

**STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION
PLANNING GROUP ON PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS FOR RESEARCH
FEBRUARY 7, 2014
MINUTES**

Council members present: Gilbert Bland, Martin Briley, Joann DiGennaro, Gene Lockhart, and Gary Nakamoto

Council members absent: Steve Haner

Others present: Peter Blake, Joe DeFilippo, Alan Edwards, Karen Eck, Don Finley, Ken Gabriel, Ann Nichols-Casebolt, Betty Jolly, Joe May, Keith Martin, Ivelina Metcheva, Ashley Myers, Monica Osei, Liz Povar, John Provo, Marcy Reedy, Lee Ann Rung, Tom Skalak, Dietra Trent, and Nancy Vorona (by phone)

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. DiGennaro called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Mr. Nakamoto and seconded by Mr. Lockhart the minutes from the September 10, 2013, and December 3, 2013, meetings were approved unanimously.

ACTION ON PURPOSE STATEMENT AND AGENDA OUTLINE

Ms. DiGennaro welcomed the many stakeholders in attendance. Dr. Skalak from UVA asked what the summit would showcase, and Ms. DiGennaro requested that Mr. Lockhart explain the suggestions he made at a prior meeting. Mr. Lockhart felt it would be useful to take a comprehensive look at all of the facts relating to research in the Commonwealth, including some that may be objectionable.

Discussion ensued regarding the topics that should be highlighted at the summit. Delegate May said the impact that technology has made in the Commonwealth is unknown at this time. He said he thought that the chair of the Joint Committee on Technology and Science should be invited to attend the event. Delegate May stressed the importance of keeping legislators informed of research as well as continuing the educational process for citizens in general. Ms. DiGennaro asked about the existence of national indices to measure the impact of research. Dr. Skalak said efforts have made to develop a set of agreed upon metrics, but none has been successful to date. Ms. Jolly suggested that the summit highlight successful research efforts currently in Virginia. In an effort to attract the business community, she also recommended that it include Virginia's return on investment for every dollar spent on research. Mr. Lockhart suggested that in addition to attracting public sources of capital, Virginia should also consider private sources such as venture funds.

Mr. Briley indicated that the Virginia Economic Development Partnership is mapping research activities of each university in order to tell the story to business leaders. He expressed having difficulty in obtaining information about strategies expected to occur in future years. He felt it was important for Virginia to get an inventory of current assets.

Ms. DiGennaro reminded members that the focus of the summit should be on showcasing all of Virginia. She suggested a list of items to be put in place immediately, including successful public/private partnerships. Ms. DiGennaro distributed a list of outreach efforts, including social media that would enhance the summit. Mr. Finley offered the assistance of the Virginia Business-Higher Education Council in attracting media to the summit.

Dr. Skalak said universities are unique from other organizations in that they invent the future. However, he said it is often difficult to attract investors during the start-up phase of research. He felt it is a two-part story and suggested that it would be beneficial to find a way to tell the comprehensive story, including how universities help to create opportunity.

Dr. Eck explained that ODU has been successful in leveraging federal research dollars because of the university's proximity to Jefferson Labs and NASA. Dr. Casebolt from VCU indicated that the summit proposal had a broad view and suggested that it focus on a few sectors from areas such as cyber security, neuroscience, big data, and energy to showcase examples of how state dollars have been utilized successfully.

In response to Mr. Finley's question about including a panel discussion of intellectual property, Ms. DiGennaro said that the issue would not be the primary focus of the conference, however, IP policy as it impacts research funding would be reviewed.

Mr. Martin from the Virginia Chamber mentioned a perception in the business community that partnering with universities is difficult because of problems with intellectual property. Dr. Metcheva of VCU suggested that the problem is not with intellectual property policy, but rather with getting companies to invest in early stage development. She felt that proof-of-concept funding would be the most useful to institutions.

It was suggested that someone from a state that has been successful with proof-of-concept funding be invited to participate. Dr. Skalak indicated that UVA has something in place now and that if it was funded at a higher level, it could be elevated to a state model in Virginia. Ms. DiGennaro asked Dr. Skalak to discuss this further at the next meeting and possibly consider including it as a "call to action" item at the summit.

Deputy Secretary of Education Trent said that because the Governor supports jobs, research, and education, she felt comfortable that he would support the purpose of the summit. However, she indicated there was no guarantee of funding. Dr. Skalak felt it would be worthwhile to include proof-of-concept models in the draft agenda's first two panels. He felt best practices exist that could dispel the myth that universities are slow and, with the UVA example, suggested that highlighting what Virginia is doing would be useful. Mr. Briley said if a misperception exists in the business community, then it would

be worthwhile to tell the story. He felt that intellectual property is a hurdle but not the only hurdle.

Dr. Gabriel of GMU suggested combining the draft agenda's final panel with an earlier one. Dr. Casebolt suggested that the "call to action" could come out of the summit by asking the attendees what they see as the top challenges and where we go from here. Mr. Briley felt a facilitator is needed at each university that the business community can contact for help in navigating the research system.

Ms. DiGennaro provided a recap of the items discussed and thanked everyone for their participation. Action on the draft purpose statement and agenda was deferred until the next meeting, pending additional revisions in light of meeting's discussion.

REVIEW OF POTENTIAL INVITEES AND PARTICIPANTS

Ms. DiGennaro noted that the meeting materials contained a list of potential invitees and participants, assembled from members' suggestions. She encouraged members and attendees to send additional suggestions to Dr. Edwards at SCHEV.

DISCUSSION OF NEXT STEPS

Ms. DiGennaro indicated that staff would send an email to solicit times for the next meeting sometime in March.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Joann DiGennaro, Chair

Lee Ann Rung
Director, Executive & Board Affairs