

Idaho Falls Higher Education Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2004
Bennion Student Union Multipurpose Room - University Place – Idaho Falls

Attendees: Jim McFadden (Chair), Brian Pitcher, Linda McCoy, Carol Baldwin, Edith Irving, Kipp Hicks, Peter Vik, Susan Morris, Jennifer Fisher, Ann Howell, Charles Hatch, Susan Morris, Keith Hinckley, Mark Young, John Hansen, Shlene Cox, Scott Hinschberger, Bill Robertson, Marge Foster, Bob Stiger, Harold Blackman, Linda Milam, Jerry Wixom, Lew Rodriguez, Ron Campbell, Janice McGeachin, Randy Thompson, Robert Pack, Richard Bowen

Introduction of Attendees - Attendees briefly introduced themselves.

Welcome and Approval of the, Meeting Minutes - Chair Jim McFadden welcomed everyone and requested a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting. *John Hansen moved approval of the December 3, 2003, minutes. Mark Young seconded. Motion carried.*

Committee Reports - Community and Business Education Needs: Jim McFadden reported a Vice Chair is needed. They would like more Council members actively involved with the Diversity Subcommittee. It is time to conduct a new needs assessment. Keith Hinckley said the Diversity Subcommittee has had successful involvement from school districts and the migrant council. They developed and distributed a brochure encouraging parents to encourage their children in educational pursuits. They have formed two sub groups. One will address events at the Center and the other will work on financing. At present they have no way of covering costs of activities they would like to plan. Connie Gomez described the development of the "Celebrate Your Future" event scheduled for Friday, May 7. There will be a keynote speaker, breakout sessions, entertainment and dinner. She distributed a flyer that will be sent home to the parents. They are desperate for funding to cover costs. They will meet with Key Bank today. Donations can be sent to "Celebrate Your Future", ISU Foundation, PO Box 8265, Pocatello ID 83209. Jim and Keith encouraged the Council members to attend.

Advocacy Committee: Mark Young discussed the learning curve the committee faced and the legislative session. They know what they need to do to prepare for the next session. The Executive Committee has identified a number of significant issues, especially funding. The Advocacy Committee will focus on adequate representation of our community's interest in having collaborative higher education in our town from EITC, ISU, UI and BYU-I. It will be important that everyone become involved and provide feedback.

Public Relations and Community Awareness: Marge provided handouts and discussed the marketing campaign. The campaign will continue with the slogan, "Your Success, Your Way." The "Now You Can" event will use the theme of enticing people to return to higher education to finish degrees or begin an advanced degree. There are other events for the Golden Anniversary that includes various concerts and a 5 K run in September. Randy Thompson said the SBOE supported the promotional efforts and activities.

Idaho Falls Magazine: Jim McFadden called attention to an article on Higher Education in Idaho Falls on pages 34-39 of the Spring 2004 issue. Copies of the magazine were available to attendees.

Institutional Reports - Idaho State University: President Richard Bowen warned of future budget concerns. The past legislative session was not good for higher education and FY06 will be worse unless problems can be averted. The 2% employee pay increases were not funded and the SBOE would not allow an additional increase in student fees to cover those costs. ISU will reduce services by cutting the adjunct faculty budget. This is an area that can be reconstituted when there are better times. Cutting the adjunct budget will mean fewer and larger classes. This year will be a picnic compared to next year. There are major issues that the legislature and governor will have to work through, i.e. sunset of the 1 cent sales tax and a 27th payroll. Shortfall predictions range from \$200-260 million. ISU is expecting a \$6 million budget cut. The university presidents will work this summer and fall on forming a coalition of big businesses to take the lead in creating an understanding of the value higher education brings to the state.

The president of the UI Foundation has made an offer for ISU to purchase this property at its appraised value dependent upon the authorization of the SBOE. ISU would like to purchase it and they have the bonding capability. This would be a very good project for ISU and would cement ISU's place in eastern Idaho for a

very long time. They are committed to the continuation of the partnership and collaboration which has proven that two universities can function as one to the clientele.

University of Idaho: Provost Brian Pitcher extended greetings on behalf of Interim President Gary Michael and incoming President Tim White. President White has expressed his interest and commitment to the UI's support of the region and the services here. Provost Pitcher concurred with President Bowen about the challenges we face and the opportunities and strategies we need to put together regarding budget issues. UI, ISU, and BSU have an agreement to work closely together on the INL contract bidding process. The investment in research has paid off and continues to move ahead. With the lack of state and federal funding, the UI has to look at how they can reduce spending and have a balanced budget. This means limiting growth and even elimination of academic programs. President White has announced a Vision and Resource Task Force to help restructure the university. The university is trying to design a process to tighten and focus. What does that mean in terms of the UI activities in Idaho Falls? There is strong, long term commitment to the core of UI programs and programmatic activities. The core is the traditional programs that support the research of the Lab (Engineering and Technology) and our statewide role in agriculture and natural resource areas. They will continue to implement the 8 year program planning process for the eastern Idaho region. The UI announced yesterday the discontinuation of the Adult Education program in Idaho Falls. The program began 3 years ago and grew rapidly. The need for faculty has grown beyond available funding and enrollment can't be sustained. The program will be phased out over 3 years to accommodate students currently in the program.

Regarding the property, the UI Foundation is cash strapped and needs to free up assets. ISU has had a long interest in the property so they were naturally the first considered. There are a number of issues to work through. He confirmed that the ownership doesn't change the commitment to programs. They are working on an agreement and MOUs.

Eastern Idaho Technical College: Interim President Bill Robertson reported they did not receive a budget cut last year but they have grown to accept the idea that they are on a base level. They are facing issues with implementing the raises. They try to supplement state appropriations with funds from private enterprise. They are developing an Institution Effectiveness Plan to develop a strategy to do better with the resources they have. The legislature increased the bonding authority for the Health Education Building in response to problems with the grant matching. The MOU with ISU will allow both institutions to occupy the building and cooperate with programs. The scholarship campaign raised 105 K. Commencement is May 7 in the Civic Auditorium.

BYU Idaho: Ron Campbell, Dean of Continuing Education, said they are busy with the accreditation visit. BYU-I discontinued its office in Idaho Falls in 2003. Their role here was one of support to ISU and UI and they arrived at a point where there wasn't the same level of interest. They still intend to offer courses and welcome input. They don't want to wear out their welcome in Idaho Falls due to the large number of education students and the placements that requires. They will need to place 800 student teachers annually and will do that in a larger area including Washington, Utah, Wyoming and Arizona. The landscape is changing in Rexburg with construction of family housing and other building growth.

Legislative Report – Jim McFadden presented comments from Senator Bart Davis. Senator Davis was disappointed with the funding level for higher education. He was also concerned about the opposition to the Nursing building at EITC from the Magic Valley and Bannock County. Representative Gagner was instrumental in getting the legislation passed through the House. Jim thanked all the area legislators who supported it. Representative Janice McGeachin said she was surprised by the vote because it was a shared facility. In terms of funding, it is a matter of priority and spend efficiently as possible. The sky is not the limit. It is important to build the economy of the state and she agrees higher education is part of that. As a member of the Health and Welfare Committee, she isn't able to focus as much on higher education as she would like. Health care is one of the important issues that threaten the state budget. Her best way to contribute to higher education is to keep those costs under control.

Question and Answer Period: Mark Young commented that if we have demand for a program like Adult Education and we cut it, we are not maximizing the resource. He asked if there is a way that ISU, UI and EITC can work to achieve effectiveness and efficiency by combining resources and if there are other

paradigms we need to look at for managing University Place. Provost Pitcher said faculty and staff are maxed out. One approach to getting more resources is increasing student fees. It all comes back to quality and access. President Bowen indicated there are high cost programs, i.e. Pharmacy, that can be self sustaining if higher fees were charged. The SBOE is reluctant to charge higher fees. There is national debate over previously state supported universities becoming autonomous. John Hansen said a longer term solution to the funding problem is needed. Increasing student fees is a bandaid. If you ask people if they are willing to pay more taxes they will say no but the BSU Public Policy survey shows education as a priority and that people are willing to pay more for a quality education. There is a disconnect. There is a direct connection between education and economic development. Companies come into the state for quality education and not necessarily taxes. The public needs to understand the slippage and the consequences. Working with the press to get the correct information out was discussed. Jerry Wixom said language needs to be used that can be understood by the public. He cited “adjunct” as an example. President Bowen agreed that “services” and “classes” would be a better choice but that it is often the news writers who determine the words.

Linda Milam said that the Council needs to make clear that whatever form the agreement or MOU between the universities on the property sale takes, it needs to provide for continuation of UI programs and to insure adequate and appropriate space and consideration of the allocation of space for classrooms, labs, and faculty and staff offices and that the division of labor agreed upon over the years would continue in a way that best serves the students in this area and at this center. To the extent that the sale is needed, justified and approved, we need to push for a strong and clear memorandum. One of the reasons it has worked so well up to this point is that the agreement has been very clear, it has been in writing, it has been agreed to and signed off on. The written agreement made it easier to cooperate. The Council needs to consider the needs of the DOE facilities here and the budgeting impacts it has on programs . A real concern is what the funding will be for ongoing nuclear research.

Linda Milam suggested having a day at the center before the election for all the legislative candidates in eastern Idaho. They can see what is here. There would be representatives of ISU, UI, and EITC here to talk about the cooperation, the growth of the student body and the growth of course offerings. All of that impacts the economy of eastern Idaho.

Announcements: The Celebrate your Future event is May 7 at University Place. UI commencement in Idaho Falls is May 6.

Meeting adjourned.