**WVNCC Staff Council Minutes**

**September 19th, at 1pm via ZOOM**

1. **Called to Order**: 1:00 PM by Staff Council President Regan Blaha
2. **Roll Call:** 
   1. **Present**: Regan Blaha, Jenna Derrico, Christa Nash, Tillie Ossman, Dan McClure, Dennis Thorn, Thomas Queen, Scott Montgomery
   2. **Excused**: Hilary Wilson, Christopher Corbin
3. **Review of Minutes**: None to be approved
4. **Chair Report**: Report by Regan Blaha
   1. Regan welcomed everyone back for the 2024-2025 School Year. Introduced Christa Nash as the new Sector Representative for Professional Non-Faculty. Regan mentioned as her being chair that has left an open vacancy for Secretary.
   2. Regan and Hilary will meet monthly with Dr. Mosser, but their first meeting will be October 9th.
5. **Old** **Business**: None
6. **New Business**:
   1. Secretary vacancy:
      1. Tillie Ossman nominated herself to become the next secretary. Jenna Derrico motioned for the nomination to be accepted. Christa Nash seconded. Motion carried. We will vote at the next meeting to make it official.
7. **BOG Report**: None
8. **ACCE Report**:

The ACCE met for the annual retreat on July 22 – 23, 2024.

The group spoke with Dr. Sarah Armstrong Tucker, Chancellor for the HEPC and CTCS. The Chancellor shared some updates:

* Chancellor Tucker had just returned from several meetings with the US Department of Education. The Undersecretary shared with the Chancellor that there is very little chance the FAFSA for 2025-2026 will be released in early October, and even a November release would be a huge stretch. The Department hired consultants for assistance after the unsuccessful FAFSA rollout for 2024-2025, and they uncovered even more issues than the Department had been aware of. They are working to address these issues but there is no timeline in place for a resolution.
* College presidents are reporting that applications are up this year, and college-going interest is up, but FAFSA completion is still down. The HEPC and institutions are considering whether to extend funding deadlines, adjust add/drop dates, or make other changes to preserve higher education access for those who can least afford it. The Legislature doubled the Higher Education grant for the year and made emergency grants available which could help students who expected to receive merit-based scholarships but their standardized test scores fell short due to the pandemic. This put extra workload on Financial Aid staff across the state and many institutions experience turnover with their financial officers.
* The federal student loan forgiveness effort is admirable but the Chancellor worries that it paints higher education in a bad light. Institutions do not have control over how much students take out in loans, and most of what was forgiven was graduate school debt rather than undergrad. The state can help keep student loans to a minimum by offering more financial aid to replace it and by keeping restrictions on that aid to a minimum (like WV Invests but without the drug test or service requirements).
* Dual enrollment expansion is going well across the state. Almost every institution has participated.
* The HEPC doesn’t expect a lot of legislation targeting higher education this year, but they will encourage legislators to fully fund the performance-based funding model, including the inflationary increase. Later in the meeting, Matt Turner from the HEPC shared that the institutions have been asked to present yet another flat budget proposal for the coming year. Institutional Presidents are trying to act more as a cohesive system in order to allow better transferring of credits and have talked about common course numbers or a common application.
* There has been significant turnover in Presidents as well as in Human Resources Departments. It’s made it harder to offer statewide professional development opportunities. The Vice Chancellor of Human Resources at the HEPC works with schools individually and the HEPC has also tried to onboard and train new Presidents. The Chancellor said the higher education system may need to consider how we incentivize key staff to stay in the state or whether we can have positions that serve the same function but across multiple institutions.

The ACCE also heard from Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, Patricia Humphries.

* The minimum salary threshold necessary for an employee to be exempt from overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act was raised on July 1 2024 from $35,568 annually to $43,888. It is set to increase to $58,656 on January 1 2025. Employees paid below the threshold as of those dates are hourly and must be paid overtime.
* Taran Wolford is about 25% done reviewing the job titles and job descriptions that each school submitted to her in order, group them by job family, and identify benchmark jobs to use in the staff compensation study. They continue to encourage schools to replace generic Z job codes with more appropriate job codes.
* The April 2025 salary schedule the HEPC released has been added to MarketPay so HR offices have access to that when pricing their job.

Kristen Boggs – legal counsel for the HEPC – trained the group on Open Meetings Laws and discussed the implementation of the Campus Self Defense Act. She clarified that the fleet management policy in WV forbids employees from having a weapon in a state vehicle or a rental car during the time it is rented for college business.

1. **Committee Report:** 
   1. No updates
2. **Adjournment**- Regan Blaha called for adjournment. Jenna Derrico motioned, and Dennis Thorn seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 PM.

Note: Next meeting October 24th, 2024, at 1pm via ZOOM or B&O Auditorium