



## State of Connecticut

### The Connecticut General Assembly

#### The Planning Commission for Higher Education

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#### Judith K. Resnick, Chairperson

#### Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 14, 2014

3:00 p.m. Room 1E

The meeting was called to order at 3:13 p.m. by Judy Resnick.

The following commission members/designees/guests were present: E. Vagos Hadjimichael, Booker DeVaughn, Jason Jakubowski, Mary Lou Aleskie, Judy Resnick, John Schemo, Judy Goldfarb, Michael Gargano, Sally Reis, Judy Greiman, Roberta Willis, and Benjamin Barnes.

Judy Resnick introduced the newest member of the Planning Commission for Higher Education, Booker T. DeVaughn.

Members introduced themselves.

The minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Judy Resnick address the members saying that progress is being made on the strategic plan, that the commission is still on target and that the goal today is to engage in some substantive conversation. She continued that no one disagrees with the actual goals, but that based on various conversations there are some changes needed to make those goals come true. Judy said there are things the commission members need to talk about because the plan can't be fleshed out until those things are identified and strategies are formed concerning addressing those issues. Judy stated that in November, after the election, the commission will have the opportunity to have something which will be useful to whoever is sitting in the Governor's office and the Office of Policy and Management.

Aims McGuinness proceeded with NCHEMS' presentation. Reference made to [American Council on Education](#). Reference made to an article by [Dennis Jones in Change Magazine](#).

Mike Gargano commented that he thinks in many ways we are pretending in the sense that if we just grow our enrollments we'll be fine – if we create a new tax base in Connecticut, everything will be fine – if we generate revenue at the campus level, everything will be fine. He shared that he's not convinced that that is true, but he is becoming convinced that the model have, relative to the funding structures is not sustainable for post-secondary education in the sense that it will not allow the institutions to achieve their aspirations. Mike stated that part of the conversation is to think it terms of what some other states have done that look at education as a shared responsibility. He went on to say that those states see education as having a real value and benefit to the state to have an educated citizenry and the individual citizen sees it as a personal benefit to have an education. Mike asked in that context, how do we share in the cost of education, what should be the responsibility of the state and what is the responsibility of the individual if you accept that they both have equal benefit. Mike continued that in the Massachusetts university system they have moved toward a model that's 50/50 – the state contributes 50 and the individual contributes 50, which is more focused on what we know as the educational cost and they separate student life style as the student's preference. He said that the next piece of the equation would be what is the state financial aid strategy for that student.

Mike Gargano agrees with Aims that the institutions are all after the same students which results in a diminishing market and that there is no indication that the traditional market is going to change, but the adult re-training market probably has some growth, which will require rethinking of the menu of academic programs and how they relate to the various regions.

Mike Gargano then went on to discuss how in the Connecticut model intuitions of higher education are rewarded for enrollment and continuous enrollment, meaning the longer you keep a student enrolled you keep getting rewarded from the state. He went on to say that he thinks the conversation should change that acknowledges enrollment, but the greatest reward should be in retention, progression and degree completion. Mike stated that we need to change the culture and funding mechanism to reward institutions for what we want them to produce.

Aims McGuinness indicated that the group needs to pick up one or two of the themes Mike just emphasized such as a financing plan that reflects shared responsibility, rewards institutions when they make progress towards the goals. Aims suggested that the goals need to be population specific and mission specific so they will be different for community colleges, UCONN and the independent sector.

Mike Gargano stated that he would agree with Aims and went on to say that part of the conversation is that in most cases 85% of revenue is tied up in personnel, which is something that has to be discussed in an honest way with everyone at the table. Mike asked if we have the discussion with this group or among other groups, where do we take this conversation, do we have it within our own means to create this type of change that we all advocate for or do we have to find a different venue to create this type of change.

Aims McGuinness asked how do we engage faculty throughout the state to help come up with a solution. He continued that if you look at systems around the country very few are finding a way to deal with that. Aims shared that there are modes of delivery that dodge that question, like how Charter Oak serves this population and is a new mode of delivery, but there are institutions with campuses with helpful and important faculty resources throughout Connecticut who need to be engaged in coming up with a solution rather than going around them. Aims went on to say that there is a need to engage faculty in rethinking the faculty roll. Aims referenced an article by [Phil Altback in "Inside Higher Ed."](#)

Mike Gargano shared that if one of the recommendations might be that we create a faculty innovation fund, which would need about \$100,000 to start and maybe we could get a grant for another \$100,000. He went on to say that he can see an arrangement where faculty at UCONN, private institutions and ConnSCU come together to rethink curriculum, teaching methods, student learning outcome, consortiums, collaboratives where the faculty lead this part of this enterprise and present a variety of recommendations to the Commission so that what we end up with is something rooted both in practical experience and technical experience and the expertise of our faculty.

Vagos Hadjimichael said that part of what Mike is talking about is getting away from a funding model and focusing on a spending model. He went on to say that the particular issue is the uneven and unequal distribution of funds within every campus between student services and academics. Vagos stated that there has been a 25% increase in student services over the last 10 years vs. 5.5% in academics, so the idea of assisting faculty to good things means that we have to focus on what faculty does and what it takes to do it. Vagos said that a conversation about student services going through the roof has to take place at some point. Vagos wonders how everyone is going to come together as a team with all the different institutional missions. He asked for Sally Reis to give a candid opinion about that with regard to the University of Connecticut. Vagos went on to say that we are thinking about generating a team of institutions, but if the University of Connecticut gets the funding or the lion's share of the funding, why would they be interested in participating in team work to achieve those goals.

Sally Reis said she wanted to correct one thing, and then she will comment. She continued that UCONN looks very closely at its cross-admits, so if you make the point that they are sharing admits with UMASS, that is accurate, but last fall our admits were most frequently with Northeastern, BU, Delaware, Penn State, Maryland, Drexel, BC and Fordham. Sally stated that UCONN's only cross-admit in the State of Connecticut is Quinnipiac, so it goes back again to mission. She said that UCONN is not competing with the Board of Regents for admits anymore, UCONN did 10-12 years ago, but UCONN's pool is different now. Sally indicated that what that says is that UCONN is better as an institution when the Board of Regents is able to do better as an institution.

Aims McGuinness reflected a recent conversation with NCSL that the number one interest was that Berkley announced it made \$250,000,000 by admitting students from everywhere other than California and the interest in legislators in California for penalizing Berkley for doing that.

Sally Reis said that UCONN walks a fine line.

Aims McGuinness proposed, what if the State of Connecticut said we do not have any money to fund the additional enrollment with NextGenn, where does the money come from to finance those students? He continued that it would have to come through generating more paying students from non-Connecticut sources and probably from private fund raising or else by not admitting the students. Aims stated that the consequence therefore is increasingly going to draw UCONN a way to get students from exactly the list you just did which is in fact not serving Connecticut. He went on to say that in his experience is exactly what generates the anger of legislators because as a major research university, but would not be serving Connecticut.

Sally Reis stated that we know that 70-80% of students who graduate stay in the state, so if we're bringing in out of state students they may stay in the state.

Aims McGuinness offered that can be sold only marginally, especially when you look at evidence that we heard in every single interview we made, the concern is about losing students.

Sally Reis stated that was not data base, she stated that the data base argument that she is making is that in the research that UCONN does of its students who stay in the state, those who attend UCONN from out of state, we are getting a large percentage of those students to stay in the state. Sally went on to say that she agrees with Aims' premise, which is that if UCONN doesn't get the money from the State then does UCONN look at a higher percentage of out of state admissions. She continued that the point she wants to make is that UCONN shares the concerns of helping and working with the Board to do anything we can to support the Board of Regents and UCONN also shares the concerns regarding the state budget.

Aims McGuinness offered that UCONN NextGenn figures are part of the strategy to meet the goals. He continued that the evidence around the country is that it will not be larger institutions like UCONN that face the sustainability issue, but that it will be a real issue and challenge for the CSCU sector because they do not have the more diverse sources of revenue that UCONN has.

Ben Barnes said he would like to speak to Mike's comment about shared responsibility. He said that he understands that there is an implied nexus that when the institutions fulfill their aspirations the state and students are enriched, but he's not sure it is a direct line. He went on to say that there may be things the institutions want to do that have no benefit to the state or students, or which do not benefit some of the Commission's goals. Secretary Barnes went on to say that he understands we need to figure out how to pay for this and what we are going to do that we need to keep in mind that there are three parts, there are three legs to this stool.

Aims McGuinness shared that if Dennis was here, he would be reinforcing that.

Ben Barnes' second point is that Aims said in his remarks that the goals are widely agreed to, who doesn't want this, but the first goal really is an overarching goal that doesn't get us anywhere, it's vague, it doesn't help. He continued that in the case of UCONN this suggests that they shouldn't be bringing in out of state students unless they have very strong abilities to retain those students here in Connecticut. Secretary Barnes went on to say that the only way to support that goal is a very strong strategy for job placement in state, retention strategies getting people to uproot their lives and making Connecticut their home. He went on to say that frankly with CSCU it would tell you to abandon the hardest to reach students because those are the most expensive and difficult to educate and get to the goals. Secretary Barnes said that adults who already have lives here should be gone after and getting them college degrees. He stated that would be the quickest way to increase the percentage to 70%. Secretary Barnes said taking people who have high likelihood of dropping out and not being successful in their higher education and making them be better educated is the longest way to get to that, it is the least direct approach, and yet we really do believe that we should be embarking on remedial education. He continued to say that he believes that deeply and yet it is not supported by this primary goal. Secretary Barnes stated that this primary goal says we should do something different. He believes that UCONN firmly believes that they need heavily resources programs to get out of state students to support them in their success, which is not in compliance with this goal. He continued that this goal seems to suggest that a whole bunch of things that everyone wants to do and everybody is pursuing don't make any sense, so he questions that being the first goal.

Aims McGuinness shared that what Secretary Barnes said is a good example of why this may be written in a way that doesn't communicate. Aims continued that the ultimate measure is whether the education attainment of people in a given catchment area is moving from being relatively uneducated to having more post-secondary credentials from certificate and above. He went on to say that this may

communicate that the source of improvement on that is only by the graduation of people from the institutions in the state. He shared that one of the realities is that one of the most powerful effects of getting out of state students is that they are the magnets that draw an educated population, so you have to look at not only the people being produced, but the effect of migration, so it isn't just students being produced, all the models presented to the commission have an assumption of in-migration. Aims stated that goal number 2 is a key way of achieving the first goal. He asked if the urban core problem and adults getting not getting though are essential to dealing with improving the education attainment of the state.

Ben Barnes replied that he's not certain that the effectiveness of the degree production of our higher education institutions is as effective a way to get to the 70% as our ability to attract international immigrants. He went on to say that 1/3 of Stamford's population moved into the country between 2000 and 2010 and that they were largely highly educated folks attracted by jobs in the financial services sector. He continued that a significant percentage of them had college education. Secretary Barnes said that's a lot of people, that's a graduating class for a medium sized college in a decade.

Aims McGuinness indicated that Connecticut has done really well on two issues: importing well educated people for that purpose and importing very large numbers of very poorly educated people. He mentioned that in Bar Harbor, Maine, which is desperately poor, the number one variable to improve the education attainment of that region is Jackson Labs, which is the only source of new employment. Aims went on to say that investment in the other parts of NextGen have a major impact in achieving goal number 1.

Ben Barnes said that his argument is that the way it's written it seems as though if we just can push more people through the pipe that we're going to raise the number to 70% and we can declare victory. He went on to say that he thinks it's far more complex than that.

Aims McGuinness stated that as a member of the Commission, between now and November 17<sup>th</sup> we need to make sure that it reflects all that Secretary Barnes described.

Judy Resnick commented that you could look at the first goal in a strict constructionist way, but she thinks if you do some of the deeper dives that NCHEMS did for the Commission in terms of the demographics, the real opportunity for increasing enrollment and retention and graduation or attainment is that adult. She went on to say that we don't have enough adults. Judy reminded everyone of the [mathematical analysis prepared by NCHEMS](#) that shows if you did all of the things that we know are right about urban education and reducing the achievement gap, you still can't come close to what we need in terms of an educated population without the adult population, the 25 to 64 year olds, and that is the opportunity that is here already. Judy continued that some are immigrants and some need remediation.

Aims McGuinness said that to underscore what Judy just shared that if you look at the [model NCHEMS prepared](#), that if you look at how to get to a 70% and ask what variables really make a difference you can do it partly by immigration but the thing that will really make a difference is actually the population that is here and in place-bound, that is not highly mobile. Aims went on to say that relates to the adult population, the technician population, the certificate level. He continued that if you are really going to move the needle on that it's probably greater production from ConnSCU across the system and a significant improvement at the certificate level. Aims said that if you take each of those variables in the [model that NCHEMS](#) created they are in that model. He shared that he hears what is being said, that goal number 1, as it is written now, doesn't communicate what he is saying.

Ben Barnes commented that he's not going to quibble over it too much; he certainly understands the nuances and that he feels some of those things are worth doing for a whole host of reasons, regardless of whether or not they get the state to the 70%. He continued that we should be dealing with remediation and getting to people in under-served communities into the mainstream of our economy with a college education because that's the right thing to do and that's what we believe as a people and a state. Secretary Barnes isn't comfortable pegging that as "this is how we are getting to our 70% goal." He continued that he's concerned as that being presented as a paramount goal rather than as a goal to increase the level of education, but that we may end up doing it in a way that is circuitous because we have other goals.

Aims McGuinness shared that the goal is not just a percentage but it's the kind of population that the state needs or the education we need for the citizens in terms of preparation for life, for citizenship, for participation and if you have large gaps of the population who don't have the level of knowledge and skills to do that in a competitive state – that's the reason why you invest in that – it's a lot more than just getting to the 70%.

Booker DeVaughn stated that one of the ways of getting to the 70% would be something that was mentioned in the report – cooperative education. He shared that there are students who are able to get enough financial aid, but they have other expenses and responsibilities. Booker went on to say that one of the ways to help them stay in school would be to have a cooperative ed experience which would be beyond the typical college work study and then when that student graduates they have experience because they have worked at local companies and may have opportunities to work for these companies so we are getting a different mix of people who are in the 70%.

Aims McGuinness asked Booker if he had that experience as a teacher in higher ed.

Booker DeVaughn replied that he had an experience with cooperative education at a community college and that with a population who may not have job skills that this is a way to provide them with what they need to move to the next level as well as provide them with some income to stay in college.

Aims McGuinness said that what Booker just mentioned has been a theme heard consistently and indicated that the real issue will be are there real incentives for that to be more than just pilot projects. Aims shared with the Commission members that co-op ed is more a curriculum design faculty time issue, faculty members need to be engaged in the design of programs that integrate programs with work experience, you cannot just say you are going to do co-operative education.

Mike Gargano indicated that he would like to go back to his original point that he started this with, which is, how are we going to pay for this. He continued that all the various variables need to be put on the table: taxes, housing, culture, life style and business and industry play into how people view the state and want to stay in the state, but the real question in front of the Commission is with all of the competing interests in the state: health care, employment for people with disabilities, etc., but there are only so many dollars to go around so it would behoove this group to get to what the main event is, which is how do we pay for higher education, what is the responsibility of the individual and what is it that we can reasonably expect from the state. Mike said that when we have an understanding of those two then all the publics we serve can plan properly, and then everyone can plan for the main event.

Aims McGuinness said he would talk about the main event and used the State of Maine as an example. He went on to say that the issue that the Board of Trustees in Maine is facing is what issue is what is

their responsibility to rethink the way education is being delivered so it's more affordable. Aims asked if there isn't another party in this - the Board of Regents.

Ben Barnes discussed that expenses are controlled by the University Board of Trustees, the Board of Regents and Trustees at private colleges and university, and that revenues are determined in part by the state, in part by the market and in part by the decision of individuals. He stated that the Commission will have to get down to brass tacks on this and that there is a temptation for governing boards of intuitions of higher education to say that they didn't get what to fulfil our institutional aspirations, so therefore we need to raise tuition and push it onto the students as though somehow that is punishing the State of Connecticut, in its defense it doesn't want to raise taxes to expand the revenues available for higher education, which is a reasonable decision. Secretary Barnes continued that putting it on students and their families is one outcome, the other the expense side; they control what they spend their money on.

Aims McGuinness shared that in other states, one leg of the affordability stool is also the state office that controls policy related to pension liabilities and health care costs. He went on to say that in Louisiana if you talk about every appropriated dollar, basically 60% of each of those dollars going to an institution are essentially taxes offloaded by the state to pay for pension liabilities and health care.

Ben Barnes shared that is not true in Connecticut. Secretary Barnes continued to say that off the top of his head there is probably \$250,000,000 - \$300,000,000 per year that is paid to represent the unfunded pension liability that is attributable to former and current employees at UCONN and the Board of Regents, so we are paying probably 40% - 50% of our total block grants are going toward that. He went on to say that some of that we get back, but that all told there are a billion and a half dollars a year going toward unfunded pension liabilities.

Aims McGuinness responded that he emphasized that because he thinks that the solution to the expense side is really a shared responsibility, it cuts across the whole system. Aims continued that for the next meeting he and Dennis will think about the first goal because if it doesn't communicate to the commission members that may be a slight problem and that maybe they can do a little better with it. He went on to say that we have the goals and a set of objectives, the things that need to overcome. Aims said that he didn't hear very many people objecting to the major theme that Mike emphasized about how the system is really going to be affordability, which is the third goal, what are the shares of financing between the state, the public and he will add the other one on in terms of changing modes of delivery within the system, and also greater sensitivity to the issue of quality with the caveat that we have to respect several definitions.

Mary Lou Aleskie asked how success on the second goal will be measured and if advancement in global competitiveness adds any value in the income equation or if we should be talking about education for education's sake in the context of this in some way.

Aims McGuinness replied that the education for education's sake in some respects has to be part of goal one also. He said that he will go back with Denise regarding goal two, the easier to measure ones are the worst measures. He said that the typical measure internationally on goal two is the number of publications generated and moving up rating scales. Dennis suggested a measure related to the investment for example in research in connection with change in the economy in Connecticut. Aims said that the other issue which is the most difficult to measure is the contribution of arts and culture, but if those are off the table you miss many of the contributions the independents make in the state.

Mary Lou Aleskie suggested that maybe distinctiveness is part of the marketing and marketability of our institutions and if we ignore that as part of the component we may be missing something.

Roberta Willis said that she connects the first goal to the second goal because it seems that the reason why we are doing the 70 by 2025 is because of goal number two, and another part missing is about the individuals who we want to be sustainable and have a life. She went on to say that the reason we came up with the 70% was because we know that the jobs in 2025 are going to require post-secondary education, and the people who are not in that 70% are the people who are being left behind now.

Aims McGuinness commented that it's beyond just the economy of Connecticut, they're going to be left out if they don't have some education.

Roberta Willis agreed that they will be left out, but added that they will also be a drain on the economy via the need for social services programs. She went on to say that the state has a responsibility to educate our population so they can live sustainable and wonderful lives.

Aims McGuinness said that if any of the Commission members look at this and say this doesn't compute, we need to listen to that.

Judy Resnick shared that there was much discussion regarding the November meeting date due to the Veterans' Day holiday falling on the regular meeting date, so the next meeting will be Monday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in room 1E. She went on to say that she hopes today's conversation will help Aims and Dennis to capture what was discussed today with the goal of the next meeting to have something to talk about that reflects this discussion.

Aims McGuinness stated that he thinks the current draft reads more like a report from NCHEMS to the State of what they did, rather than a strategic plan and that this is a chance to have something that really frames it in a different way. He continued that they are also going to have conversations with some of the presidents before the next meeting so they can get as many people involved as possible.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:43 p.m.