

## **BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

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March 21, 2017

10:00 a.m.

Salem State University  
Central Campus, Marsh Hall  
Room 210  
352 Lafayette Street  
Salem, MA

### **Meeting Minutes**

A meeting of the Board of Higher Education (BHE) was held on Tuesday, March 21, 2017 in Marsh Hall, Room 210 at Salem State University at 352 Lafayette Street, Salem, Massachusetts.

#### **The following Board Members were present:**

Chris Gabrieli, Chairman  
Nancy Hoffman  
Tom Hopcroft  
Robert Johnson  
J.D. LaRock  
Paul Mattera  
Jim Peyser, Secretary of Education  
Henry Thomas  
Paul Toner

Carlos Santiago, Commissioner and Secretary to the Board

#### **The follow Board members were absent:**

Jasson Alvarado-Gomez  
Sheila Harrity  
Fernando Reimers  
Dani Monroe

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Chris Gabrieli called the meeting of the Board of Higher Education (BHE) to order at 10:15 a.m.

### **II. WELCOME**

Chair Gabrieli welcomed everyone in attendance and invited Salem State University (SSU) President Patricia Meservey to offer remarks.

President Meservey welcomed everyone and acknowledged her recent announcement that she will be retiring, but remaining as President until her Board identifies her successor. She remarked that her approaching retirement brings an opportunity to reflect on her ten years of service at SSU and what the university has accomplished in that time. She continued by

acknowledging and thanking the BHE and the entire team at the DHE for their support of SSU and the State University segment as a whole; she also thanked Secretary Peyser, her colleagues within the State University and Community College systems, as well as her own team at SSU including faculty, staff, students and alumni. She remarked that she is immensely proud of the success of her students and highlighted their achievements, including an increase in their six year graduation rate from 37% to 52% over the last ten years. Their entering class has increased in diversity, and 40% of those students are Pell eligible, meaning they're providing an opportunity for social mobility.

President Meservey continued highlighting additional accomplishments during her tenure, including the fact that SSU became a university in 2010 which speaks to the accomplishments and identity of their students and faculty. She added that she has always viewed public higher education as a public good, and stressed her belief that the university has a responsibility to give back the community. She said that they have done so through economic development and civic engagement, citing the North Shore alliance for economic development, which was founded by SSU. She additionally cited the 400,000 hours of community service the faculty and students have given back to the region. Further, the campus has grown and is beautiful, and she cited the many facilities the university was able to open or renovate thanks to the Massachusetts State College Building Authority (MSCBA), partnerships, and donors, including the new library, fitness center, theater, and garage. Finally, she highlighted SSU's recent fundraising campaign in which they exceeded their goal by \$26 million. This was a major step forward with over 12,000 donors, including 94% of full time employees who contributed.

President Meservey concluded her remarks by stating that she came to her decision to retire when she believed it was the right time for her personally and for the university; she is confident that SSU is in a strong position and she's looking forward to passing the baton, and with the support of the BHE, SSU will be able to continue their mission and path forward towards success.

Chair Gabrieli thanked President Meservey for her for her leadership, congratulated her on the many accomplishments achieved under her tenure and read an official resolution into the record formally acknowledging her retirement and many accomplishments.

He then acknowledged BHE member Robert Johnson and congratulated him on his recent appointment as Chancellor of UMASS Dartmouth, which will be effective later this summer. He additionally noted that BHE member Sheila Harrity has recused herself from today's meeting because she is under consideration for a presidential appointment at Quinsigamond Community College.

### **III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

Chairman Gabrieli brought forth a motion to accept the minutes of the January 17, 2017 Special BHE meeting. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously by all Board members present.

Chairman Gabrieli brought forth a motion to accept the minutes of the January 24, 2017 Joint BHE/BESE meeting. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously by all Board members present.

Chairman Gabrieli brought forth a motion to accept the minutes of the January 24, 2017 BHE meeting. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously by all Board members present.

#### **IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

#### **V. REMARKS AND REPORTS**

##### **A CHAIRMAN’S REMARKS**

Chairman Gabrieli offered brief comments. He began his remarks by highlighting that from his perspective, he is looking forward to Thursday to celebrate the progress of the Early College Initiative. He commented that yesterday, he visited Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) and met with an impressive group of high school students who are moving forward in Gateway/Pathway programs and they are thriving. He continued that he knows the BHE is strongly in support of this and it will be a test of their ability as a Board to take that energy and move it forward, to engage their partners in higher education and K-12 and help advance policy that really changes lives. He continued that Early College programs have made a big difference in students’ lives, as they can earn a semester or even a whole degree with no cost; it represents a big move towards college affordability. Chair Gabrieli also thanked BHE member Nancy Hoffman for her leadership over the years on this matter.

He concluded his remarks by stating the Academic Affairs agenda items today will be a little more detailed than normal due to the snowstorm last week which required the cancelling of the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) meeting.

##### **B. COMMISSIONER’S REMARKS**

Commissioner Santiago began his remarks by welcoming everyone and thanking President Meservey and SSU for hosting the BHE today. He continued that in his nearly four years working at the DHE, there has been no other president that he has relied upon more to learn from on the “ins and outs” of Massachusetts higher education, as she knows the history, the people, and the system. He expressed his gratitude for President Meservey’s wise council, and remarked that he looks forward to helping SSU’s new president successfully transition. He then welcomed and acknowledged the other presidents in attendance: Cape Cod Community College President John Cox, North Shore Community College President Patricia Gentile, Northern Essex Community College President Lane Glenn, and Framingham State University President Javier Cevallos. He additionally acknowledged the attendance of Bill Hart, Executive Officer for the Community Colleges, and Vincent Pedone, Executive Officer for the State Universities.

He continued that the BHE agenda for today is surprisingly light, and there is no significant business for the FAAP or SPC. However, they still do have quite a bit going on and reiterated the comments of Chair Gabrieli regarding the Early College Initiative. The Commissioner thanked Chair Gabrieli for his leadership, and BHE members Paul Toner and Nancy Hoffman for their service on this matter. He continued that Massachusetts may not be the first state out of the gate for Early College initiatives, but we have an opportunity to be exemplars.

He continued that the DHE continues to face budgetary challenges; we are down staff but are consolidating staff to keep the work and agenda of the Board going forward. He continued by citing the recent move of our Workforce Development unit into the Academic Affairs unit. He explained that the work has shifted to teams as we can no longer sustain individual staff members being responsible for just one project, though the work being done continues to be of the highest quality.

He continued that throughout the public system, leadership and our Presidential core is changing; 10 out of 24 campuses are in the process of changing leadership. He remarked that diversity is a source of strength, and that our new campus leadership brings forth a variety of different experiences and backgrounds. Seven of the presidential searches are now complete, and the conclusion of another search at Quinsigamond Community College is drawing near.

The Commissioner continued his remarks by briefly summarizing recent DHE activities. DHE website hits are up quite a bit; the Commonwealth Commitment page hits spiked the day of Governor Baker's State of the State address. Elena Quiroz-Livanis, Director of Postsecondary Success Strategies has been selected to serve on a prestigious working group on transfer articulation by the US Department of Education (USDOE). The DHE has reached out to the USDOE for guidance on the recent IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) on FAFSA filings being down for unclear reasons. Finally, he concluded his remarks by reporting that Vision Project Performance Incentive Fund grants have been awarded.

Chair Gabrieli thanked Commissioner Santiago for his comments. He then invited Secretary Peyser to make comments.

### **C. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION'S REMARKS**

Secretary Peyser began his remarks by congratulating and thanking President Meservey for her years of service. He continued that she is a great advocate for public higher education and commended her commitment to collaboration across campuses and segments.

He remarked that he will also be attending the Early College events on Thursday. He added that DCAM is developing new process for allocating capital assets, as the needs of the system are quite significant and we need to have a process that allows us to make decisions in a transparent and strategic way.

### **D. REPORTS FROM PRESIDENTS**

#### **Community College Presidents' Report – Cape Cod Community College President John L. Cox**

##### List of Documents Submitted by President Cox

*None*

President Cox brought greetings from the Community College segment, and thanked the Commissioner, Chairman Gabrieli, Secretary Peyser, and the members of the Board for the opportunity to speak today.

He began by stating that he appreciated the Secretary's comments about the need for a strategic framework for capital asset investments, and highlighted the significant need for deferred maintenance support. His remarks included three main points:

- 1) As the Commonwealth struggles with very difficult fiscal challenges, community colleges continue to seek support for the full funding for collective bargaining agreements. Higher education benefits when the state meets the full commitment of these agreements, rather than having them met through tuition and fee increases. With the potential for an unfunded mandate, students suffer through fee increases. He is asking for full support in the coming weeks.
- 2) The Community College National Legislative summit in Washington was held recently. This provides an important opportunity for student trustees to shine, including BHE student representative Jasson Alvarado-Gomez, who was there and

spoke eloquently. With a new congress and administration, there is an opportunity to advocate for Pell 2.0, and to see the opportunity for year-round Pell through the Pell reserve, as well as the opportunity for increased access for short term workforce development programs. They were pleased that the new Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos chose the summit as her first public address, though it is clear their work is not complete. The Trump's administration thin budget needs some thickening; the Pell reserve has been eliminated to offset increased Defense spending and Pell expansion is not gaining traction with the new administration. The Pell Grant program is vital, and serves a crucial need. He asks for the BHE support as we try to change some thinking in Washington.

- 3) Community college leaders have been looking locally to try to increase expansion, and North Shore Community College (NSCC) has launched a new effort to increase access. Through a phone survey, NSCC reached out to students who applied for admission but did not actually show up and found two prevailing issues: how to pay, and how to make time (opportunity cost). Both of these responses are tied to affordability. These students were not demonstrating the highest or lowest need but somewhere in the middle; having a gap of unmet need around \$1500. The NSCC Promise Award will take the Commonwealth Commitment program to the next level by reducing the direct cost to attend NSCC to zero for new full-time students who are eligible for financial aid but lack enough grant funds to cover tuition and fees. The plan is a "first come, first qualified" promise for up to 100 new students enrolling in the Fall 2017 semester. There will be a minimum GPA requirement and students must demonstrate need. NSCC will repackage the aid allocation to fully commit to these students who are close paying their bill. With the NSCC Promise Award and the Commonwealth Commitment program, it's possible to get a BA for a very low cost and is an opportunity to reshape our resources going forward.

President Cox concluded his remarks by summarizing his three points: fund collective bargaining, Pell problems, and watching the NSCC Promise Award.

### **State University Presidents' Report – Framingham State University President Javier Cevallos**

#### *List of Documents Submitted by President Cevallos*

President Cevallos brought greetings from the State University segment. He thanked Secretary Peyser, Commissioner Santiago, Chairman Gabrieli, and the members of the Board for the opportunity to speak today. He thanked President Meservey again for her service and leadership, and then congratulated BHE member Robert Johnson on his chancellorship at UMASS Dartmouth.

He began his remarks by extolling the many accomplishments and innovations the nine campuses of the state universities have successfully implemented to increase graduation rates, close achievement gaps and respond to the needs of our regional economies. He continued that segment takes its mission to offer access to high quality four year degrees very seriously, and that they play a vital role in providing an opportunity for socioeconomic mobility, particularly for those coming from underserved communities and gateway cities. The segment is focused on helping these students succeed by offering affordable educational pathways, leading to good careers and upward economic mobility. Their students and the strength of the economy depend on it.

He continued that the segment has answered the state's call by increasing their capacity; enrollment is up 16% and degree production is up 41%, which is unprecedented among regional and national peers. They offer numerous experiential educational opportunities, and over 90% of students are employed or continuing their education one year after graduation.

He continued that despite this, public higher education is facing a funding crisis, and offering Massachusetts residents affordable, high quality degree options is becoming increasingly difficult. They need to stay true to their mission in serving students in gateway cities and fueling the employment pipeline, but the collapse of state support is transferring the cost of funding from the state to the students, and is jeopardizing their ability to offer quality, affordable degrees. He cited recent studies in the New York Times and the Mass Budget and Policy Center that demonstrate that public higher education is the best chance at upward socioeconomic mobility, and that public higher education support directly correlates to the strength of the state economy.

He continued that over the past few years, there have only been modest funding increases that do not offset the cost of collective bargaining agreements. These unfunded liabilities have forced the campuses to balance budgets by using reserves, student fees, and budget cuts and it is not sustainable. Public campuses often face criticism for increasing fees but unfunded collective bargaining agreements account for over 80% of those fee increases.

He concluded his remarks by asking the BHE to join with the segment in expressing concern over the impact of the Governor's budget recommendation, and asking the legislature to include funding for college bargaining obligations in the FY18 budget. He then thanked the BHE again for the opportunity to speak about this.

## **E. REPORT FROM STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

None

## **VI. MOTIONS**

List of Documents Used:  
*AAC 17-13 through 17-14*

### **A. Academic Affairs**

Chairman Gabrieli turned the meeting over to AAC Chair Nancy Hoffman. Before proceeding with the motions, she mentioned the ongoing IRS DRT issue, and expressed concern over the unclear reason for the problem, and commented that some states have changed the deadlines for state financial aid to alleviate damage by this issue. BHE member J.D. La Rock seconded this concern, citing the NSCC pilot Promise Award program is dependent on timely FAFSA completion. Clantha McCurdy, Senior Deputy Commissioner for Access and Student Financial Assistance commented that OSFA diligently tracks FAFSA completions, and we are currently on track with FAFSA completions compared to last year. She continued that the state deadline is May 1, and OSFA will continue to keep Commissioner Santiago updated on FAFSA completions.

Committee Chair Hoffman continued by providing an overview of the two

program approvals: MWCC's Paramedic Technology Certificate and Lasell College's Master of Science in Criminal Justice degree's approval for the purposes of the Police Career Incentive Pay Program (PCIPP). She then introduced campus representatives from Lasell and MWCC, and turned the meeting over to Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success Pat Marshall.

Deputy Commissioner Marshall provided an overview of the MWCC proposal, including its purpose in fulfilling a workforce void and allowing EMT first responders to upgrade skills sets and improve their job status. She continued that external reviewers found the program to be of high quality and important to the community.

BHE member Paul Mattera asked if there is any emphasis in the program on teaching students how to address mental health concerns. A representative from MWCC responded yes. Committee Chair Hoffman confirmed that this is a program for students who already have EMT training, and that it was developed as a response to a local need that was articulated.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was moved, seconded and approved as follows, with all board members present voting in favor:

**AAC 17-13      APPLICATION OF MOUNT WACHUSETT COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO AWARD THE PARAMEDIC TECHNOLOGY CERTIFICATE**

**MOVED:**      The Board of Higher Education approves the application of Mount Wachusett Community College to award the Paramedic Technology Certificate.

Upon graduating the first class for this program, the College shall submit to the Board a status report addressing its success in reaching program goals as stated in the application and in the areas of enrollment, curriculum, faculty resources and program effectiveness.

Authority:      Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Section 9(b)

Contact:      Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D, Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success

Committee Chair Hoffman turned the meeting back over to Deputy Commissioner Marshall. She provided an overview of what the PCIPP Guidelines require and the timeline for the process. Secretary Peyser asked about the distinction between PCIPP certification versus just academic approval. Deputy Commissioner Marshall explained that PCIPP certification requires that the program passes a higher bar, and functions as a certification of excellence.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was moved, seconded and approved as follows, with all board members present voting in favor:

**AAC 17-14      APPROVAL OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS UNDER THE GUIDELINES FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

**MOVED:** The Board of Higher Education approves the Lasell College Master's of Science in Criminal Justice program under the *Guidelines for Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Academic Programs*. The program has been found to meet or exceed all quality standards established by the *Guidelines*.

As required in the Guidelines, each institution shall submit two copies, including one electronic copy, of a report to the Board annually, certifying that each program is being maintained and operated within the provisions and spirit of the criteria and guidelines set forth by the *Guidelines*.

Authority: Criminal Justice Program  
Chapter 41, Section 108L (as amended)

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D.  
Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success

## VII. DISCUSSION

- **Revised Program Approval for Public Institutions and Timeline**

Committee Chair Hoffman introduced the next item, the revision of the program approval process for public institutions. She provided an overview how this was discussed at the retreat, noting that as the board considers strategic plans and seeks to have a better aligned system, it would be better to shift the AAC committee work to review overall policies rather than the details of program review because the staff already does so much on the latter. Thus, they have come up with a proposal to significantly change in the way the AAC reviews programs, moving from review at the end of the process to much earlier in the process.

BHE member Robert Johnson stated for the record that he would be recusing himself from this discussion due to conflict of interest concerns involving his future employment as Chancellor of UMass Dartmouth.

Chair Hoffman turned the meeting over to Deputy Commissioner Marshall, who provided an overview of the current process and timeline and the proposed changes to the process. She continued that the intent of the revision is to ensure better alignment with system level goals, and to send a clearer message to campuses earlier in the process whether they should move forward with their new program. She also highlighted that the Letter of Intent (LOI) must indicate a link to the campus strategic plan and be more substantive. Commissioner Santiago remarked that campuses will need to be more explicit in how the new program fits into the operational and financial objectives of the institutions, and their long term campus plans.

The BHE engaged in a lengthy discussion regarding the revised process. Board member Hoffman commented that we should offer more guidance to institutions regarding the LOI. Board member Henry Thomas asked if the answer is no after the LOI, is there an appeal process? He continued that UMASS has their own process that they bring before the UMass Board of Trustees and questioned if we had the appropriate authority; his concern is that if the program is vetoed after only a two page LOI, are we giving the program enough consideration before doing so. General Counsel Dena Papanikolaou acknowledged that although UMass has different statutory authority than the State Universities and Community Colleges, and although there are some ambiguities in the interrelation of UMass' statute and the BHE, the law is clear that the BHE has final authority on program approvals. However, she added that she would gladly explore Board Member Thomas' concerns further with UMass' legal counsel.

BHE member Paul Toner clarified that the new process entails having a more upfront conversation about the need for the program before undergoing the entire review process.

BHE member Hoffman asked a question about LOI and what happens at the campus level before it is submitted. Deputy Commissioner Marshall and Commissioner Santiago responded that we assume there are lengthy conversations at the campus level before this happens. The revised process will reverse the order of events, but it will not fundamentally change the information we review on this process.

BHE Member J.D. La Rock asked if we should be offering guidance on the LOI in regards to demonstrating not only the connection with institutional goals, but having a view of statewide goals as well. Secretary Peyser stated we should be clearer about our priorities, and that it's a good thing. He continued by referencing the recently revised strategic planning process to bring them more into alignment with overall statewide strategic plans. Secretary Peyser remarked that implication here is that the BHE will have questions if academic proposals are not in alignment with campus strategic plans. BHE Member La Rock commented that a fully built out statewide policy is good for the state and the campuses.

Deputy Commissioner Marshall provided a summary of the next steps. The comment period would begin the week of March 27, and feedback would be completed in May. We would present to the AAC/BHE at the June meeting. She continued that the current process for program approvals would remain in place through April 15, and anything after that date would be required to use the new process. Chair Gabrieli commented that he supports moving forward with this new process, and that it makes sense. He continued that we have a unique moment as a Board to put some meat into this policy change, and that we have agreement on procedural elements, even if we want to revise some of the substantive elements.

## VIII. PRESENTATIONS

- **Student Learning Outcomes Assessment: An Update**

- List of Documents Used:

- *Continuing to Advance the Culture of Assessment*

Commissioner Santiago provided a brief introduction on the next agenda item, the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Presentation, and introduced Lane Glenn, President of Northern Essex Community College, Deputy Commissioner Marshall, Robert Awkward, Director of Learning Outcomes Assessment.

Deputy Commissioner Marshall began by explaining the importance of this topic in that it assures that no matter which campus our students attend, they will receive a high quality education. Further, it matters to faculty because it enhances teaching, and it matters to taxpayers because of accountability. She continued that the federal government and accrediting agencies are interested in this as well as employers, and cited that employers report that demonstrated capacity to think critically and solve problems are critically important.

President Glenn then provided some history of the learning outcomes assessment process, which began under former DHE Commissioner Richard Freeland. He formed a task force to capitalize on the momentum building around the interest in learning outcomes assessment. A nine state multi-state collaborative was launched in December 2012, piloted in FY15, and it now currently has grown to 13 states.

President Glenn introduced DHE Director Robert Awkward. He reiterated why assessment is important, as it demonstrates that students can apply what they have learned. He continued that it demonstrates our ability to prepare students for jobs, citizenship, and for life. These are universal learning goals that cut across disciplines. He cited achievements of the project to date, including a culture change across campuses, faculty collaboration and equity, and minimizing duplication of effort.

Robert Johnson left the meeting at 12:25

DHE Director Awkward continued by explaining the integration with MassTransfer, citing how faculty developed shared learning outcomes for MassTransfer A2B mapped disciplines. He then concluded his presentation with an overview of the 13 state multistate collaborative sample results and future goals.

The BHE engaged in a question and answer period during and after the presentation. BHE member La Rock asked how could we use this to prove the value of public higher education to the legislature or an employer, in other words, what is the external piece here? President Glenn and DHE Director Awkward responded that the external piece is that we will be better able to respond, and further, just the fact that we are actively engaged and sharing it publicly is a testament to the forward thinking and responsiveness of our system. BHE member Thomas asked about assessing instructional quality. President Glenn responded that that are alternative ways to measure that, and this project is not designed for that purpose. Board member Hoffman commented that receiving faculty input would be helpful.

#### **IX. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

#### **X. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Gabrieli adjourned the meeting at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carlos E. Santiago  
Commissioner of the Department and  
Secretary to the Board