



Minutes
Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center
Board of Trustees Meeting
December 10, 2020

Call to Order

Chairman Todd Pillion called the meeting to order and stated that the meeting was being conducted in accordance with §2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia and Item 4-0.01 of Chapter 1283 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly. The Chairman, in consultation with the Executive Director, had determined that it would be both impracticable and unsafe to assemble a quorum in a single location for the meeting. He noted that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss or transact the business statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of the public body and the discharge of its lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities.

Senator Pillion explained that as vice chair he was serving as acting chair due to a current vacancy in the office of board chair due to the incumbent's appointment to the board having lapsed, but that the board would be taking up the election of officers and filling the vacancy during the current meeting.

The roll was called by Secretary Steve Ahn. A quorum was present.

Board Members/Designees Present:

Steve Ahn, Secretary	Delegate Terry Kilgore
Cheryl Carrico	Jen Myers (UVA)
Maria Colobro	Bill Nuckols (ODU)
Joseph Crook (SCHEV)	David Olive (Bluefield) (Ex-Officio)
Joshua Ely	Keith Perrigan
Brian Hemphill (Radford University)	Senator Todd Pillion, Acting Chair
Donna Henry (UVA Wise)	Mike Puglisi (Emory & Henry)
Adam Hutchison (VHCC)	Sandy Ratliff
Hannah Ingram	Susan Short (Virginia Tech)
Delegate Mark Keam	Donna Stanley (VCCS)

Board Members/Designees Absent:

Senator Ben Chafin	Susan Parish (VCU)
Delegate Chris Hurst	Delegate Sam Rasoul
Delegate Joe Johnson (Emeritus)	John Wells (Emory & Henry)

Others Present:

Fran Bradford, VA Deputy Secretary of Education
Kathy Hietala (SWVHEC)
Deb Love (OAG)
David Matlock (SWVHEC)
Penny McCallum (Virginia Tech)
Ramona Taylor (OAG)
Adam Tolbert (SWVHEC)

Minutes

Chairman Pillion advised the board that no action to approve minutes was required at the current meeting. He reminded the trustees that due to the COVID-19 state of emergency, the Executive Committee had met in lieu of a full board meeting on June 11, 2020, to address the necessary business matters of the Center that would have ordinarily been taken up at that meeting. He explained that the board's bylaws grant the Executive Committee power to act in most cases for the full board. As part of the Executive Committee meeting, the minutes from the December 2019 meeting as well as an amendment requested by board member Maria Colobro to the June 13, 2019, minutes were approved at the June 11, 2020, Executive Committee meeting. Ms. Colobro wished to amend the June 2019 minutes to reflect that she had, in fact, attended the meeting by phone. Minutes approved by the Executive Committee in June had been provided to the trustees.

Acknowledgement of Outgoing Board Members

These outgoing board members were recognized for their service on the board:

- Former Chairman, Delegate Israel O'Quinn
- Delegate Will Morefield

- Dr. Ron Proffitt
- Dr. Charlie White

Introduction of New Board Members

These new board members were introduced and welcomed to the Board:

- Delegate Mark Keam (who was in attendance)
- Delegate Chris Hurst
- Delegate Sam Rasoul
- Donna Stanley, new Virginia Community College System representative
- President John Wells, Emory & Henry College
- President Adam Hutchison, Virginia Highlands Community College

Nominating Committee Report

The Chairman stated that board officers would normally have been elected at the June 2020 board meeting, but because of the global health pandemic, as well as the fact that the Executive Committee does not possess the power to make those appointments, this item was deferred to the current meeting, with currently serving officers continuing to serve as their original appointments permit. He announced that the board now needed to elect officers for the 2020-2022 term, and called upon President Brian Hemphill of Radford University for a report from the Nominating Committee.

President Hemphill reported that the Nominating Committee, consisting of Senator Ben Chafin, Keith Perrigan, and himself, had met and would respectfully submit the following nominees for the board officers:

- Chair: Senator Todd Pillion
- Vice Chair: Keith Perrigan
- Secretary: Steve Ahn

President Hemphill moved for adoption of the report and election of the proposed slate of officers. Upon second by Chancellor Donna Henry, election of the proposed slate of officers was unanimously approved by the Board.

Update from Secretary of Education's Office

Fran Bradford, Deputy Secretary of Education, brought greetings and thanks from the Secretary to the trustees for their service on the board and to the Commonwealth. Recognizing that it is a volunteer board, she acknowledged the valuable time they give and experience they bring to the Center. She commended Senator Pillion for his support of Virginia Higher Education and speculated that he would run a tight but effective ship, and that the Center would be in good hands with him as Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Deputy Secretary Bradford praised David Matlock's infectious energy, enthusiasm and love of his job. She said he had been an invaluable resource to her office and to her since she became Deputy Secretary, and recalled that the Center had hosted one of the Secretary's earliest visits to southwest Virginia during a tour a couple of years previously.

She also recognized and expressed appreciation to the staff of the Higher Ed Center. Realizing that it has been an incredibly difficult time for many folks, both personally and professionally, she wanted the staff to know that the Center's board and leadership in Richmond greatly value its effort and commitment over the past several months, saying that none of the amazing work at the Center would happen without them.

Deputy Secretary Bradford proclaimed herself a huge fan and huge believer in Virginia's higher education centers. She lauded their creativity in engaging communities, working to bring businesses nearby, and to train workers needed by those businesses. The Deputy Secretary said that higher education is not always nimble, but that higher education centers are truly beacons of light in that regard. Especially presently, she said, this nimbleness is vitally important in seeking ways to get workers back into jobs during a challenging time. She said she knows that the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center is doing amazing work on that front because she joins the regular calls of the higher education centers as her schedule permits and has first-hand knowledge of the remarkable creativity being generated. Through their work bringing new educational partners to the table and creating and expanding new relationships with the private sector, the centers are, most

importantly, connecting the two. She noted that one of the things she has learned in her job is the important nexus between Virginia being the best educated state in the nation in increasing the number of Virginians with post-secondary degrees and maintaining its place as the best state for business. Even as those two things are intricately connected, she ventured that higher education centers are likewise at the nexus of the two. In conclusion, she expressed pride in the work of the Center—especially during the current times—and reiterated appreciation to the staff, the Executive Director, and the Trustees.

Virginia Tech Report

Penny McCallum, Director of Virginia Tech's Southwest Center, delivered a report highlighting the results of the partnership shared by Virginia Tech and the Center, which has been quite successful in serving K-12 educators across all of southwest Virginia. Ms. McCallum noted that one of the Southwest Center's main goals is to provide professional development opportunities for educators in the 17 school divisions it serves, which includes all of Region 7. While speaking with superintendents and teachers in August and early September, she said she learned about the challenges, the stress, and the frustrations among educators. The pandemic had totally disrupted the normal teaching and learning day in schools. Her objective was to determine how to best assist educators across the region to adapt to this new life in the classroom. She took the information shared with her and developed a survey that she then sent out to all the school divisions to acquire feedback on their most critical needs. While collecting the feedback, Ms. McCallum said that Mr. Matlock had called to suggest that they meet. He explained that he had been contacted by several superintendents who needed professional development for their teachers but could not pay for the speakers. During their meeting, they formed a partnership between the Higher Education Center and the Virginia Tech Southwest Center. In their partnership, the Higher Education Center provided funding and IT support, while Virginia Tech supplied faculty from the main campus to deliver the programs. Ms. McCallum related that in the meantime she learned that a grant proposal for STEM education in southwest Virginia that she had submitted to the Virginia Department of Education during the summer had been funded.

Consequently, she was able to combine the funding from the Center and that from the DoE, keeping them separate but using the funds to fund programs. The first program was Reading, since K-3 Reading had been identified as the most important need at that time. She explained that it is difficult for teachers to teach reading to that age group, since beginning learners in kindergarten and 1st grade have never read before; their parents are not teachers and are not prepared to teach them at home. Ms. McCallum contacted Dr. Heidi Mesmer, a professor in the Reading Specialist program at Virginia Tech, who immediately agreed to deliver four weekly sessions for teachers; 125 K-3 teachers signed up for the program and attended the sessions. Next, Ms. McCallum said, it was determined that parents needed some help, so Rachelle Kuehl from Virginia Tech delivered four weeks of programs for parents, attended by 45 parents. The third program was Reading for Grades 4-7, also with four weeks for teachers and four weeks for parents. The kickoff with the two reading programs was a huge success, but Ms. McCallum said they didn't stop there; teachers also needed help with technology. Many had never used Zoom, Google Classroom, Chrome or any of the other programs that they were introduced to and forced to use immediately. Some teachers chose to retire rather than deal with it, but others enrolled in classes and in programs to learn more about it, so three different sessions were provided on using the unfamiliar technology that teachers had suddenly been forced to use. From the onset of the health pandemic, not only were teachers teaching students in the classroom, but many were also simultaneously teaching virtually, creating a difficult and stressful environment for teachers and students alike. As an example of just one of the many things learned, Ms. McCallum described how a teacher might demonstrate something to her students virtually. If the teacher held up a letter for beginning readers, for instance, it might be backwards on technology; therefore, teachers had to learn how to properly hold a letter or a paper of any kind so that the children could read it correctly. In addition to the reading and technology programs, programs were also hosted for special needs children and their parents, physical education teachers, science labs, how to stay connected with your students, and safety strategies for coaches and physical education teachers. Sessions are planned in school law, related to schools dealing with the COVID climate in 2021, as well as for math

teachers and parents of math students. Ms. McCallum went on to relate that with the end of the most recent grading period many students' grades were very low. Teachers of students who had always been "A" students were shocked to see those students doing poorly because they were not completing their work and they were not staying online for their classes. She noted that ways of correcting that situation are being explored. Ms. McCallum encouraged the trustees to review the college and university reports provided in their electronic meeting materials for a comprehensive account of all the programs offered thus far. Seven faculty presenters from the School of Education and the School of Mechanical Engineering and Technology at Virginia Tech were joined by faculty from the University of Pikeville and the University of Virginia's College at Wise in leading classes. Several local teachers from Washington and Wise counties also taught classes, as Ms. McCallum explained that their shared experiences enabled them to better relate with their fellow teachers. One of those teachers, Jane Carter of Wise County, established a site for science teachers to communicate about their successes and failures, or to seek help in areas that are needed, which Ms. McCallum predicted would be a very successful program. Thus far, over 400 teachers have participated in the live virtual workshops, representing all school divisions in Region 7, as well as a teacher from Montgomery County and teachers from five private schools in the region. Each program was recorded and continues to be available to teachers from the Virginia Tech Southwest Center and Higher Education Center's website. Teachers who were unable to participate when sessions were taking place can go to the website and participate in the program on their own, and the supplemental materials that presenters provided are there as well. Follow-up sessions will be held for reading teachers, math teachers and others identified as needs in the coming months. In conclusion, Ms. McCallum expressed appreciation to the Executive Director and the Center for its financial and IT support. She praised Nicky Rahley, the Center's IT Manager, without whom the programs could not have been delivered. She invited her supervisor, Dr. Susan Short, to add comments.

Dr. Short expressed her admiration of McCallum and Matlock for the creative solutions they worked together in developing to truly make a difference in

communities throughout Virginia. She conveyed appreciation to Ms. McCallum for her ongoing leadership on behalf of Virginia Tech, reminding everyone that the work the university does with its community and K-12 partners is critical and essential to its land grant mission of serving communities and contributing to the betterment of the human condition.

Executive Director's Report

David Matlock's report included the following notable matters:

Activity Update

- Introduction of the Center's new legal counsel in the Office of the Attorney General, Ramona Taylor. Ms. Taylor greeted the meeting attendees and briefly shared information about herself and her legal background.
- Work of the Center's academic partners:
 - Radford – Just completed the first year of its new counseling education cohort for educators; is preparing to launch a new master's in strategic communication; is working with regional manufacturers.
 - VCU - The doctoral program in nurse anesthesia and the baccalaureate degree in clinical lab science continue to go well.
 - UVA Wise - Delivered professional development programs to 288 individuals during the last semester.
 - King University – The nurse practitioner program is exploding, and the social work and RN programs continue to do well.
 - Virginia Tech – As the Trustees had already heard from Ms. McCallum's report, Virginia Tech is employing a variety of initiatives to meet the needs of K-12 partners.

Speaking to the college presidents and designees on the board representing the 10 colleges and universities partnering with the Center, Mr. Matlock assured them that they could be very proud of their representatives onsite, who do an outstanding job and represent their respective colleges and universities extremely well.

- Conference Services – Mr. Matlock reported that COVID-19 had definitely affected the Center's conference service operations negatively. During a normal year, the Center could expect 67,000-69,000 attendees at a variety

of events for 350-400 different organizations, generating over \$275,000 in Non-General Revenue, but the current numbers are fractions of those and are anticipated to drop slightly. However, he spoke confidently about its ability to weather the storm of the pandemic. He commended the Conference Services team and encouraged trustees to review the Conference Services report.

- Education Outreach – Mr. Matlock recommended that the trustees read the reports provided to them, highlights of which include:
 - K-5 STEM Academy and CodeVA activities for students and teachers have continued virtually during the pandemic.
 - United Way Virtual Careers Expo for 7th Graders was presented on a virtual platform during the week of October 5-9, allowing 5,500 invited seventh-graders from southwest Virginia and the New River Valley to explore career options. The Center contributed a recorded lesson called *Fly a Virtual Drone*.
 - The 15th Annual STEM Career Workshops for 6th Grade Girls that normally brings over 600 sixth-grade girls from the surrounding area to the Center was also moved online due to COVID-19, with Miss America serving as the keynote presenter.

Infectious Disease Preparedness & Response Plan

Mr. Matlock informed the trustees that the Center formed a COVID-19 Transition Team and has developed a very well put together and vetted infectious disease preparedness and response plan. In addition to the report they would hear at the current meeting, he invited Trustees to view the plan from the Center's website. He commended the COVID-19 Transition Team on their exceptional work.

Financial Reports

- Despite COVID-19, the Center finished Fiscal Year 2020 in outstanding shape, Mr. Matlock said. He said although it did not generate as much as would have been preferred, neither was money lost.
- Everything is on target with the FY2021 approved budget. Since inevitably revenue is going to be reduced, some projections have been reduced, and things are on track for a balanced budget.

- Under the Breakdown of Non-General Revenue, in Room Rentals and Food & Beverage Services, Mr. Matlock said the 5-year average is well over a quarter million dollars. Considering that the previous fiscal year's revenues had approached \$280,000, he pointed out that he had projected \$100,000 in June, thinking that COVID would be gone before year-end. With the pandemic continuing, he noted that revenues would not meet that projection. In reality, he expected that figure to be closer to \$40,000—about \$235,000 less than normal. He maintained that the Center was stable and could ride out the storm and achieve a balanced budget in the process.
- Personal Services total operating budget is well within the 5-year average, and will actually come in slightly below the total reflected.
- In the Other Than Personal Services area of the budget, Maintenance Reserve is the largest item, because the Center has a lot of projects underway, which Mr. Matlock said the trustees would hear a report on at the current meeting. Total spending in Other Than Personal Services is also expected to come in under budget.
- Some of the Maintenance Reserve funds will be spent on post-COVID projects and improvements.
- The Center will end the year with a Contingency Fund of approximately \$1.2 million, which Mr. Matlock said is a nice amount for an agency its size.
- He gave credit to the Center's team members for the solid state of the Center's budget, and praised Debbie Hensley, the Center's Senior Director of Finance, for her outstanding work.
- For the Center Foundation report, Mr. Matlock referred the trustees to their electronic packet to review grant balances under the management of Alicia Young, Foundation Vice President of Finance. He reported that the Foundation is currently managing 5 grants totaling approximately \$8 million, most of which are with the Virginia Tobacco Commission. Current grant balances total \$4 million. Mr. Matlock informed the Trustees that they would hear a report from the Chairman of the Foundation Board at the June board meeting.

At the conclusion of his report, Mr. Matlock invited questions. None were forthcoming.

Construction Update

Jeff Webb, Chief Technology and Operations Officer, gave an update on the Center's new addition and office renovation projects. His report was accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation including photographs of the progress. For the benefit of new board members, Mr. Webb explained that the purpose of the addition project was to create much needed storage space for the Conference Services, Maintenance and Housekeeping departments. Secondary to that was to provide additional office and classroom space. In total, about 6,000 square feet was added, including a new freight elevator space.

New features highlighted in Mr. Webb's report included:

- Canopy added over the loading and unloading area at the Grand Hall will provide cover to staff, caterers and others in inclement weather;
- A 300 kilowatt natural gas generator added for additional emergency load to keep areas of the building such as the Grand Hall operating during loss of power;
- New grease trap for the catering kitchen area;
- Repaving of the entire area behind the building due to the excessive number of trenches that had been cut in it during the current and past construction projects.

Addition - First Floor

The Center has been enhanced by a number of key elements of the addition project, including:

- Extensive work in the electrical room to add the switch gear necessary for the new generator;
- A maintenance area with garage doors will enable Facilities staff to work on lawn mowers and other equipment, and also provides a work bench and storage area;
- Double doors leading from the new addition and underneath the new canopy area to the Grand Hall will allow Conference Services staff to

quickly and easily move tables, chairs, staging and other event set-up equipment;

- Two large (750 square feet each), much-needed storage rooms for event set-up equipment and supplies;
- The new freight elevator will allow Conference Services staff to transport services to and from second floor rooms more discreetly and easily.

Addition - Second Floor

- The Testing Center has been relocated into the new addition second floor, where glass windows will allow Testing Center staff to observe test candidates directly at all times.
- Several second floor rooms will provide office space for the Center's growing number of academic partners.
- Two storage areas on the second floor will allow Maintenance and Housekeeping to store filters, vacuum cleaners and related supplies and equipment.

Renovation in Administrative Suite and Culinary Classroom

Mr. Webb said that the Center had also taken on a renovation of the rear area of the administrative suite and former culinary classroom. Reconfiguration of these spaces will create four new offices in the administrative suite and a STEM classroom in the former culinary classroom.

Other Improvements

- Installation of a new Simplex fire alarm system throughout the entire building has begun. Mr. Webb explained that the old system was becoming end-of-life and extremely difficult to find parts for, so the decision was made to replace it.
- The HVAC project to replace 70-plus HVAC units in the ceilings is underway. Duct work will be redone and some areas will be rezoned. Mr. Webb said this work is in addition to 22-25 units that the Center had already replaced before it received funding for this project, which is expected to be completed by the end of April.
- Replacement of all exterior glass, or glazing, to make the building more energy efficient is also planned.

- New furniture for the new addition and office renovation areas is anticipated to begin arriving onsite sometime during the current month.
- Carpet replacement will take place on the entire second floor, and tile will be replaced in the back hallway on the first floor.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Mr. Webb invited board members to stop by the Center for a tour when in the area, and also invited questions about his report. No questions were proffered.

Sandy Ratliff inquired as to whether the Testing Center would serve candidates such as contractors testing for their professional licenses. Mr. Matlock was unsure, but invited Ms. Ratliff to follow up with him to discuss the matter further.

Susan Short asked the total cost of the addition and renovation projects. Mr. Matlock responded that the original contract was approximately \$2.4 million but would ultimately be closer to \$2.7 or \$2.8 million including the generator.

COVID-19 Transition Team Report

Nicky Rahley, Information Technology Manager, provided a PowerPoint report created by the Center's COVID-19 Transition Team. Key points included:

- The Center established a COVID-19 Transition Team that is responsible for developing safe practices and procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of its guests and staff in response to Governor Ralph Northam's announcement of the Forward Virginia Phase approach to the reopening of the Commonwealth.
- The COVID-19 transition team consistently reviews recommendations and guidelines provided by the CDC, VA Department of Labor & Industry, VA Department of Health, and the International Association of Conference Centers, as well as Executive Orders of Governor Northam, and provides suggestions to ensure the Center is in compliance with pertinent COVID-19 safety measures.

- The team seeks to ensure that the Center is prepared to welcome guests back to the facility and has helped to implement procedures and install equipment to better protect the health of the community.

Ms. Rahley presented a video created by the Transition Team featuring the safety protocols that have been developed, which include:

- All guests arriving at the Center are directed to only the main entrance doors, which helps with sanitation efforts and allows the staff to better assist and direct visitors.
- Masks are required for entry. Single-use masks are available at the Information Desk for visitors who may have forgotten theirs.
- Temperature monitoring kiosks have been installed in multiple locations. Individuals simply step up to the kiosk, which will take and display their temperature and tell them if it is normal. The kiosk will remind individuals to wear a mask if they do not have one on.
- Signage displayed throughout the facility reminds guests to wear face masks, maintain six feet of distance, and wash hands.
- Digital monitors also rotate important information regarding COVID-19 safety and CDC guidelines.
- Since nearly everyone who visits the Center stops by the Information Desk for assistance, to better protect frontline staff, a one-way traffic flow with retractable roping and installed sneeze shields has been created in that area.
- Social distancing floor signs have been installed, reminding guests to maintain six feet of distance.
- Restrooms are high traffic areas, and the Center has worked to make its restrooms totally touchless, installing easy-flush motion sensor toilet adapters, touchless faucets and soap dispensers, and foot pulls near the bottoms of doors allowing a hands-free exit.
- New touchless water fountains featuring water filling stations have been installed.
- The Clorox Total 360 Electrostatic Sprayer system utilized by the Center's conference staff to sanitize meeting areas before and after events. The system is EPA approved to kill the COVID-19 virus and can sanitize 18,000 square feet per hour.

- UV Disinfecting Lamps, which can be placed inside a room to sanitize the entire room within 15 minutes.
- V-Ray Sanitizers that quickly and easily clean objects with UVC light that kills 99.9% percent of bacteria.
- OSHA-approved body fluid spill kits.
- In Classroom 240 and the Tiered Executive Auditorium (TEA), social distancing table tents have been installed directing guests where to safely sit 6 feet apart.
- Every employee at the HEC was provided with three reusable face masks and a face shield.
- All facility partners were provided with a box of single-use masks.
- All building residents were provided with disinfecting wipes or spray, disposable gloves to help clean their office areas, and hand sanitizer.

Ms. Rahley also noted documentation developed by the Transition Team as part of the COVID-19 Action Plan:

- COVID-19 Sanitation Checklist – Used by Conference Services and Housekeeping departments.
- Daily Wellness Self-Check Form – Center employees must complete this form prior to reporting to a Center work location. It is also given to caterers and subcontractors who must report to a Center work location.
- COVID-19 Usage Acknowledgement Form - Clients choosing to rent meeting space during the pandemic are required to complete this form prior to holding an event at the Center.
- Positive COVID-19 Test Notification and Cleaning Checklist - Center staff refer to this form in the event of a positive occurrence of COVID-19 in the facility.

At the conclusion of her report, Ms. Rahley invited questions. None were forthcoming.

HR/Administration Report

Adam Tolbert, Senior Director of Administration, delivered the HR/Administration Report. To give new board members some background, Mr. Tolbert explained that he handles the Center's HR matters, continuity of

operations, memorandums of understanding with the higher education partners, as well as legislative matters and general administration items.

FOIA Overview & Applicable Laws Notice

Mr. Tolbert serves as the Center's FOIA [Freedom of Information Act] Officer. He informed trustees that a FOIA guide prepared by the Education Section in the Office of the Attorney General had been included in their electronic packets for the current meeting. He also provided Trustees with the required notice of laws; i.e., State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act, Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and the Virginia Public Records Act.

Mr. Tolbert advised that questions or concerns about FOIA matters could be directed to him or to the Center's legal counsel, Ramona Taylor, Senior Assistant Attorney General, to whom any kind of legal matter should also be referred.

Conflict of Interest Statements Reminder

In addition to his myriad other responsibilities, Mr. Tolbert serves as one of the Center's Conflict of Interest Act Reporting Coordinators. In that capacity, he reminded those present that Financial Disclosure Statements of citizen members and Statements of Economic Interest of General Assembly members and designated state officers must be filed by February 1st. He added that board members who are employed by another state agency should soon receive information from their agency's conflict coordinator if they had not already. The current filing period covers activity between January 1 and December 31, 2020. Mr. Tolbert cautioned that, for some filers, a financial penalty could be imposed if they fail to file. He advised board members of the requirement that training be completed every two years, and that the Ethics Council has activated new training that is customized for the different filing statuses; i.e., General Assembly member, state officer or employee, or a citizen member appointed to a state board such as the Center's. Mr. Tolbert notified the board members that Kathy Hietala, who is the Center's Coordinator for Board members, would be reaching out to citizen members within the next 30 days on their filing requirement.

At the conclusion of his report, Mr. Tolbert invited questions. None were forthcoming.

Chairman Pillion expressed appreciation to David Matlock, Jeff Webb, Nicky Rahley, Adam Tolbert and Hannah Hietala for all the hard work they had put into the meeting reports and all the hard work that they always put into the Center and its success. For new members of the board, he commented that they would soon discover that the Center runs a tight ship and it's all hands on deck all the time, and the Board certainly appreciates it.

Mr. Matlock added his appreciation to his administrative assistant, Kathy Hietala, for her work with Center team members, academic partners and board members putting together the board meeting.

Chairman's Appointments to Executive Committee

Pursuant to Article 4, Section A of the Board's Bylaws, the Chair chose to reappoint the following members to the Center's Executive Committee:

- 1) President Brian Hemphill of Radford University
- 2) Chancellor Donna Henry of UVA WISE

Public Comments

No public comments were received.

Closing Remarks

In closing, Chairman Pillion took a few moments to recognize the Center's Executive Director, David Matlock, for his leadership during the trying and uncertain time of coping with the challenges and uncertainties of the coronavirus. Senator Pillion said he had heard from the staff at the Center, who are very appreciative of Mr. Matlock's steady leadership during the pandemic, keeping them informed of important information and updates, and his concern for their safety and well-being. None of those things have gone unnoticed by the staff or by the Chairman, who had observed Matlock's diligent work recently. Senator Pillion observed that Mr. Matlock's outstanding leadership efforts were evident from the reports and

information trustees had received during the current meeting from the Executive Director and the Center's leadership team. The Chairman also extended appreciation to the entire Center staff, including those who had not already been mentioned, who do a great job and whose dedication to serving the public and commitment to the success of the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center as it fulfills its role in advancing educational opportunities is commendable. He said the Center is a true asset to southwest Virginia and he looks forward to working closely with the Executive Director and the Center's team during his service as Chair of its board.

Prior to adjourning, the Chairman informed trustees that the Executive Committee had met earlier that day to begin work on a proposed employment agreement with Executive Director Matlock. He said that the new employment agreement should be available for the full board to review in early January, which could result in the need to call a special board meeting to approve the agreement. Should that come to pass, it will be a very short meeting via Zoom, with the proposed employment agreement being the only topic for discussion.

Chairman Pillion reminded the board that the next *regularly* scheduled meeting of the full board would be held on June 10, 2021.

The Chair called for a motion to adjourn. **Brian Hemphill made the motion; the motion was seconded by Donna Henry, and the meeting was duly adjourned.**