

**Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center
Board of Trustees
Minutes
June 6, 2006**

Board Members/Designees Present: Deborah Icenhour, Sean McMurray, Susie Ellis, Ron Jessee, Rebecca Scott, Dan LaVista (SCHEV), Marcia Gilliam (Virginia Community College System), Roseann Runte (ODU), Ellen Taylor (Radford), Sondra Stallard (UVA), David Prior (UVa-Wise), David Wilkin (VHCC), Ralph Byers (VT), and Douglas Covington (Emory & Henry).

Board Members/Designees Absent: Delegate Bill Carrico, Delegate Joe Johnson, Delegate Terry Kilgore, Delegate Dave Nutter, Senator Phillip Puckett, Senator William Wampler, Michael Puglisi (VI), Jackson Barker, Lorraine Turner.

Others Present: Dr. Rachel Fowlkes, Scott Bevins, Gerald Blankenship, Deborah Bourne, Nancy Breeding, Nancy Cooley, Christine Fields, Blue Gotham, Mark Halsey, Kathy Hietala, Clif Martin, Penny McCallum, Christopher Qualls, Mary Quillen, Jack Roper, Sonia Vanhook, Doug Viers, Jeff Webb; Joe Ellis.

Welcome and Introductions

In the absence of the Chairman, Senator Phillip Puckett, and Vice-Chairman, Delegate Joe Johnson, who were in a special legislative session (along with the other legislative board members) Secretary David Wilkin called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the newly-renovated General Francis Marion Hotel.

Members and guests in attendance, including those participating by videoconferencing, introduced themselves.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes for the December 20, 2005, meeting were approved as written.

Financial Report

Christine Fields, Budget Director, gave the Financial Report, and referred the Board to the written report contained in the board packets.

Conference Services & Marketing Report

Deborah Bourne presented the Conference Services & Marketing Report, beginning with a highlight of marketing efforts. These included the Center's website, which had been recently redesigned by the IT Department, and new marketing materials, consisting of newspaper ads, presentation folders, and a redesigned Improving Your Life brochure. Ms. Bourne reported that over 1500 events and 245 organizations held events at the Center by June 30, 2006, attended by approximately 93,500 guests. She pointed out that those figures do not include the 150 or so classes per week. A wide array of groups held events at the Center. Among them were State Farm Insurance, Food City, Virginia Highlands Festival, Tri-State Regional Economic Development, Harvest Moon Market, Appalachian College Association, Mistletoe Market, Governor-Elect Kaine's Pre-Inaugural Dinner, the Emory & Henry Educational Forum, Garden Faire, the Southwest Virginia Technology Council, Highlands Study Center, Thompson & Litton's 50th Anniversary Celebration, the New Horizons Conference, Johnston Memorial Hospital and Mountain States Health Alliance annual Recipe for a Healthy Life luncheon, Washington County Chamber of Commerce's largest Expo ever with over 60 exhibitors. Ms. Bourne also described several upcoming events, including Creating a New Economy in Southwest Virginia, a conference focusing on the rich cultural heritage of the region and its impact on the economy; and the American Chestnut Foundation's national conference.

Executive Director's Report

Dr. Rachel Fowlkes' report focused on the work the Higher Education Center has done to help CGI-AMS fill jobs in Lebanon. The Center sponsored a workshop to help faculty align their instruction to meet the needs of the software development industry. Faculty from 12 colleges participated.

She reported that the Center recently recognized 77 graduates at the annual Graduate Recognition Ceremony. VCU will graduate its first cohort in the Master's in Nurse Anesthesia program in December.

Dr. Fowlkes reported that Jeff Webb, Chief Information Officer, and two other staff members from the IT Department had been to Redmond, Washington, for a week of training at the Microsoft headquarters. The Higher Education Center was selected as one of the training sites for Microsoft's testing for the new VISTA project.

In an effort to conserve energy and reduce utility costs, Dr. Fowlkes reported that new, digital thermostats had been installed in the building, along with a master control computerized system. Room temperatures can be programmed so that the needed utilities are generated in peak times, and cut back during slow times.

Recent visitors to the Center include groups from the Ardmore, Oklahoma, Higher Education Center, and the New College of Virginia. Expected visitors are the new Attorney General and the Governor.

Dr. Fowlkes also informed the board that, because of the restructuring agreement with the University of Virginia, the Center's fiscal arrangement with UVA would change effective July 1st. She said that UVA would continue to act as fiscal agent, but that personnel would now receive benefits through the state rather than the UVA plan.

Dr. Fowlkes mentioned the planned expansion of the HEC, using approximately \$1.8 million in General Obligation Bonds. Plans will be presented at the December Board meeting.

Dr. Fowlkes told the board that the Center assisted the Barter Theatre raise money to rebuild their scene shop by producing multiple copies of a CD of original music produced by Barter actors. The CDs are for sale at the Barter box office.

In closing, Dr. Fowlkes recognized Ron Jessee and Lorraine Turner, members of the Board whose terms were expiring. She presented them with a framed photograph of the Center in appreciation for their service on the Board.

Study in Mexico

Nancy Breeding, Tobacco Scholarship Administrator, presented a report on her recent trip to Mexico with George Hiller, Director of International Business and Education, other college representatives, and students. The Study in Mexico trip is offered as an opportunity to introduce students--particularly from small colleges—to international study as part of their college curriculum. The trip was quite beneficial and enlightening for Nancy, since the Tobacco Scholarship Program has held several workshops with scholarship recipients on international study.

College Reports

The following individuals presented reports and remarks for their respective institutions:

Chris Qualls - Emory & Henry College
Roseann Runte, Nancy Cooley, and Mark Halsey - Old Dominion University
Ellen Taylor - Radford University
Sondra Stallard - University of Virginia
David Prior - The University of Virginia's College at Wise
David Wilkin - Virginia Highlands Community College
Ralph Byers and Penny McCallum - Virginia Tech
Blue Gotham – College for Older Adults

Community Revitalization

Joe Ellis, husband of board member Susie Ellis, gave an interesting and informative presentation on community revitalization. The Ellises, who are the owners of the General Francis Marion Hotel, have been instrumental in the revitalization of downtown Marion, Smyth County, and the surrounding area, focusing their efforts on the preservation, restoration and promotion of cultural and natural resources, and Appalachian heritage.

Other Business

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned, and the members moved to the upstairs lobby for a reception, and tours of the General Francis Marion Hotel and the Lincoln Theatre for those who wished.