



**Minutes of the Council of Presidents
June 3, 2025
USC Alumni Center
900 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201**

Council of Presidents Members Present:

Dr. Luther (Fred) Carter, Francis Marion University, *Chair, presiding*
Dr. Courtney Catledge, University of South Carolina Lancaster (Virtual)
Dr. April Cone, University of South Carolina Salkehatchie
Col. Alexander Conyers, South Carolina State University
Dr. Richard Cosentino, Lander University
Dr. Galen DeHay, Tri-County Technical College
Dr. Marilyn Fore, Horry-Georgetown Technical College
Dr. Tim Hardee, SC Technical College System
Dr. Daniel Heimmermann, University of South Carolina Aiken (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 (Virtual)
Dr. Kevin Pollock, Central Carolina Technical College
Dr. Eric Reisenauer, University of South Carolina Sumter (Virtual)
Dr. Hope Rivers, Piedmont Technical College
Dr. Michael Sonntag, University of South Carolina Palmetto College (Virtual)
Dr. Suzanne Thomas for Dr. David Cole, Medical University of South Carolina (Virtual)
Dr. Walt Tobin, Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College
Mrs. Cassie Verardi for Dr. Stacey Moore, York Technical College (Virtual)
General Glenn Walter, The Citadel (Virtual)

CHE Staff:

Dr. Jeffrey Perez, President & Executive Director
Ms. Laura Belcher

Other Guests Present

Mr. Darryl Bridges, Francis Marion University
Mrs. Elizabeth Shefton, Francis Marion University
Mr. Adam Taylor, Lander University
Mr. Graham Tew, Francis Marion University



I. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m.. Chairman Carter welcomed everyone and asked the them 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

Dr. Carter introduced the draft minutes for the February 13, 2025 Council of Presidents (COP) meeting, and asked whether there were any additions or corrections. Dr. Lee made the motion to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded by Dr. Tobin. The minutes were unanimously approved.

III. Discussion Topics:

Fiscal Year 2025-26 Summary

Chairman Carter asked Graham Tew to lead the discussion on the upcoming fiscal year.

The budget discussion centered around the following topics:

- Tuition Mitigation
- Needs-based Scholarship
- Lottery Tech Funding
- Employee Pay Increases
- Health Insurance Costs
- Pell Grants

CHE Tuition Mitigation Plan

Dr. Perez asked Darryl Bridges and Adam Taylor to reiterate the information that the workgroup presented at the February meeting.

Observations and recommendations that the work group presented:

- Mitigation numbers have to account for both appropriated and non-appropriated dollars
- The Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) is often used as an objective measure of inflationary pressures specific to higher education. While it is important for policymakers to use a consistent index, institutions may face extra-inflationary expenses that should be considered.
- Priority should be given to fully funding state-mandated cost-increases for IHE's as is done with other state agencies.
- The differences between IHEs in breadth and scope, programs offered, research activities, regional workforce needs, community impact/services, and other insitutional characteristics should be taken into consideration for the overall funding model.
- Levels of In-State Enrollement should be given consideration for taxpayer funded appropriations and sector differences should be taken into consideration (FTE vs Headcount).
- The current model limits recurring funding requests to tuition mitigation funds. Consideration should be given to allow insitutions to request funding for other factors, separately from base tuition mitigation; which is necessary to maintain the current scope of operations and programs.

Dr. Perez is tasked with taking the Form Hs, from last year, and completing a matrix of factors that each institution used. This will give them a sense on where to go for the next year.

DEI Legislation

Graham Tew explained that all the action on DEI legislation took place in the House of Representatives. The bill passed through the House and it is currently in the Senate Judiciary Committee. Concerns are on the vagueness of the language.

Discussion continued around whether the Senate will take up the bill.

Campus Safety Conference

The Dalton and Linda Floyd Campus Safety Conference will be held on July 21-22 at Coastal Carolina University.

Conference Topics:

- Threat Assessment
- Sexual Assault and Prevention
- Active Shooter Preparation and Response (Keynote Speaker: Captain Wayne Freeman)

Nomination/Election of Council of Presidents' Chair for 2025-26

Chair Carter announced that it was time to elect a Chair for the upcoming academic year from the technical colleges. Dr. Galen DeHay was nominated by Dr. Hardee. Dr. Fore moved that nominations be closed and that Dr. DeHay be elected by acclamation.

IV. Old Business

No old business to discuss.

V. New Business

No new business to discuss.

VI. Adjournment

The Council of Presidents meeting adjourned at 1:38 p.m.