STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA
BOARD OF VISITORS ORIENTATION
OCTOBER 23-24, 2018
MINUTES

Mr. Peter Blake, Director of SCHEV welcomed the attendees and provided a brief overview of the agenda. Attached is a copy of the attendee list.

Mr. Blake introduced the CEO of The Virginia Museum of History and Culture (VMHC), Mr. Jamie Bosket. Mr. Bosket provided welcoming remarks to the group and spoke about the changes at the Virginia Museum of History and Culture.

Mr. Blake introduced the Chair of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), Mr. Heywood Fralin. Mr. Fralin gave an overview of the agenda and explained the importance of the service that the boards of visitors (BOV) members provide.

Governor Ralph Northam addressed the group via a video message. He stressed the importance of making higher education affordable, accessible and accountable. Additionally, Governor Northam emphasized the importance of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and encouraged board members to utilize SCHEV's expertise.

Mr. Blake introduced the first panel featuring The Honorable Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth, the Honorable Fran Bradford, Deputy Secretary of Education and the Honorable Aubrey Layne, Secretary of Finance.

Perspectives on Board Service:

Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth shared that the board appointments this year were spread equally between men and women and reflect the diversity of the commonwealth.

Fran Bradford, Deputy Secretary of Education thanked and greeted the group on behalf of the Secretary of Education, Atif Qarni who was unable to attend. She shared the four key areas of focus for education: early childhood, equity in pre-K-12, pathways to a good job and access and completion.

Secretary Bradford opened the discussion for questions. An attendee suggested that it would be helpful to have a portal or resource that connects board members across institutions to create a community of shared information, best practices, questions and concerns.

Aubrey Layne, Secretary of Finance shared a presentation on Financial Considerations and Issues and discussed how these issues impact state funding for higher education. Secretary Layne discussed the health of Virginia's economy and the competing issues

that affect funding for higher education. The health of the national economy, federal policy and issues such as health care costs and pre-K-12 education costs are among the factors that create funding challenges for higher education. Secretary Layne opened the discussion for questions. An attendee asked that Secretary Layne share the names of the other AAA-bonded states he mentioned at the beginning of his presentation. He said he would provide this at another time.

Virginia's Economic and Civic Prosperity: Roles of the Virginia Plan for Higher Education & the Public Colleges and Universities

SCHEV council member, Thomas Slater introduced the panel and talked about future projects from SCHEV. He introduced the panelists: Mr. Peter Blake, Director, SCHEV, Dr. Megan Healy, Governor's Chief Workforce Development Advisor, and Susan Gooden, Vice Chair, State Board for Community Colleges.

Mr. Blake spoke about the strategic planning process and how the board of visitors (BOV) fits into it. He introduced the four pillars of the Virginia Plan for Higher Education:
1. Affordable access
2. Student success
3. Innovation and investment
4. Prosperity for the commonwealth

Dr. Healy introduced the group to the governor's workforce plan, which is designed to provide the right skills for the right job with family-sustaining wages. She spoke about the importance of providing the workforce with the right skills to keep business in the Commonwealth, and the importance of matching credentialing programs to the needs of employers. The employment sectors with the greatest need for additional qualified candidates include trades, cybersecurity, health care and teaching.

Dr. Gooden discussed civic prosperity or how higher education benefits the community at-large. She said that short-term credentialing programs, such as Fast Forward career training through Virginia community colleges, can increase a student's earnings by 25 to 50%. Dr. Gooden also stressed the need for more paid internships to promote diversity and inclusion in the workforce. The panel opened up the discussion to questions.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24

Mr. Fralin introduced Mr. Blake who introduced Belle Wheelan, President of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Dr. Wheelan provided a presentation on the public purposes of public higher education and the roles of public colleges and universities and their boards on the eve of the 21st century's third decade.

Dr. Wheelan provided an overview of SACSCOC and the process for accreditation. She provided thoughts on effective governance and advised members to regularly evaluate what the board is doing. The board should also regularly evaluate the Chief Executive

Officer in order to maintain a good working relationship. Dr. Wheelan answered questions from attendees.

Inquiring, Listening and Responding: Best Practices of Effective Boards

Mr. Blake introduced Todd Stottlemyer, member and former rector, College of William & Mary, and noted that Mr. Stottlemyer brings 12 years of experience serving on various institutional boards. Mr. Stottlemyer described servant leadership and discussed fiduciary responsibilities (duty of care, duty of loyalty and duty of obedience); characteristics of well-functioning boards; and what it means to be a great board member.

Mr. Stottlemyer offered suggested strategies for board members to ensure success in their role. He also answered questions from the audience.

Perspectives from the Legislative Branch

SCHEV Council member, Katie Webb introduced Delegate Lashrecse Aird. Delegate Aird has worked for Richard Bland College for many years and served in various roles. Delegate Aird noted that policy makers are concerned with students getting a return on their investment and obtaining jobs in industries that need workers. She said they are also focused on ensuring students are taking the correct classes, especially for transfer credits, and aligning degrees with sectors that need workers. Increasing access to education and maintaining affordability and lower student debt is another area of concern for legislators. In addition, she said the legislature wants to ensure that institutions are accountable to their missions and to state needs. Delegate Aird answered questions from the audience.

Legal and Ethical Responsibilities

SCHEV Council member, Henry Light introduced Alan Gerhardt, Executive Director of the Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council and Al Wilson, Assistant Attorney General.

Mr. Gerhardt talked about the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and reported that FOIA is one of the few laws that has a policy statement, which states that every public record and public meeting must be open by default unless there is a specific exemption in the law. He also informed the audience that public meetings must be properly noticed and open to the public, and minutes must be taken. He talked about bills related to public comment at public meetings and noted one bill that specifically excluded governing boards. Mr. Gerhardt recommended that members watch the FOIA video on the SCHEV website.

Mr. Wilson briefed the group on ethical responsibilities of board members. He noted that the Ethics Council is responsible for handling Conflict of Interest disclosure forms. A knowing violation is a Class 1 misdemeanor and is also equivalent to malfeasance in office, which means a person can be removed. Mr. Wilson explained that public

institutions are represented exclusively by the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and he described the history of that office. He advised members to refer legal matters to the rector for discussion at full board meeting because the OAG cannot guarantee confidentiality. If an individual member asks for advice from the OAG, it may have to be disclosed to full board. He also cautioned members not to seek advice from outside attorneys. Mr. Wilson recommended that members complete the training module on conflict of interest that is available on the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council website.

Hot Topics and Trends in College Student Life

Deputy Secretary Fran Bradford served as moderator and introduced Dr. R. Kelly Crace, Associate Vice President of Health and Wellness at the College of William & Mary and Kevin Foust, Chief of Police and Directory of Security at Virginia Tech.

Dr. Crace talked about campus safety and explained how the landscape of practices for campus safety has changed. The relationship between mental health counselors and law enforcement on campus is critical. Regarding sexual assault, Chief Foust said that the consequences of how an institution investigates or does not investigate can be very severe. The campus should see that it is a joint effort between student conduct, Title IX, law enforcement and counselling. Dr. Crace stressed the importance of building the level of trust in the system to ensure that survivors would be supported.

On alcohol issues, both panelists said that the focus should be on reducing the state of need. Chief Foust said that continuing education on the dangers of alcohol abuse is critical; students hear the messages during orientation but need to hear it again.

Regarding protests on campus, Chief Foust said that board members should understand the institutions' policies; Dr. Crace said policies should be fairly applied. The panel answered questions from the attendees.

Fiduciary Obligations – Building Budgets and Setting Tuition

Bill Bolling, former Lt. Governor introduced the topic and talked about how difficult issues of tuition-setting and budgeting can be for the board. He noted different perspectives through his time as a legislator, lieutenant governor and board member, and introduced Michael Maul, Associate Director, Department of Planning and Budget; Dwight Shelton, Vice President for Finance and CEO, Virginia Tech and Victoria Harker, SCHEV Council member and former rector, University of Virginia.

Mr. Maul presented on the budgeting process from the perspective of the Department of Planning and Budget.

Mr. Shelton talked about how Virginia Tech prepares its budget development and how that is intertwined with decisions related to setting tuition and fees. He described the structure of the institution's budget, and how priorities are developed.

Ms. Harker presented information about board tuition setting decisions. Important considerations include replacing aging faculty, funding for aging infrastructure (physical plant and technology) and updating technology for research. Increased enrollment puts pressure on the institution. The panel answered questions.

Marge Connelly, SCHEV Council member wrapped up the discussion. She recommended reading SCHEV's tuition & fees report, which provides benchmarking information. She offered four suggestions to board members: 1) do not count yourself out of this discussion – trust that you can fully participate; 2) know where your institution stands – how you compare on tuition with other institutions and with your own six-year plan; 3) understand how goals of access and affordability relate to your school's mission; and 4) have tough conversations.

Board Governance and Executive Management: Leadership for Virginia's 21st Century Needs and Goals

Troy Paino, President of the University of Mary Washington, introduced the panel and provided questions for the panel members. Panel members included Makola Abdullah, President, Virginia State University; Ángel Cabrera, President, George Mason University; Mark Lawrence, Rector, Radford University and Marianne Radcliff, Rector, Longwood University.

Regarding how the presidents conceptualize the different roles of the board members, etc., President Abdullah noted that at his institution the president manages day-to-day operations. The president and staff try to think of the two best and two worst things that need to be shared at each meeting.

President Cabrera noted that the most important responsibility is to hire and if necessary, fire, the president. He suggested that board members show their support for the issues and spend time with your president, not just by email or at meetings.

Mr. Lawrence said the board is the ears in the community, it hears concerns of which the university community may not be aware that should be conveyed to the president. He stressed that all members, including new board members should contribute to the conversation.

Ms. Radcliff said open communication is the key and she felt that the board should not surprise the president. She also suggested that new members find their niche, particularly something they have an interest in because good presidents recognize those interests and engage them on related issues. A board member should be an advocate for higher education and for the president.

With regard to how presidents and boards ensure safety while offering intellectual diversity and freedom of thought, Mr. Lawrence stressed communication as the key to handling difficult situations.

Ms. Radcliff said many different viewpoints exist at Longwood University but from a First Amendment standpoint, the university has a policy on campus and makes it part of student orientation.

President Cabrera said universities are one of the few places left where controversial ideas can and should be discussed, and it can be difficult. He said one of the most important jobs is to protect the role of the institution.
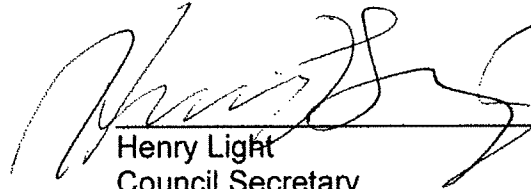
President Abdullah said when groups on campus invite speakers, it can be controversial and create security concerns.
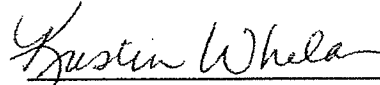
The panel answered questions from the audience.

Mr. Blake introduced Secretary Thomasson who provided final remarks. She thanked the members on behalf of Governor Northam and herself and noted that her office would be distributing certificates and pins to new board members through their institutions.

Henry Light
Council Secretary

Beverly Rebar
SCHEV staff

Kristin Whelan
SCHEV staff