion University  
Pamela Jones, Department of Employment and Workforce  
Rachelle Lydell, Francis Marion University  
Brian Mallory, University of South Carolina Beaufort  
Meghan McCraw, Executive Budget Office  
Thayer McGahee, University of South Carolina Aiken

Gwynth Nelson, SC Institutes of Innovation & Information  
Ashley Owens, Francis Marion University  
Erin Paysinger, Lander University  
Jeff Perez, SC Independent Colleges and Universities  
Karin Roof, The Citadel  
Jake Scoggins, SC Senate  
Eric Skipper, University of South Carolina Beaufort  
Kimberly Smalls, SC Institutes of Innovation & Information  
Allison Steadman, Francis Marion University  
Pam Steinke, University of South Carolina Upstate  
Rosline Sumpter, SC Technical College System  
Abbie Thielke, McMillan Pazdan Smith  
Reinell Thomas-Myers, SC State University  
Alissa Warters, Francis Marion University  
Bessie Watson, SC Inspector General's Office  
Macey Webb, SC House of Representatives  
News 19 WLTX

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

Vice Chair Dyer convened the meeting at 12:35 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**

Vice Chair Dyer introduced the draft minutes of the February 1, 2024 and February 27, 2024 CHE Business meetings and asked for any additions or corrections. Commissioner Smith motioned to approve minutes as presented, and Commissioner Seckinger seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**3. Chair's Report**

Vice Chair Dyer on behalf of Chair Hayes thanked Dr. Woodfaulk for serving in the capacity of Acting President and Executive Director. He welcomed the new Acting President and Executive Director, Dr. Gregory Little. Vice Chair Dyer asked that Commissioner Sellers remain in the thoughts and prayers of everyone as he continues to recover. Vice Chair Dyer asked for a motion to go into executive session to

discuss a legal issue with external counsel, to which Commissioner Seckinger and Commissioner Snyder seconded. Vice Chair Dyer called for the vote and Commissioners went into executive session. When the Commission exited Executive Session, Vice Chair Dyer confirmed that there was no action taken in executive session.

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

Vice Chair Dyer called on Acting President Little to give his report. Acting President Little highlighted his priorities for the first two weeks in office: met with senior leadership; attended an all-staff meeting; learned about agency functions, activities and initiatives; met with Governor's staff, legislators, and other State leaders; posted four critical position vacancies; and prepared for the agency's budget presentation to the Senate Finance Committee scheduled on March 21, 2024. Acting President Little said that his focus in the next two months will include: evaluation of the 39 individual actions in the Inspector General's report; continue meeting with agency staff; present final information to the House Legislative Oversight Committee (HLOC) Education and Cultural Affairs Subcommittee; and meet with institutional presidents.

Acting President Little gave an update on the HLOC. He reported that staff is working to finalize the next meeting date, at which final information will be presented to the Education and Cultural Affairs Subcommittee. He explained that following the presentation, the Subcommittee will draft a report, which will then be considered by the full HLOC.

Acting President Little announced upcoming events: Coordinating Council on Workforce Development Meeting, March 18; Budget presentation to Senate Finance Committee, March 21; Higher Education Day at the Statehouse, April 9; Council of Presidents Meeting, May 1; CHE Committee and Commission Meetings, May 2; and College and Career Decision Day Rally, May 7. Acting President Little concluded his report and asked whether there were any questions. Commissioner Smith thanked staff for conducting the New Commissioner Orientation and thanked Acting President Little for his leadership.

#### **5. Committee Reports**

##### **5.01 Report of the Executive Committee**

Vice Chair Dyer reported that the focus of Executive Committee has been serving as the search committee to find an Acting President and Executive Director and working through the IG's report.

**5.02 Report of the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing**

**Edgar Dyer**

Vice Chair Dyer reported that the Committee had one item for consideration, which he summarized and motioned for the approval of the consent agenda. Commissioner Seckinger commented that she spoke with Francis Marion University staff about adding a component of nutrition within the proposal. Vice Chair Dyer called for the vote and the consent agenda passed. Commissioner Dyer thanked Dr. Berry for her work in the absence of an office director.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**A. New Program Proposal**

**Francis Marion University—Bachelor of Science in Education, Multi-categorical Special Education: Autism Studies, Pre-K through 12**

**5.03 Report of the Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services**

**Hugh Mobley**

Chair Hayes called on Commissioner Mobley to provide a report on the Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services. Commissioner Mobley reported that the Committee had three items for consideration and five items for information, which he summarized. He explained that Item C. was conditionally approved by the Committee with an addendum that there be feedback from the House and Senate Education Committees on their assessment of the program. Commissioner Mobley motioned for the approval of the consent agenda. Vice Chair Dyer called for the vote and the consent agenda passed. Commissioners engaged in conversation about the FAFSA completion decline and asked that Dr. Woodfaulk comment on what is being done to address the issue. Dr. Woodfaulk said that her team met with the US Department of Education to receive an update on FAFSA. She said that it was explained that by the first week in March the US Department of Education will receive reports regarding student eligibility, which will be made available to institutions. Dr. Woodfaulk said that the Office of Student Affairs has been conducting statewide in-person and virtual workshops with parents, students, and high school counselors on FAFSA completion. She said that virtual toolkits have also been posted to the agency's website. Dr. Woodfaulk explained that institutions are also holding workshops to aid in this effort. Commissioner Mobley asked whether it was possible to put together short awareness videos that could be advertised within high schools and social media, to which Dr. Woodfaulk said that there are videos placed on the agency's website. Commissioner Mobley recommended determining if there is a way to push the information out beyond the agency's website.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. SC Program for the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Teachers (SC-PRRMT) Quarter 2 Report
- B. SC Institutes of Innovation & Information (SCIII) Quarter 2 Report
- C. SCIII 2023-24 Annual Report
- D. Better FAFSA Review (For information, no action)
- E. College Goal SC Review (For information, no action)
- F. Scholarship Legislative Review (For information, no action)
- G. Scholarship Overview and Invoicing (For information, no action)
- H. Methodology for Future Scholarship Projections (For information, no action)

**5.04 Report of the Committee on Finance and Facilities**

**Paul Batson**

Vice Chair Dyer called on Commissioner Batson to provide a report from the Committee on Finance and Facilities. Commissioner Batson reported that the Committee had four items for consideration from the University of South Carolina, one additional item for action, and one item for information only.

Commissioner Batson summarized the items and motioned for the approval of the consent agenda. Vice Chair Dyer called for the vote and the consent agenda was approved unanimously. Commissioner Batson summarized item B., Battelle Savannah River Alliance and motioned to approve. Vice Chair Dyer called for the vote and the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Batson summarized items for information. He called on Mr. Wilson who summarized the staff approvals for February 2024.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Permanent Improvement Project Approvals
  - 1. University of South Carolina - Columbia
    - a. 1429 Senate Street Purchase
      - Establish Project
    - b. 1430 Senate Street
      - Establish Project
    - c. Booker T. Washington Renovation
      - Establish Project
    - d. New Health Sciences Campus – Medical Education and Research Facility
      - Increase Budget
- B. Battelle Savannah River Alliance (For Action)
- C. Permanent Improvement Project Staff Approvals during February 2024 (For information, no action)

**5.05 Report of the Committee on Strategic Initiatives & Engagement**

**Doug Snyder**

Vice Chair Dyer called on Commissioner Snyder to provide a report on the Committee on Strategic Initiatives and Engagement. Commissioner Snyder reported that the Committee does not have any items for consideration. He reported that the Committee met this morning and provided an overview of that meeting which included a discussion about workforce development, dual enrollment, educator preparation report card, and transfer and articulation.

Commissioner Snyder called on Ms. Ward to give a brief legislative update. Ms. Ward announced that the budget debate will start on Monday. She reported that there were two amendments from the House Ways and Means (HWM) Committee, one of which would eliminate non-established FTEs and amendment 10 supported the Governor's funding of a higher education study. She said the HWM did remove further funding for the Battelle Savannah River Alliance. She reported that the House considered a codification bill related to longstanding provisos, those over 15 years or noncontroversial. Ms. Ward reported that the agency's budget will be presented to the Senate Finance Higher Education Subcommittee on March 21. She announced that the House will be on furlough the week of April 1. She reported that S.538 regarding tenure was objected and will be on the contested calendar. She said that staff are monitoring bills related to skills-based hiring; competency-based education; and claim disclosures for lottery funds.

**FOR INFORMATION, ONE FOR ACTION**

**A. Legislative Update (For information, no action)**

**6. Other Business**

There was no other business.

**7. Public Comment**

Ms. Debbie Himes made public comment regarding selection of the next President and Executive Director.

**8. End of Business Meeting**

The business meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.