

MINUTES

WEST VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION

June 7, 2024

I. Call to Order

Chairman Andrew Payne convened a meeting of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (Commission) on June 7, 2024, at 9:00 a.m., in the David K. Hendrickson Conference Center, Room 1220, Building 2000 of the West Virginia Regional Technology Park, 2001 Union Carbide Drive, South Charleston, West Virginia, and by Zoom videoconference and conference call. The following Commission members participated: Michele Blatt, Ex-Officio, State Superintendent of Schools; Christina Cameron, Ex-Officio, Chair of the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education; James Denova; Michael J. Farrell; Diana Lewis Jackson; and Andrew A. Payne. Other participants included university representatives, Chancellor Sarah Armstrong Tucker, and Commission staff.

Chairman Payne secured a quorum and welcomed all participants to the meeting.

II. Chairman's Report

A. Election of Officers

Commissioner Denova nominated the following slate of officers:

- Chair: Andrew Payne
- Vice Chair: Michael Farrell
- Secretary: Diana Lewis Jackson

There being no other nominations, Chairman Payne entertained a motion to approve the slate of officers for the upcoming year.

Commissioner Cameron moved to approve the nominated candidates to serve as officers of the Higher Education Policy Commission from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. Commissioner Blatt seconded the motion. Motion passed.

B. 2025 Meeting Dates

Commissioner Jackson moved to approve February 14, June 27, September 19 and December 12 as the 2025 meeting dates. Commissioner Denova seconded the motion. Motion passed.

C. Resolution Recognizing Strong Support of Higher Education in West Virginia

Chairman Payne presented the following resolution and entertained a motion for its approval:

WHEREAS, public higher education serves as the cornerstone for the economic and social advancement of the State of West Virginia, offering students vast opportunities for a strong and affordable education that leads to promising careers and a bright future; and

WHEREAS, investing in public higher education is essential for providing students with the foundation they need to achieve their full potential, and for providing higher education institutions with the resources they need to support those students and strengthen the communities they serve; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, Governor Jim Justice and the West Virginia Legislature have demonstrated unwavering commitment to the enhancement of public higher education within the state through substantial investments and initiatives; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, Governor Justice and the Legislature made a historic investment of \$209 million for deferred maintenance projects across West Virginia's system of public higher education, paving the way for projects that will strengthen our campuses for years to come; and

WHEREAS, this year, amid challenges associated with the federal government's rollout of a new Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which is the key to unlocking funds for college, Governor Justice declared a state of emergency that allows our students to receive state financial aid regardless of their ability to complete the form; and

WHEREAS, Governor Justice and the Legislature also provided public higher education with more than \$80 million this year to strengthen West Virginia's needs-based financial aid programs and support the operations of public higher education institutions; and

WHEREAS, since West Virginia's newest and most prestigious scholarship, the Underwood-Smith Teaching Scholars Program, was established in 2020, 129 scholars have each received \$10,000 per year to pursue teaching careers in elementary education, special education, math or science in their home state; and

WHEREAS, the students of our public universities are deeply appreciative of the positive impact of these investments on their educational experiences and career opportunities, and the faculty, staff and leaders of our institutions are equally as grateful to be able to continue making a profound impact on students' lives;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, on behalf of our system of twelve campuses across the state, express profound gratitude to Governor Jim Justice and the West Virginia Legislature for their steadfast dedication to and substantial investments in public higher education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commit to honoring these investments by continuing to strive for excellence in higher education on behalf of our students and our state.

Commissioner Farrell moved to approve the resolution and Commissioner Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

III. Chancellor's Report

Chancellor Tucker provided a brief update.

IV. Annual Update from Advisory Council of Students

Walker Tatum of Marshall University and Madison Santmyer of West Virginia University provided the annual update to the Commission on behalf of the Advisory Council of Students.

V. Presentation on International Education and Student Trends

Dr. Clark Egnor, Director of International Programs, presented an update on statewide efforts to attract international students and encourage West Virginia students to study abroad and experience different cultures.

VI. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Jackson moved to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2024 Commission meeting. Commissioner Farrell seconded the motion. Motion passed.

VII. Approval of West Virginia Higher Education Grant Program Maximum Award for Fiscal Year 2025

Mr. Brian Weingart, Senior Director of Financial Aid, presented the agenda item.

Commissioner Jackson moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves \$6,800 as the maximum award for the West Virginia Higher Education Grant Program for Fiscal Year 2025.

Commissioner Cameron seconded the motion. Motion passed.

VIII. Approval of Appointment to the Higher Education Student Financial Aid Advisory Board

Mr. Weingart presented the agenda item.

Commissioner Blatt moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the appointment of Molly Daniels to the Higher Education Student Financial Aid Advisory Board.

Commissioner Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

IX. Approval of Appointments to the West Virginia Regional Technology Park Board of Directors

Chancellor Tucker presented the agenda item and recommendations for appointment or reappointment beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2027:

- Georgette George
- Bill Bissett
- Charles “Ed” Gaunch
- Greg Rosencrance

Commissioner Cameron moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the appointments to the West Virginia Regional Technology Park Board of Directors

Commissioner Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

X. Review of Tuition and Fees

Ms. Misty Price, Vice Chancellor for Finance, presented the informational agenda item.

XI. Review of Institutional Operating and Capital Budgets and Approval of Institutional Capital Budgets

Ms. Price presented the agenda item.

Commissioner Jackson moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the Fiscal Year 2025 institutional capital budgets.

Commissioner Cameron seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XII. Approval of Fiscal Year 2025 Higher Education Policy Commission Division Operating Budgets and Higher Education System Initiatives

Ms. Price presented the agenda item.

Commissioner Jackson moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, that the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the Fiscal Year 2025 division operating budgets and Higher Education System Initiatives.

Commissioner Blatt seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XIII. Approval of Fiscal Year 2025 WVNET Budget

Mr. Steven White, Executive Director of WVNET, presented the agenda item.

Commissioner Farrell moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the Fiscal Year 2025 West Virginia Network for Educational Telecomputing budget.

Commissioner Denova seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XIV. Approval of Transfer of Real Property

Mr. Turner presented the agenda item on behalf of Shepherd University and explained the need for the transfer due to a historical error.

Commissioner Jackson moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the transfer of a parcel of property in Shepherdstown, WV to Shepherd University, approves execution of the deed that will effectuate the transfer, and delegates authority to the Chancellor to approve the final documents and execute the deed on behalf of the Commission.

Commissioner Denova seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XV. Approval of Amendments to Commission Rules

A. 133 C.S.R. 3, *Higher Education Accountability System*

Dr. Zornitsa Georgieva, Senior Director of Research and Analysis, explained the agenda item.

Commissioner Cameron moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves amendments to its legislative rule titled *Higher Education Accountability System*, 133 C.S.R. 3, to be filed with the Secretary of State for the 30-day public comment period and if no substantive comments are received, extends its final approval

Commissioner Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

B. 133 C.S.R. 23, *Standards and Procedures for Undergraduate Admissions at Four-Year Colleges and Universities*

Ms. Jodi Oliveto, Senior Policy and Program Officer, explained the agenda item.

Commissioner Cameron moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves amendments to its procedural rule titled *Standards and Procedures for Undergraduate Admissions at Four-Year Colleges and Universities*, 133 C.S.R. 23, to be filed with the Secretary of State for the 30-day public comment period and if no substantive comments are received, extends its final approval.

Commissioner Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

C. 133 C.S.R. 26, *Underwood-Smith Teaching Scholars Program and Teacher Education Loan Repayment Program*

Mr. Weingart explained the agenda item.

Commissioner Denova moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the amendments to its legislative rule titled *Underwood-Smith Teaching Scholars Program and Teacher Education Loan Repayment Program*, 133 C.S.R. 26, to be filed with the Secretary of State for a 30-day public comment period, and if no substantive comments are received, extends its final approval.

Commissioner Blatt seconded the motion. Motion passed.

- D. 133 C.S.R. 59, *Awarding Undergraduate College Credit for Prior Learning, Advanced Placement Credit, College-Level Examination Program, and Nursing Career Pathways*

Dr. Corley Dennison explained the rule revision.

Commissioner Jackson moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves revisions to its procedural rule titled *Awarding Undergraduate College Credit for Prior Learning, Advanced Placement Credit, College-Level Examination Program, and Nursing Career Pathways*, 133 C.S.R. 59, to be filed with the Secretary of State for the 30-day public comment period, and if no substantive comments are received, extends its final approval.

Commissioner Cameron seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XVI. Approval of Repeal of Commission Rules

- A. 133 C.S.R. 21, *Freshman Assessment and Placement Standards*

Ms. Oliveto explained the need to repeal the rule.

Commissioner Cameron moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the repeal of its procedural rule titled *Freshman Assessment and Placement Standards*, 133 C.S.R. 21.

Commissioner Blatt seconded the motion. Motion passed.

- B. 133 C.S.R. 29, *Travel*

Ms. Kristin Boggs, General Counsel, explained the need to repeal the rule.

Commissioner Jackson moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the repeal of its procedural rule titled *Travel*, 133 C.S.R. 29.

Commissioner Cameron seconded the motion. Motion passed.

- C. 133 C.S.R. 31, *Ethics*

Ms. Boggs explained the need to repeal the rule.

Commissioner Jackson moved approval of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission approves the repeal of its procedural rule titled *Ethics*, 133 C.S.R. 31.

Commissioner Cameron seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XVII. Update from Wheeling University

This item was listed fifth on the original published agenda.

Mr. David Hendrickson, Chairman of the Wheeling University Board of Trustees, presented an update to the Commission regarding the institution's anticipated enrollment, financial health, and plans for the 2024-25 academic year.

XVIII. Additional Board Action and Comment

There was no additional action or comment by the board.

XIX. Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Denova moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Andrew Payne

Andrew A. Payne, Chairman

Diana Lewis Jackson

Diana Lewis Jackson, Secretary