



**Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center
Board of Trustees
Minutes
June 11, 2015**

Call to Order

Chairman Kevin Crutchfield welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Roll call was held. A quorum was present.

Board Members/Designees Present:

Kevin Crutchfield, Chairman
Richard Alvarez (Radford)
Billy Cannaday (UVA) (telephonically)
Senator Bill Carrico
Steve Cochran
Gene Couch (VHCC)
Marcia Gilliam (Virginia Community College System)
Mark Graham (Emory & Henry)
Lisa Hall (ODU) (telephonically)
Saul Hernandez
Delegate Joe Johnson (Emeritus)
Delegate Terry Kilgore
Christine Kinser
Delegate Israel O'Quinn
Marcia Quesenberry (UVA-Wise)
Ruby Rogers
Susan Short (Virginia Tech)

Board Members/Designees Absent:

Peter Blake (SCHEV)
Senator Ben Chafin
Delegate Will Morefield
David Olive (Ex-Officio)
Matt O'Quinn
Lindy White
Delegate Joseph Yost

Others Present:

Pat Ball
Joyce Brooks
Duffy Carmack
Courtney Conner
Connie Estep
Sim Ewing
Paul Farrar
Rachel Fowlkes
Elizabeth Griffin
Debbie Hensley
Kathy Hietala
Penny McCallum
Senator Phillip Puckett (Chair, Search Committee)
Nicky Rahley
Deborah Sproles
Eddie Sproles
Elizabeth Tate
Adam Tolbert
Sonia Vanhook
Jeff Webb
Alicia Young

Approval of Minutes

The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes for the December 11, 2014, meeting. **They were unanimously approved upon motion by Senator Carrico, seconded by Christine Kinser.**

Executive Director's Report

Dr. Rachel Fowlkes, Executive Director, reported on the following notable matters:

New Board Members:

- Recognized newly-appointed legislative members:
 Senator Ben Chafin
 Delegate Israel O'Quinn

Retiring Board Members:

- Thanked members whose terms are expiring:
Chairman Kevin Crutchfield
Matt O'Quinn
Ruby Rogers

Research & Development:

- Called the Board's attention to the R&D Report, explaining changes in Ed Rogers' role. Rogers was hired as Director of Research and Development (a state government position) by the Center approximately four years previously to recruit new businesses for the Center's R&D initiative, which has been tremendously successful. Noted that about 2-3 years previously, Mr. Rogers had requested to be taken off of state employment and become a contractor with the Center, allowing him to expand his opportunities to work with other companies. Subsequently, Mr. Rogers formed his own company, Terabinth Strategic Management, as shown on the R&D report in the Board folders. Mr. Rogers moved to Charlottesville in late 2014 to be more strategically located to potential prospects for future R&D projects. He has been traveling to the Center a couple of times a month. The Center's contract with Mr. Rogers expires June 30, after which he will not be associated as a permanent employee or contractor with the HEC. Instead, Mr. Rogers will work with the Center in a consultant capacity to identify companies that might be eligible for Tobacco Commission grants or possibly rent space in the Clean Energy Research Center. Dr. Fowlkes encouraged the Trustees to read Mr. Rogers' report, noting his exceptional work for the Center, particularly in positioning the Foundation for growth as the R&D companies grow. Under Mr. Rogers' leadership, the Foundation acquired equity interest in its contracts with some of the early-stage companies.

Conference Services:

- Highlighted the Center's annual Performance Measure submitted to the Governor's Office. This report lists all of the organizations and companies that have held meetings, professional development trainings, or events *other than academic classes* at the Center. For FY14-15, 221 different organizations held 716 events, with over 58,000 people at the HEC.

College Reports:

- Drew the Board's attention to a brochure from VCU's Department of Nurse Anesthesia listing all 68 graduates of the program from the Higher Education Center site since the distance program began in 2004. Dr. Fowlkes touted this highly successful academic program as an example of what the Center does best—identifying job opportunities in the region, and educating/training students to fill them. By identifying crucial employment needs, and then working with academic institutions to develop and offer corresponding programs onsite, the Center is able to fulfill its mission. She encouraged the Center's academic partners to identify and develop signature programs to bring to the Center.
- Recognized Virginia Tech for once again receiving an almost half-million-dollar grant to offer a math project with teachers in Buchanan County. Expressed appreciation to Susan Short and Penny McCallum for bringing it to the region. Told the Trustees about McCallum's recent trip across Virginia with 27 middle and high school science teachers to visit NASA's Langley Research Center, NASA's Wallops Flight Facility, and the Science Museum of Virginia.

Testing Center:

- Explained the growing importance of the HEC's Testing Center. As the educational landscape rapidly changes, many academic institutions offer online courses that require a proctored exam for students to earn credits, and GED tests are also now online. Many individuals seek licensing or certification in a career field, and many employers require testing of potential employees. The list of tests administered by the HEC Testing Center continues to grow rapidly, and Fowlkes commended Sonia Vanhook for her leadership in recruiting new companies to offer tests at the Center.

New Initiatives:

- In her closing remarks, Dr. Fowlkes said that she believes the future is bright for the Higher Ed Center for a number of reasons, with technology topping the list. Fowlkes praised the Center's IT staff for their work and the Center's first class technology. Higher education is being revolutionized by technology, and the Center's state-of-the-art technological capabilities provide myriad methods of delivering courses and programs. Noting that Old Dominion's programs have all gone online, Dr. Fowlkes stated that more people will have access to

higher education than ever before as a result of technological advances.

- Dr. Fowlkes said that it had been a delight to work with the current Trustees, the HEC staff, and everyone who has contributed to the success of the SW VA Higher Education Center. She expressed special appreciation to Delegate Johnson and his colleagues in the House of Delegates and Senate of Virginia, including former Delegate and Judge, Ford Quillen. They were instrumental in crafting the legislation that created the Center. She expressed gratitude to their successor legislators, Senator Carrico, Delegate Kilgore and Delegate O'Quinn, among others, for continuing legislative support. Dr. Fowlkes concluded by saying that serving as the Center's first Executive Director has been the "dream job of a lifetime."

Nominating Committee Report

Susan Short, representing Virginia Tech, presented the nominating committee recommendation of Senator Bill Carrico to serve a one-year term as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the SW VA Higher Education Center.

The Chairman called for a vote on the nomination of Senator Carrico. **Upon motion by Marcia Gilliam, seconded by Delegate Kilgore, the nomination of Senator Bill Carrico passed by acclamation.**

Financial Reports

Duffy Carmack, Chief Financial Officer, introduced Debbie Hensley and Alicia Young to give the Financial Reports for the Center's budget and the Center's and Foundation's grants.

Debbie Hensley highlighted the following items included in the budget report:

- Projected figures for the end of FY15; noting that the Center had been conservative in spending, while waiting for final budget approval, and anticipating budget cuts.
- Center received a 5% reduction in FY15, which was also carried forward to FY16.
- Higher Education Equipment Trust Fund was increased slightly by General Assembly, as was Maintenance Reserve, which has been committed toward payment for replacement of the roof. UVa

Procurement is working with Department of Planning and Budget to facilitate that process.

Alicia Young gave the grants reports for the Center and the Foundation. Highlights are as follows:

- Foundation grants are growing.
- A few items remain to be completed in the R&D Center. Once construction is finished, the TIC grant will be closed.
- Optafuel Phase 2 grant balance is for equipment. Optafuel also has a Phase 3 open grant.
- Matching funds are being raised for Excavation Alert and Radical Combustion before TIC grant money can start flowing for those projects.
- The Tobacco Commission approved a new grant for WireTough Phase 2 in May, so work will soon begin on that project.

The Chairman called for a motion to approve the contingent proposed budget for FY2016. **Upon motion by Senator Carrico, seconded by Marcia Gilliam, the contingent proposed budget was unanimously approved.**

The complete financial reports were available in each member's Board folder.

Executive Director Search

Report from the Search Committee:

- Senator Phillip Puckett, Chair of the Search Committee, updated the Board on the process of selecting the Center's next Executive Director:

Puckett related that the Committee has reviewed 57 applicants and narrowed that field down to 7, with interviews set to begin on June 26th. Interviews are anticipated to be completed by July 8th, at the conclusion of which the Search Committee will make a recommendation to the Board. Unfortunately, Puckett said that the Committee's work will not be completed by the time the current Director retires. It is the Committee's opinion that the Board should consider appointing an Interim Director until the new Director is in place, and that it would be logical to have Duffy Carmack fill that position. As "next in line," Puckett said that Carmack is familiar with the operations of the Center, and the Committee would recommend him for consideration by the Board as Interim Director.

The Chairman recognized the motion of the Search Committee that Duffy Carmack be appointed to serve as the Center's Interim Director until such time as the new Director is in place, and called for a second. **Steve Cochran seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.**

Announcement from the Office of the Attorney General:

- Elizabeth Griffin, the Center's counsel in the Office of the Attorney General, read an announcement from Ron Forehand, the Chief of the Education Section in the Office of the Attorney General, who serves as the legal advisor to the Search Committee in the Executive Director search process:

"The Executive Director Search Committee of the Board of Trustees of the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center will meet at an undisclosed time and undisclosed location within the next 15 days for the sole purpose of conducting interviews of candidates for the position of Executive Director."

Public Comments

None.

Closing Remarks

Chairman Crutchfield, whose term on the Board is ending, expressed his appreciation, saying that it had been a privilege, an honor, and a lot of fun to serve. He noted that it had been a pleasure to see great things happening at the Center, wished the new Chairman the best and the support of the Board in that role.

In closing, the Chairman noted that the group would adjourn next door to the Grand Hall for the retirement celebration honoring Dr. Rachel Fowlkes, and **declared the meeting adjourned.**