

**Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center
Board of Trustees
Minutes
December 18, 2006**

Board Members/Designees Present: Senator Phillip Puckett, Senator William Wampler, Delegate Bill Carrico, Delegate Joe Johnson, Delegate Terry Kilgore, Delegate Dave Nutter, Jackson Barker, Ralph Byers (VT), Susie Ellis, Marcia Gilliam (Virginia Community College System), Deborah Icenhour, Sean McMurray, Michael Puglisi (VI), Chris Qualls (Emory & Henry), Chris Robinson, Rebecca Scott, Sondra Stallard (UVA), Ellen Taylor (Radford), Lorraine Turner, and David Wilkin (VHCC).

Board Members/Designees Absent: Dan LaVista (SCHEV), David Prior (UVa-Wise), Roseann Runte (ODU).

Others Present: Dr. Rachel Fowlkes, Scott Bevins, Gerald Blankenship, Courtney Conner, John Dooley, Connie Estep, Christine Fields, Kathy Hietala, George Hiller, Penny McCallum, Mary Quillen, Betty Reiff, Ann Risdon, Jack Roper, Eddie Sproles, Sonia Vanhook, Jeff Webb, Brenda Wilson; Steve Smith, David Kendall, Mary Kasarda, Ann (Mrs. Joe) Johnson, Winona Fleenor.

Welcome and Introductions

Senator Phillip called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes for the June 6, 2006, meeting were approved as written.

New Partnership

Steve Smith, President and CEO of K-VA-T Food Stores, Inc., expressed the company's excitement about its new partnership with the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center. World Classics Catering (WCC), a new division of Food City, has become the Center's exclusive food and beverage provider. With a staff of talented chefs and event planners, WCC will offer a

unique menu of dining options ranging from box lunches to elegant dining for 500. Mr. Smith said that the company's additional goals at the Center are to introduce business associates from across the United States to the Center's technology and meeting facilities, and encourage their use of the Center.

Financial Report

Christine Fields, Budget Director, gave the Financial Report. Changes since the June meeting include the following:

- 1) The Center received an additional \$503,000 in General Operating Funds, thanks to the Southwest delegation;
- 2) Estimates indicate that an additional \$32,000 in Non-General Funds will be generated by the Center, for a total of \$645,584;
- 3) Total revenues for FY08 are \$2.7 million, an increase of \$535,000.

Conference Services & Marketing Report

Sonia Vanhook presented the Conference Services & Marketing Report, highlighting marketing efforts and presenting event statistics for the year. Each Trustee was given a packet of the Center's new marketing materials, consisting of a presentation folder containing a calendar, a brochure about the Center, space/cost information for conference, meeting and catering reservations, and a redesigned Improving Your Life brochure. Ms. Vanhook reported that approximately 900 calendars had been mailed out to the Center's database. Statistics for the year revealed that almost 700 events were held at the Center between July and December, 2006, as compared to just over 600 for that same period in 2005. Those events attracted approximately 34,000 participants in 2006, versus approximately 32,000 in 2005. Ms. Vanhook reminded the assembly that these statistics *do not* include classes or students. Usage of the Center for the year was made up of the following percentages: Local and federal government – 2%; state agencies – 12%; K-12 – 11%; non-profits – 13%; corporate – 19%; higher ed – 43%. The percentage of change in usage from 2005 to 2006 was negligible.

Executive Director's Report

Dr. Rachel Fowlkes' gave a PowerPoint presentation updating the board about Center events during the past six months. Dr. Fowlkes said that one of the Center's three strategic goals is to provide upper-level undergraduate and graduate degree programs, non-credit enrichment

courses, and professional development events, at a convenient time, place, and location for students that live in southwest Virginia. To that end, she shared some statistics from the recently concluded fall semester: 346 credit courses were offered in 70 different curriculum areas; most students were over the age of 25, and the majority of classes were offered after 5:00 p.m. or on weekends. The mix of technology is very blended today, with satellite instruction from ODU, videoconferencing classes, SVETN network, some delivered online, many with faculty face-to-face that also have some technology component as well—students submit homework or meet with faculty members online outside normal classroom hours. Because technology is an important factor at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, it has a robust technology budget in order to keep up-to-date.

Dr. Fowlkes reported that the Center's first graduates from Virginia Commonwealth University's Nurse Anesthesia program had received their diplomas the previous week in Richmond. Nine hospitals in the region are providing clinical sites and future employment for the Center's VCU students. The pipeline includes five recent graduates; a group of seven to graduate in December 2007; a third group of eight that will graduate in December 2008; and a group of ten new students beginning in August 2007.

The newest program at the Center will be the University of Richmond's Weekend College, to begin Fall 2007. Dr. Fowlkes introduced Ann Risdon, who is the coordinator for the liberal arts degree program.

Dr. Fowlkes also introduced Betty Reiff, the coordinator of WALL—Weekend Adult Lifetime Learning—another new Center program. WALL offers Friday evening and Saturday enrichment courses for adults of any age.

The F.A.S.T. (Females Advancing the Sciences and Technology) conference held at the Center in November was driven primarily by three industries in the region: General Dynamics, Eastman and CGI. Approximately 660 sixth grade girls from Washington, Smyth and Russell Counties and the City of Bristol filled every room in the building, including the Grand Hall. The conference received extensive coverage by the Bristol Herald Courier, with half of the front page, a quarter of the back page, and five color photos.

Professor Francis Webster's keynote presentation—a highlight of the conference—was enthusiastically received. Dr. Fowlkes said that the goal of F.A.S.T. was to promote careers in science, math and technology to girls at a young age.

Dr. Fowlkes discussed the 2002 General Obligation Bond expansion of the Higher Education Center. She explained that \$400,000 was used in 2004 to renovate space for the culinary arts kitchen. The remaining \$1.5 million will be available in this fiscal year. The SVHEC will request \$1.4 million from the Commonwealth to complete the expansion project. Dr. Fowlkes described four critical needs: 1) Health lab, 2) storage space, 3) faculty offices, and 4) modifications to the Grand Hall.

Dr. Fowlkes reported on the support services the Center has provided Northrop-Grumman and CGI, the new Artisan Center and Return to Roots.

Legislative Issues

During the legislative comment period, the legislative delegation expressed their appreciation for the Southwest Virginia Higher Education, and recognized the opportunities it has created, and the difference it has made in the lives of many residents of the region. They reaffirmed their commitment to support and assist the Center in its continued efforts. The legislators also expressed their pleasure in having Delegate Joe Johnson present at the meeting. Delegate Johnson thanked the Board for the cards, letters and prayers of support during his recent illness.

Citizen Member Remarks

The following individuals identified areas of need for their respective businesses or organizations that they would like to see addressed by the Higher Education Center:

Chris Robinson – Director of International Sales and Marketing, Bristol Compressors: Foresees need in the areas of international business, global economics and the global marketplace; technical and vocational training to increase computer literacy in the area of programming robotics; and an advanced MBA program.

Lorraine Turner – Superintendent, Russell County Schools: She needs highly qualified teachers in math, science, and special education.

Sean McMurray – CEO, Johnston Memorial Hospital: Continuing need for the CRNA program; future high demand for qualified professionals in all the health care services; acute needs in nursing and physical therapy; continuing education for all personnel to improve current skills and acquire new skills; information technology training for physicians and employees other than clinicians; customer relations and critical thinking skills. The hospital would welcome visits with the colleges to discuss specific needs for the future. Flexible schedules, including weekend and night offerings are essential, and faculty real world experience is important, for hospital employees.

Susie Ellis – Vice President of Finance, TEDS, Inc.: Company workforce requires minimum of bachelor's degree in the areas of programming, engineering analysts, writers; a compressed time format for advanced degree programs, opportunities for upgrading current skills, and opportunities for professional development in the areas of critical thinking, problem solving and customer service, are also important for TEDS employees.

Deborah Icenhour – Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney, Wise County, Virginia: Court system is in great need of court clerks, regional jail personnel, secretarial and administrative staff, probation and parole officers, domestic violence counselors, CASA workers, social workers, substance abuse counselors, mental health and psychology professionals, and scientists; dire need for a laboratory situation to expedite the outcome of many cases that are continued month-to-month due to the fact that lab results are not back. Area attorneys already attend Continuing Legal Education seminars at the HEC, and with the Appalachian School of Law growing by leaps and bounds, the possibility of a future presence at the Center should not be ruled out.

Jackson Barker – Assistant Principal, William N. Neff Center for Science & Technology: Anticipated Doctorate in Education program will be of great benefit; also recognize a need in the areas of math and science; the Neff Center has a need for skilled craftsmen, as well.

Rebecca Scott – Regional Adult Education of Lee, Scott, Wise & Norton Public Schools: Higher Education Center is a natural progression for GED graduates in this area that have gone on to graduate from the region's community colleges.

Other Business

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned.