



**Minutes of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) Meeting
Hybrid
September 7, 2023**

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Hughes called the business meeting to order at 1:13 pm.

I. Opening Business

A. Attendance

Commissioners attending: Chair Hughes, Vice Chair Scott, Commissioners Abramson, Gonzales, Harber, Kostenbauer, Meyer, Temu Otting, Tucker, Walmer, and Wilson, Executive Director Paccione

Advisors attending: Sen. Zenzinger, Rep. Story, Mark Cavanaugh, Michael Lightner, Melinda Picket-May, Mark Superka, Colleen O'Neil, Jamie Viefhaus-Zak, Leilani Domingo

B. Approval of the Minutes for the July 28, 2023 Commission Meeting

Commissioner Walmer moved to approve the July 28th minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Kostenbauer. The motion was approved.

C. Reports

1. Chair - Chair Hughes welcomed our new parent advisor, Jamie Viefhaus-Zak, and our new student advisor, Leilani Domingo. She acknowledged their presence and thanked them for their participation, involvement, and commitment. Chair Hughes encouraged the new advisors to not be timid but rather jump in and actively participate in the meetings and be the voice for their colleagues and students across the state. Their voice is needed and will help the Commission do its best work. Chair Hughes reported that the Governor had a press conference. She applauded the technical work group for the implementation of strategic plan efforts. She also complimented all of the commissioners who serve on the COSI board. She noted the focus of the work session on the work that the COSI board is doing.
2. Vice Chair - Vice Chair Scott thanked those who participated in the technical working group. He mentioned four institution representatives who were impactful and helped to move the conversation forward in an incredibly positive way. He shared that the Technical Working Group will have their fourth meeting upcoming later in September and that they are making good progress.
3. Commission Standing Committees
 - a. Student Success & Workforce Alignment - Commissioner Abramson reported that the committee took the last month off. The ad hoc committee on transfer acceptance will be kicking off this month. Invitations have been sent for the first



meeting on the 26th of September. Commissioners Wilson, Gonzales, and Kostenbauer are members of this committee. He welcomed others to join them. Commissioner Tucker shared that Senators Zenzinger and Marchman and other advisors are participating on this committee, as well. The committee is working to ensure a diverse set of advisors and representatives from different institutions to serve on the ad hoc committee. They will try to hold two meetings in the month of October, one in November, and two in December. The goal is to get recommendations back to the Commission before the end of the year.

- b. Finance, Performance & Accountability - Commissioner Tucker reported that the Committee met in mid-August. They have a couple of consent items today for approval. They also reviewed the capital and IT scoring after the appeals and everything went through. He said the Department Finance team and Kennedy Evans particularly did a great job of analyzing and reporting progress. The commissioners were able to ask questions regarding shifts from the original scoring to the final scoring. They believe this scoring process is well on track and is still being found useful. They will continue to update and refine it.
- c. HB22-1349 Technical Workgroup Update – Update provided in the Chair and Vice Chair reports.

4. Commissioners

- a. Commissioner Kostenbauer reported on a point shared at the Commission retreat that nobody pays the sticker price for education. She reported that in speaking with parents they are all paying the sticker price for their children to attend college. She shared that she spoke to a parent from CU. She also referenced changes to Pell guidelines and how those have impacted some families. She asked if other commissioners had been speaking with parents and maybe were hearing the same stories.

5. Advisors

- a. Advisor Lightner reported about the concept of three-year bachelor's degree. He shared that a couple of schools have come up with a reduced student credit hour bachelor's degree. Advisor Lightner shared about changes in access to varying accrediting agencies from the "regional accrediting" agencies to institutional accrediting agencies. He shared about programs in Utah and Idaho where they have a path to get a three-year degree, but it was rejected by the accreditor. Because of this, they sought out a different accreditor, which approved reduced credit hour BA degrees, with some being 90 credit hours and some at 96. These are thought to be the lowest credit hour bachelor's degrees in the country.
- b. Advisor Zenzinger reported that she resonated with Commissioner Kostenbauer's comment regarding the cost for higher education. She shared that she has one child at UNC and one at CSU and that this year they received half the financial aid compared to last year. She shared that the changes that came about were not positive for people who have multiple children in school.

- D. Executive Director Report - Executive Director Paccione gave a general shoutout to COSI's impact on student success and affordability. She shared that the Department will continue to advocate for it each year left in this administration. This quarter, Colorado Helps (CO Helps) reported a 116 percent increase in participants to the US Department of Labor. She shared that the increase is a result of partnering with the Institution for American Apprenticeships. The state initially got the \$12 million grant to have 5,000 healthcare apprentices within four years. Two of those years were impacted by COVID, but the program is currently at 56 percent toward that goal of 5,000 with one year to go. She reported that CDHE staff continues to work through our cybersecurity incident including working with the institutions to address the



concerns and data collection measures. Director Paccione took a moment to welcome Carla Blanc, the new Legislative Liaison for the Department. She provided an update regarding a Governor’s Cabinet retreat held last week. She shared information about a new Executive Order announced by the Governor this week. She shared that the Governor’s vision is to have every high school student graduate with a high school diploma and a credential of value - whether that’s an associate degree, an IB diploma, AP credits, or work force credential of value. She also introduced Ian Boyce, the new controller for the Department.

- E. Legislative Update** – No report
- F. Public Comment** – No public comment

II. Consent Items

- A. Renewal of Full Authorization for Denver Seminary – *Heather DeLange, Director of Office of Private Postsecondary Education*
- B. Two-Year Cash-Funded Capital List for University of Northern Colorado – *Kennedy Evans, Lead Finance Analyst*
- C. Two-Year Cash-Funded Capital List for Colorado School of Mines – *Kennedy Evans, Lead Finance Analyst*
- D. Non-Monetary Supplemental Request for Trinidad State College Freudenthal Library Renovation – *Kennedy Evans, Lead Finance Analyst*

Commissioner Tucker moved to approve the consent items. Seconded by Commissioner Gonzales. The motion was approved.

III. Action Items

- A. Fiscal Year 2024-25 State-Funded Capital Projects and Priority Lists – *Kennedy Evans, Lead Finance Analyst*

Kennedy Evans, Lead Finance Analyst, presented the Finance, Performance and Accountability Committee’s approved prioritized lists for Capital IT and Capital Construction/Renewal budget requests from institutions of higher education for full CCHE approval. Ms. Evans started with the Commission’s statutory duties with regards to the capital budgeting process. Per C.R.S. 23-1-106, CCHE must annually submit a prioritized list of state funded capital construction/renewal and capital IT projects to the Office of State Planning and Budgeting, the Office of the State Architect, the Capital Development Committee (for construction/renewal), the Joint Technology Committee (for IT), and the Joint Budget Committee by November 1st of each year.

Ms. Evans defined each of the four types of capital projects reviewed. She stated \$170 million of state funds were appropriated for state institutions of higher education and broke that funding down by category. She reviewed the capital submission and review timeline.

Commissioner Wilson asked if the capital process was run through an ROI lens, congruent with the new strategic plan. Ms. Evans responded that it does not currently play a role, as the current rubric was revised three years ago, prior to the adoption of the new strategic plan. Capital criteria are on a five year review cycle, and the current iteration has a heavy focus on deferred maintenance. Chair Hughes stated that the focus on deferred maintenance was intentional and focused on maintaining existing assets rather than continuing to build and increasing the cost of



attendance. Executive Director Paccione noted that once metrics are in place from 1349, it will be easier to work the new strategic plan into the rubric.

Ms. Evans returned to reviewing the capital process including the Department's scoring, the Finance, Performance and Accountability Committee's initial look, the institutional appeal process, revised scoring, and the Committee's final approval.

Commissioner Harber requested figures on the total outstanding deferred maintenance at institutions be provided at a later date.

Director Paccione spoke to AHEC's unique features and expressed gratitude that they can now score higher and get needed funding.

Commissioner Kostenbauer moved to approve the Capital Construction/Renewal and Capital IT prioritized lists and forward them to the Office of State Planning and Budgeting, as well as appropriated legislative Committees. Commissioner Tucker seconded. The item was approved without objection.

Senator Zenzinger thanked Ms. Evans and stated that the Joint Budget Committee takes the Commission's prioritization very seriously. She noted that the influx of federal dollars has made more capital funding possible, and that this is not likely to continue this year. Therefore, she stated the Commission's input is more important than ever. She also stated that continuation projects are given high priority.

IV. Discussion Items

A. Board Training – *Michael McMaster, Attorney General's Office*

Meeting adjourned at 2:32 pm.

