

COLORADO HIGHER EDUCATION COMPETITIVE RESEARCH AUTHORITY

*Minutes of the January 19, 2011 Annual Board Meeting*

Chairman Rico Munn called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

In attendance by telephone were Board members Rico Munn, Bill Farland, Stein Sture, John Poate and Robbyn Wacker. Also in attendance were DHE staff Inta Morris and Michael Evans.

**Approval of January 12, 2010 minutes.** Stein Sture made a motion to approve the January 12, 2010 minutes. The motion was seconded by John Poate and unanimously passed.

**Chair's Report.** Rico Munn informed Board members that with the change in the administration and his resignation as Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education, this meeting would likely be his final CHECRA meeting. He said that he expected the Governor to appoint a new member in the coming weeks, but that he did not know who that individual would be.

**Financial Update.** Michael Evans (Department of Higher Education, Controller) updated Board members on the Authority's financial position. He provided a three year summary of income and expenses, and noted that the CHECRA had approximately \$1.5 million in the bank as of the end of 2010. The CHECRA had received slightly higher income than previous years from the waste tire fee, and had received close to \$2 million rather than the anticipated \$1 million from the Limited Gaming fund, hence the good financial position.

Mike Evans also noted that an annual audit had been completed in June and that there were no negative findings.

Mike Evans then provided Board members with an approximate financial forecast for the next four calendar years. Assuming ongoing income from both the waste tire fee distribution (through 2013) and from the Limited Gaming fund, and assuming the School of Mines Urban Water Engineering Research Center (ERC) is awarded in 2011, the CHECRA can anticipate being able to fund at least one and possibly two more projects at the same level (\$400,000 per year) as current projects. John Poate clarified that the Urban Water ERC had not been awarded yet, that the National Science Foundation is awaiting its budget, and that Mines hopes to find out by April whether it will receive the award.

Board members asked how certain the projected income is. Inta Morris responded that the waste tire income is more certain than the limited Gaming revenue. Rico Munn added that in the current budget climate, nothing is certain. Should the state's revenues decline, there is the chance that the Limited Gaming funds and possibly even the waste tire funds would be

redirected as needed. Inta Morris and DHE staff will monitor discussions regarding these funds and keep the Board members informed.

**Research Update.** John Poate provided an update on the School of Mines Materials Research Science and Engineering Center (MRSEC). He said the Center is receiving high marks for the science coming out of the Center.

Board Members agreed that it would be helpful to provide DHE staff with short summaries of the projects for use with legislators and others. Inta Morris will send a reminder by email requesting such summaries.

Stein Sture reported that the CU MRSEC is similarly highly successful. It is engaging a high number of graduates and undergraduates and there is a high degree of interaction with local and national companies.

Stein Sture then discussed changes to the MRSEC program at the National Science Foundation (NSF). In future solicitations, what is now known as a MRSEC will be split into Materials Research Interdisciplinary Teams (MIRTs) and Centers of Excellence for Materials Research and Innovation (CEMRIs), with MIRTs potentially including more than one IRG (interdisciplinary research group). Stein Sture also noted that NSF may be changing its policy with regard to requiring a state match. Board members will monitor news and seek additional information from NSF and keep all CHECRA members and DHE staff advised.

Bill Farland reported on the CSU Extreme Ultraviolet Engineering Research Center. He reminded members that the Center's goal is to make compact cost-efficient light sources for use in research. The work is leading to novel science advances and resulting in spin-off companies.

Robby Wacker reported that UNC is looking into possible grant opportunities with its biology programs.

Bill Farland then requested Board member response to the following: CSU's Science and Technology Center is entering its second five-year period. The Center is very successful in its work on multi-scale modeling for atmospheric processes, brings in some \$4 million per year, and is collaborating with the University of Colorado, Colorado College, NCAR and UCAR, among others. The NSF is very supportive of the work at the Center. CSU is now seeking to develop a sustainability plan for the CENTER and NSF has recommended that CSU find a source for matching funds. Would the CHECRA consider matching funds in this case?

After some discussion, Board members agreed that they would entertain a proposal from CSU for matching funds of \$100,000 to \$150,000 for its Science and Technology Center. Bill Farland agreed to provide information by email to Board members by February 4, 2011 and Members will review that information and approve or deny funding by February 18, 2011.

John Poate concluded the discussion by noting that the US Congress has proposed cutting NSF's budget to 2008 levels, which would be an approximate 10% cut.

**Other.** Board members thanked Rico Munn for his service on the CHECRA.

Bill Farland moved to adjourn at 3:50. The motion was unanimously passed.