



State of Connecticut

HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 1800
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591
PHONE: (860) 240-0280 / FAX: (860) 240-8833

SENATOR BETH BYE
CO-CHAIR

REPRESENTATIVE ROBERTA B. WILLIS
CO-CHAIR

Planning Commission for Higher Education

Meeting Minutes

June 11, 2013

3:00 p.m. Room 1E

The meeting was called to order at 3:09 p.m. by John Shemo.

The following Commission members/designees/guests were present:

Vagos Hadjimichael, Jason Jakubowski, Lois Schneider, John Bennett, Judith Resnick, John Shemo, Judith Goldfarb, Lindy Lee Gold, Judith Greiman, Roberta Willis, Toni Boucher, Christopher Bruhl, and Andy Condon.

The minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Judy Greiman, President, Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges gave a presentation on an overview of other state's strategic plans.

John Shemo opened the discussion on the RFP process and indicated that they have tried to incorporate, at least the spirit of, commission members' comments into the RFP

John Harnick discussed the RFP draft.

Judith Goldfarb made a point of clarification regarding K – 12 and indicated that the achievement gap begins at 9 months of age and asked why the commission is not looking at younger children.

Roberta Willis replied that we are looking at younger children, and that we will be having a new commission member from Voices for Children, and the commission has Thomas Moore, the Assistant Superintendent of West Hartford. The hope is that the commission will look at the total Pre-K – 20 picture.

Vagos Hadjimichael asked if comments he submitted were shared and reflected in the final draft?

John Shemo responded that it was the goal to incorporate all comments into the draft RFP.

Vagos Hadjimichael indicated that his comments were not reflected in the current draft. He shared his comments with the commission.

Lindy Gold echoes what Judith Goldfarb said. Lindy shared that the issue of school readiness is very important.

Chris Bruhl shared that readiness is a critical issue, but that the commission is taking a risk by seeking to include it. The Pre-K – 12 experience, and how these students are approaching higher education is cannibalizing other resources of higher ed through remediation. He hopes that the commission will not replicate that process by cannibalizing the commission's own limited budget by trying to do too much. Christ noted that the state has committed hundreds of millions of dollars toward Pre-K – 12. He believes it is outside the scope of the commission. Chris believes that the alignment between what is going on between Pre-K – 12 and higher ed. He feels improving that alignment should be included. Chris suggested a subject which was omitted from the RFP – disruptive technologies.

Roberta Willis indicated that she agrees with a lot of what Chris shared with the commission regarding spreading the commission's work too thin, but that there are 2 aspects that intersect with higher ed. One is training teachers and the other is the issue of alignment.

Judith Goldfarb said that she believes there are ways to bring that in. She shared that recently Connecticut received a federal grant to look at the alignment between pre-school and K – 3.

John Shemo discussed Vagos' comments, indicating that he did not see a reference to community colleges and post BA/BS landscape. He did see a reference to non-traditional students.

Vagos Hadjimichael shared that there are severe issues with non-traditional students. The most severe is their finances.

Lindy Gold discussed non-traditional students.

Vagos Hadjimichael gave an example of a typical non-traditional student and their cash flow issues.

John Bennett discussed his comments on the RFP that were in the handouts. He summarized his comments for the commission.

John Shemo let commission members know that these comments will be captured in the final draft.

Lois Schneider suggested making it clear that the RFP is with the Planning Commission for Higher Education and not the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. She was also concerned about the consultant being able to receive some money up-front. Lois asked what resources are available to the people doing this.

John Harnick responded to the payment structure concern.

Toni Boucher asked for clarification on the payment schedule.

Chris Bruhl hopes that the commission can find a way to move past the practice of not issuing some payment up-front.

Roberta Willis addressed Lois' concern about data, that there is a wealth of data available from national organizations. Many consultants who will be bidding on this will already be familiar with the data that is available.

Jason Jakubowski suggested that one area that needed to be included is on-line learning.

Judy Resnick respectfully agrees with Chris regarding the payment schedule.

Vagos Hadjimichael indicated that he has a question that he thinks no one in the room can answer: the possibility we're going to find a successful respondent that can do all the things this RFP specifies. Vagos indicated that he does not expect an answer, he was just expressing his concern.

John Shemo replied that we hope for the best.

Toni Boucher indicated that there are 2 places where she noticed that the RFP indicated to eliminate the post-secondary achievement gap between minority students and the general population. She suggested that we use "reduce" rather than "eliminate." She shared that eliminating it entirely is not an achievable goal. Toni asked about branding.

Roberta Willis shared that UCONN has done a good job at "branding" but that other state institutions have not done as well.

Toni Boucher asked if for-profit institutions are included.

Roberta Willis indicated that they are included.

Roberta Willis thanked John Shemo for stepping up to the plate for all of his work as temporary chair of the commission. Roberta shared that Judy Resnick has agreed to serve as the chairman of the Planning Commission for Higher Education.

Judy Resnick addressed the commission.

John Shemo asked for topics, and suggestions for speakers for the July meeting.

Lindy Gold suggested the topic of where we are with middle colleges, an inventory of assets concerning community colleges' road to remediation.

Toni Boucher offered learning about other state's description of going this process, what has worked, what hasn't worked, how they implemented their plan.

Chris Bruhl suggested distance learning would be a good topic.

John Shemo announced that the next meeting of the Planning Commission for Higher Education will be Tuesday, July 9th.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:31 p.m.