

Idaho Falls Higher Education Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
September 20, 2006 – 10:00 a.m.
Bennion Student Union Multipurpose Room - University Place – Idaho Falls

Member Attendees: Linda Milam (Chair), Jackie Beig, Robb Chiles, Shlene Cox, Marge Foster, Jared Fuhriman, Nikie Greene, Fred Gunnerson, John Hansen, Ralph Hartwell, Kipp Hicks, Keith Hinckley, Edith Irving, Carol J. Johnson, Steve Larsen, Linda McCoy, Jim McFadden, Anne Mollberg, Randy Morris, Ken Taylor, Mark Young

Institutional Attendees: Carol Baldwin, Jennifer Fisher, Connie Gomez, Scott Hamilton, John Knox, Susan Morris, Phil Packer, Bill Robertson, Carol Spain, Kent Tingey, Art Valais, Bob Wharton, Tim White

Legislative Candidate Attendees: Jack Barraclough Dean Mortimer (Candidate 32), Luke Prange Candidate Sen Dist 35, Mack Shirley (, Max Lamprecht representing ...Lamprecht () Scott Cannon (Candidate Rep Dist 32A), John McGimpsey 33B, Neil Williams (Candidate Sen Dist 33) Jerry Shively Dist 33A Russ Mathews (Candidate Rep Dist 33B, Brent Hill...3 Madison

Other Guests: John Kotek, Randy Kern, Louise Wagenecht

Welcome and Introductions: Linda Milam welcomed everyone and drew special attention to the presence of the legislative candidates.

Overview: Linda Milam gave a brief history of higher education in Idaho Falls. In 1949, what is now the Idaho National Laboratory began as a testing place to develop peaceful uses of the atom, basically the development of nuclear energy. As the facility was getting underway and they were beginning to recruit engineers and scientists, one of the things that became evident was they need to have the opportunity for them to move on with their education and particularly, graduate degrees. The University of Idaho began offering courses in engineering and Idaho State began offering courses toward an MBA in the early fifties. In the sixties, Eastern Idaho Vocational Technical School was established to fill an important niche by providing training for people who ran the facilities. So EITC started in large part as a response to a local and unique need. In the mid-eighties the University Place building was built as a Science Center and then purchased by the University of Idaho Foundation for those university classes that had previously been taught in high schools and junior highs. At the same time EITC established its first building which is now the Mechanical building. EITC currently has four buildings with the fifth, the health sciences building, under construction. The current University Place location started with the University Place building and then the Center for Higher Education building was added and, eventually, the Bennion Student Union Building. The two campuses still fulfill a large need for the Idaho National Laboratory. Other important changes have made Idaho Falls the second largest medical community in the state. Within a one-mile radius of the Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center there are over 300 medical related businesses. Those businesses and others scattered through the community and up and down the valley need trained people. Those are the kinds of needs that are really in a lot of ways unique to the Idaho Falls area and they are the reasons these two campuses are so important to us.

Institutional Reports: ISU – President Art Vailas focused his remarks on ISU in Idaho Falls. Philosophically a university plays an important role in transition of capital and in the future economic development of the region. There is an opportunity to bring the best minds to this region, and to keep the best minds in this region. Idaho could be the energy corridor of the world. ISU is

committed to the partnership with the INL and colleagues at the University of Idaho and Boise State University. These partnerships are critical and will bring about a renaissance in nuclear research and education which is necessary if nuclear energy is to play an important role in our nation's future global competitiveness. ISU has instituted a BS in Nuclear Engineering and expects to have it accredited in the near future. ISU already provides Masters and Ph.D. programs in Idaho Falls. ISU, BSU, and UI have formed an academic center of excellence in nuclear fuel cycle analysis which will address the problem of nuclear waste. With the financial assistance of INL and our congressional delegation through the Department of Energy, ISU is in the process of hiring three new faculty members who will have joint appointments with the INL and the ISU College of Engineering and the Institute of Nuclear Science and Engineering. In addition, the new Center for Advanced Energy Studies facility will provide critical infrastructure that doesn't exist anywhere in the state. This will be a tremendous opportunity for the Idaho universities working with the INL to solve complex problems. The ability of the region to work together will determine the success in Idaho Falls. The ISU physics department contains the nuclear science which is the largest in the country in the terms of number of graduate students and research. Much of the research is done with the Idaho Accelerator and the INL. Research science provides opportunities to make huge improvements in medicine. ISU is working with hospital affiliates to make the state of Idaho stronger and reach economic potential medically and provide new degree opportunities for students. The greatest advances in medicine are not made by medical people but come from non-medical areas interested in medical science. The age of the computer and bio chip now allows tailor made prescriptions that reduce the probability of side affects and helps scientists understand the complex issues of how diseases and their mechanisms are interrelated. The ability to bring medical research into the clinical arena is what will put Idaho on the map. The ability of our universities to work in partnership with the resources we have is going to make us competitive in bringing resources to help our students as well as leverage our faculty assets.

UI- President White thanked the legislative candidates for coming and congratulated them on their willingness to serve the public. He is enormously optimistic about the University of Idaho, the State of Idaho, and higher education in general. Issues that need to be resolved can be done together as partners for the good of the state. The university is working hard to put in appropriate business practices. UI has just completed and is implementing a strategic plan that focuses on the core activities of the UI and how they are stimuli for economic development and for the social progress of our citizens and our communities. There are many ways to calculate the economic development coming from higher education: Ideas and innovations that translate into companies and jobs; a work ready work force that comes out of our institutions and earns higher wages, pays higher taxes and pays the state back by contributing to those things that are important to our society. It is also a public good in that we need an educated society to make the good decisions in our communities. There are private benefits for individuals and there is also an equivalent public good. Cooperation among institutions is evident in the Center for Advanced Energy Studies and other things we do together in Boise or northern Idaho. It is a different era and a different level of commitment of the higher education presidents. He urged members of the council to recognize its importance when considering how to advise them and how they can serve the community better. Next week he will be one of three university presidents invited to the White House to discuss with senior leadership of the executive administration issues around science and technology and accountability in higher education. The following day he will be the only president from the Inland Northwest at the National Academy of Science meeting to discuss "The Gathering Storm," a report that can be found on the National Academy of Science's website. He encouraged everyone to read

it. It is sobering and bears on what we need to do in our K-12 systems, our community colleges, our professional vocational technical education, and higher education. In Idaho we do have huge challenges but the important point to recognize is that if we summon the will as a community the obstacles are surmountable. Two of the challenges we face are: Affordable access and faculty. The first reflects on students and their ability to enter any level of post-secondary education and earn certificates and degrees and have those activities advance them. Idaho is eleventh in the nation in the average debt of our undergraduate students at the public universities. They leave our public universities with an average of about \$16,862 in debt. And yet we have one of the lower costs for attending the state universities. One reason is that the State of Idaho is abysmal in providing need based and merit based scholarships to our students. That is why the presidents have banded together with the State Board and made two # 1 priorities for this year: Need based and merit based scholarships for the students of Idaho and improved faculty salaries. The presidents are worried deeply about the issue of affordability, getting students into post-secondary institutions and when they are there having a quality experience. We have challenges. The legislature in Utah has invested in scholarships to lure our students to attend public schools in Utah. We have seen a migration of our students going there and staying and not growing our economy. We have a challenge and an asset in BYU Idaho. It is wonderful because all these students are engaged in higher education and chances are the students will stay in Idaho and feed our economy. ISU is down 9% in enrollment, UI is down 6% and BSU, in a rapidly growing area, is only up 1% when they expected 7-8%. Everybody in Idaho and the Inland Northwest is depressed from the student numbers.

Idaho received a D in affordability on the Scorecard with no notable progress in providing affordable higher education. The lowest 2 deciles of Idahoans have to pay 43% of their household income to go to public college in Idaho. The bottom 40% of the population has to pay 30%. Increasing financial aid is pennies on the dollar for other fixes to allow these families to send their children to school so they can have higher paying jobs, contribute to back society, raise their standard of living and put more money back into taxes. All of the presidents feel strongly about the need for scholarships in Idaho to help stimulate this economy in a way that it is sustainable and vibrant and can take on the challenges of the future. Scholarships are the least expensive and the most powerful way that can happen.

President White made the point that the faculty is graying. Over the next decade UI will lose 50-60% of the faculty members and there aren't many to replace them. In addition, a faltering economy and previous business mistakes at the UI are now having an impact on their ability to hire and pay competitive salaries for faculty. The problem is exacerbated when considering the demographics of the work force in higher education and in the nuclear industry at INL and the percentage of senior people with great skills, accomplishments and wisdom that are going to be leaving. We have to systematically improve our investments in scholarships and in faculty related compensation in order for us to prepare Idaho for the future. It can not be delayed. That is why the second number one priority is for compensation in faculty salary and start up packages for hiring faculty. These priorities are not ones to grow the institutions' own nests, but are the ones to serve Idaho and advance this wonderful state in an amazingly competitive global economy. It is a one one punch--scholarships and faculty support. President White closed his remarks with a quote from Christopher Reeve about relearning to walk: "At first it seems impossible, then it seems improbable, but when you summon the will it becomes inevitable." He challenged the legislators and his colleagues as presidents to summon the will because the stakes are too high if they don't do it.

EITC - President Bill Robertson described the Eastern Idaho Technical College mission. In the simplest of terms, they come together with employers, identify programs and employment opportunities, recruit students, and train them for those jobs. The college is very focused on economic development. They have done their job if they can educate people for jobs so they can support their families and be of assistance to regional employers in the upper valley. They serve a multi county district in southeastern Idaho and have programming in 10 counties that includes part time programs, adult basic education, and general education development. There is a chronic shortage of educated health professionals, nurses, medical assistants, and surgical technicians. EITC has moved into outreach programs in the credit area principally in health education and more specifically the licensed practical nursing program. The licensed practical nursing program was one of the first offered at EITC. Outlying areas couldn't recruit nurses to their areas and as a result a program was developed in Teton Valley to provide education and training locally. It was very successful and a program was added in Salmon. The program in Driggs is now connected to St. Anthony/Ashton through distance learning facilities. EITC has a strong commitment to Idaho Falls and to the multi-counties. About 90% of their students come from the region. They are committed to being in the rural areas. They are also committed to their partnerships. In developing their programs they have partnerships with a wide variety of business and industry and economic development groups in the area. One example of a strong partnership is Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center. They have endowed in part the surgical technology program and all students have clinical opportunities in the hospital. Another example is the INL. In 1969 or 70 the Idaho Nuclear Corporation, the prime contractor at that time, donated the cash to buy the site where the EITC campus is now located. From that time forward it has been a long and mutually beneficial relationship with INL. EITC is presently offering a number of programs in conjunction with INL and the future looks bright to continue to support them.

Other vital partnerships include the Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor, the Eastern Idaho Superintendents Association, INL, Grow Idaho Falls, the Development Company, the Regional Development Alliance, the Greater Idaho Falls Chamber of Commerce, and the North Custer and Lemhi County Economic Development Corporation.

EITC has over 150 high school students attending classes on campus as part of the Professional Technical High School. It is a model that works well and gives students an opportunity to experience vocational technical training. It also gives students an opportunity once they graduate from high school to move on to the technical college environment with advanced standing. Affordability is always an issue and this program helps students finish sooner.

Construction is underway on the Health Education Building which was designed in collaboration with ISU. The completion date is June 30 and by August of 2007 some state of the art medical and health education programs that are now scattered among the two institutions will be operating in the building. It is an indication of the collaboration the two institutions can undertake in the future.

The last few months EITC has been preparing for the 10 year accreditation self study for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. It is an all consuming campus wide process that will culminate in early April with an on site visit and evaluation. The process validates and gives credence to program. It is an essential part of higher education and technical education.

President Robertson echoed President White's comments on student financial aid. EITC doesn't charge as much comparatively as academic institutions but he still worries there are students being shut out that can't afford to attend. Providing need based state funded student aid is an essential evolution of higher education.

Community Presentations: Edith Irving from Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center discussed the graying of the work force and shortages in health care. The more we age, the more we need healthcare. There is a shortage of nurses in Idaho today. By 2020 it will be at a crisis stage in Idaho and across the nation. Currently in all of the Idaho schools of nursing, we have an average of about 3 qualified applicants per slot. The Idaho Alliance for Leaders in Nursing created the Idaho Nursing Workforce Center. A survey finished in August found that 57% of acute care staff and 64% of long term care staff were above age 40 and 29% of acute care and 40% of long term care were over 50. Idaho has a 9% vacancy rate. EIRMC has a 6% vacancy rate. The turnover rate of RNs in Idaho is 19%. Turnover in Idaho Falls is 14%. Turnover means health care spends a lot recruiting, educating and orienting staff. An increase in student nursing positions in the colleges across the state would help alleviate shortages. In order to do that more faculty are needed. We are at the beginning of a crisis level of shortage of faculty in nursing programs. The number one reason that faculty leave is salary and it is the number one reason for not accepting positions. Faculty currently make about 40% less than an equally qualified RN in the practice setting. In order to be faculty in nursing the minimum degree is a Masters. Baccalaureate nurses can be hired as instructors. In 2005-2006 across the state 25 full time nursing faculty or 20% left their positions. As of August, there were 12 open faculty positions. In schools of nursing the ratio has to be 10 students per 1 faculty member. Statewide there were only 31 applicants for the 23 positions. Not adequately funding education costs the state money. If patients are Medicaid and are sent out of state, the state is billed for the expenses. Other costs come from people whose conditions worsen because they can not get access to health care when they need it. We need increased student slots in the schools across the state, more faculty, and improved salaries. Scholarships are important. More access is critical. EIRMC helps fund the certified surgical technician program at EITC. They also fund a faculty position at ISU. Part of the solutions is for practice to step up to the plate and help the educational organizations fund faculty but practice can't take full responsibility. The responsibility lies with the citizens and legislators of the state of Idaho to help direct funds into health care education. An investment in nursing education would significantly reduce costs to the state that are incurred because we don't have enough nurses and other health care professionals to take care of our citizens.

Randy Kern is the Managing General Partner of Miles Willard Technology. Miles Willard began the company in 1970. They have 19 employees. Out of those 19, 11 have college degrees, 2 have two year certificates from EITC and the other 6 have high school educations. They come from a wide range of educational institutions. He described the demographics of his family and said he is pleased with the education his kids received in Idaho Falls and higher education in Idaho. He wonders if we are headed in the right direction. He is not sure our system allows different career paths but instead tries only to prepare students for college entry. He travels extensively and is interested in the difference between the U.S. and foreign countries. He is intrigued by the German education system which allows for different levels and training based on interest and ability. All children progress at different levels and in Germany there is a mechanism for children to move between the various levels. When he reads about Idaho increasing graduation rates, he wonders what the final result will be. Today 14% of 9th graders graduate from college. The idea here is to produce people who are more employable and not necessarily people who continue to higher education. He fears the result could be higher drop our rates in high school. Only time will tell if the higher requirements will have a positive impact. The German system is intriguing because it attempts to identify performance at an earlier age and provides more vocational training for students who most likely would not attend higher education. Emphasis is on career education at an

earlier age. He is not sure preparing out students for college is the right track. The cost of university education is increasing rapidly. The cost of attaining a university is a bigger issue than adequate preparation at the high school level. It is time for Idaho to commit to a stable community college system that will serve as an alternative to four year institutions. It should provide both vocational and academic courses which provide viable career training as well as prepare students for transfer to a four year university. Fees should be structured to increase access and lessen the financial burden of paying for a college degree. The ability for students to not be saddled with debt is an economic development issue. The state of Wyoming could serve as a model on how to make higher education affordable. They have made a 400 million commitment to an endowed scholarship program which would go to Wyoming high school graduates to pay for all years of their education if they remain academically qualified. The scholarships are based on need and merit. They have also made an investment in a \$105 million endowment for faculty enhancement. He would encourage the state of Idaho to increase the Promise Scholarship and make it more affordable for children to proceed to community college or four year institutions. He could discuss at length the economic impact on the state of Idaho. The number one job growth segment in Idaho is the construction industry. He isn't sure that we want to become the state where we build second homes for people from California. He would rather be a state whose children are highly educated, remain in Idaho and drive economic development and the well being of the state.

John Kotek of DOE referred to the Gathering Storm study. The standard of living in the future will depend on the quality of jobs. That doesn't mean everyone has to go to college but they do need a level of education that qualifies them for a good paying job. Statistics show better education leads to higher income. Nearly 90% of the state's revenue comes from personal income taxes and from sales tax. Both are directly or indirectly tied to people's earnings. The more people make, the easier the legislator's job is. A better educated population has better health and lower crime rates. It attracts corporate enterprise. T

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes prepared by Carol Spain, Management Assistant, University of Idaho at Idaho Falls.