



*Nevada Governor's Office of the Western Regional Education Compact*  
*for the*  
*Nevada Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)*

Commission Meeting Minutes  
April 24, 2019

3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

In Attendance:

Fred Lokken: Executive Commissioner, Nevada WICHE

Dr. Gillian Barclay: Nevada WICHE Commissioner

Thom Reilly: Nevada WICHE Commissioner

David Gardner: Senior Deputy Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General

Colleen Lennox, Nevada WICHE Accountant Technician 1

Guests:

Brian L. Mitchell, Director, Office of Science, Innovation and Technology, Office of the Governor

Darlene Baughn, Executive Branch Budget Officer 1, Budget Division, Governor's Office of Finance

Cheyne Snyder, Budget Analyst 1, Administrative Services, Administrative Services Division, Department of Administration

1. **Call to order.** The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Lokken at 3:30 p.m. This meeting was posted in accordance with the Nevada's Open Meeting Law (OML).
2. **Public Comment.** There was no public comment.

3. **Discussion, recommendations and action regarding the minutes from the February 7, 2019; February 15, 2019 and March 27, 2019 Commission meetings.** In the March 27, 2019 draft minutes, the name of a foundation was highlighted, because it was unintelligible on the recording. Discussion of the unintelligible name ensued regarding funds and foundations. Most state agencies have funds, not foundations. Commissioner Barclay motioned to accept all three sets of minutes with deletion of the name from the March 27, 2019 minutes. Commissioner Lokken seconded the motion. Commissioner Lokken and Commissioner Barclay voted aye and Commissioner Reilly abstained. The motion carried unanimously.
4. **Discussion, recommendations and action regarding allocation of Pharmacy programs for all new applicants.** Commissioner Lokken asked Colleen if she had any context for this. Colleen questioned why we had two different term lengths for pharmacy (3-year accelerated pharmacy programs and 4-year pharmacy programs), because it seemed like extra work. The reply was that it is what was fair. Just because a student does not go to a school that offers a 3-year program does not mean they should be excluded from WICHE funding.

Commissioner Lokken asked if the commissioners had any questions. Commissioner Reilly stated it made sense to give staff the flexibility to allocate or reallocate between 3-year and 4-year slots. Commissioner Reilly motioned to allow Nevada WICHE staff the flexibility to fund both 3 and 4-year pharmacy programs. Commissioner Barclay seconded the motion.

Discussion ensued regarding confusion about why this item was added to the agenda and the lack of backup documentation for this agenda item. Commissioner Lokken thought former Director Escudero was looking for the flexibility to redirect more support from the 3-year program to the 4-year program. It was understood in the motion to empower the director to reallocate funds as needed in support of either programs slots. Commissioner Barclay requested the Commission to be provided with backup documentation when items on the agenda are unfamiliar to the commissioners to aid them in their decision-making. She understood the need for flexibility, but it would be better if the Commission had the materials related to the agenda items.

Colleen explained she could prepare backup information at a future date. Commissioner Lokken asked the other two commissioners if they wanted to proceed with the motion or withdraw the motion to discuss at a future meeting. Commissioners Reilly and Barclay both responded they wanted to proceed. Commissioner Lokken stated he appreciated everyone's efforts to make the agenda item clear. He then asked if the other commissioners thought the motion as stated included giving greater flexibility to the director on this particular item. He then directed Colleen to let the minutes reflect that. Commissioner Lokken called for the vote; all voted aye, the motion carried unanimously.

5. **Discussion and update on the status of Senate Bill 102 and Assembly Bill 358.** Commissioner Lokken asked for an update on the two Bills. Director Mitchell stated that Senate Bill (S.B.) 102 would create an appropriation of \$77,000 in each year of the biennium to Nevada WICHE to fund Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN) with a focus on geriatric care. S.B. 102 has been heard by the Senate Committee on Finance and has seen no further action.

Assembly Bill (A.B.) 358 provides education loan repayment assistance for healthcare practitioners, based out of the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy and the University of Nevada-Reno School of Medicine and would provide a large appropriation for graduate level medical

health education. AB 358 was amended at the former Director's request to require collaboration with Nevada WICHE to avoid duplication. A.B. 358 was heard by the Assembly Committee for Education, passed and re-referred to the Assembly Committee of Ways and Means. There has been no further action on this bill.

Discussion ensued regarding status of existence of geriatric nursing education programs in other states, but none in Nevada. There has been outreach to create educational partnerships to schools in other states. Commissioner Barclay reported that UNLV nursing school was discussing adding a gerontology certificate to their programs.

Colleen asked about the academic year APRN students who said they were graduating with an Acute Care Gerontology area of focus as part of their APRN studies at UNR and how did this relate to the gerontology focus discussed. Commissioner Barclay explained that Acute Care Gerontology was a sub-specialty under Gerontology and Gerontology is a part of Family Care practice. It is not a sub-specialty under Acute Care.

Commissioner Lokken stated Nevada WICHE is neutral on this bill. Commissioner Barclay stated this is why it was important for the new director to follow up with the in-state institutions on this issue. It takes five-years for a school to develop a new program. Discussion ensued regarding the lack of a current Nevada program, the period to begin a new program, funding students to go out of state, developing an in-state solution and the scarcity of out of state programs.

**6. Discussion and update on Administrative Services and managing some BA 2681 functions.**

Commissioner Lokken stated this was another item brought forward by former Director Escudero and asked Darlene and Cheyne if they had comments. Darlene stated she did not and she was attending the meeting to learn more about Nevada WICHE. Cheyne did not have any comments.

Colleen brought up the history of this request. Discussion ensued regarding the request of ASD to help Nevada WICHE with the large workload and backlog for BA 2681. Nevada WICHE pays ASD for its services on BA 2995. Discussion ensued regarding work that had been caught up since the last request and implementation of better systems put into place by former Directors Frias and Escudero to make BA 2681 easier to keep current. Much of the work has been brought current. Efficiency has increased, but the agency could use some help to catch up on the backlog until more efficient systems are in place. Commissioner Lokken stated former Director Escudero was looking for outside verification of the loan portfolio.

Director Mitchell remembered this question was asked of ASD in the past and they declined. In his opinion, they would likely decline again. If work was now taking about 30 minutes per month it should be done by agency staff and Nevada WICHE does not have the budget to pay for increased services.

Colleen added that validation of the loan portfolio is a very large project requiring a large amount of time to complete due to the tedious nature of auditing ECSI accounts. At last count there were more than 1,780 accounts in ECSI, approximately 400 of which should be active. There was a plan to correct the loan portfolio in 2017. It involved the use of the Margill Loan Manager software to validate the active accounts, and then to help audit, archive and close the remaining 1,400 plus accounts. Excess accounts in ECSI throw off the loan portfolio valuation. In addition to these excess accounts, there are loan bucket issues, time gap issues and outdated loan status that

require audit and correction to bring the portfolio valuation current. It would be helpful to have a temp help with loan audits as a one-time project. This would allow staff to keep current on day to day work and the portfolio valuation to be brought current faster.

- 7. Discussion and update on attainment of a temporary hire.** Commissioner Lokken asked Director Mitchell if he wanted to share any specifics on the temporary hire for accounting. Former Director Escudero hired a temporary employee who had some state experience and some bookkeeping/accounting experience. She has committed to staying on through June. She is working on a few projects, including checking previous completed work to ensure accuracy. Former Director Escudero left a list of things for the temporary hire to do. Currently she is going through all of the student files to verify completeness and entering them in an Excel tracking sheet. Former Director Escudero identified problems with how accounts and records had been kept in the past. The intent is to help the next director have a better understanding of the work. Commissioner Lokken mentioned this work is also intended to help with fiscal year closing.
- 8. Discussion and update on Veterinary Medicine slots and Master of Science-Nursing and Registered Nurse-Advanced Practice Registered Nurse applications.** Commissioner Lokken requested a staff update on this. Discussion ensued regarding the next two Veterinary Medicine alternates on the list for funding. Commissioner Lokken gave permission to send prepared offer letter to the veterinary medicine applicant. Discussion ensued regarding graduate nursing slots for academic year 2018-2019. At Director Mitchell's instruction, a new prospecting email had been sent to educational partners. Staff has already prepared an offer letter for one qualified applicant. Discussion ensued regarding the low response and timing with spring break. Commissioner Barclay requested staff to send the prospecting email out again.
- 9. Discussion and update on status of Margill Loan Software.** Commissioner Lokken requested a status update on Margill. Colleen reported that Director Mitchell had given permission to begin updating and auditing the Margill loan database to bring it current. She said completion of this project would save Nevada WICHE staff many hours of work. Discussion ensued regarding history of Margill and ECSI loan databases and the need to update them. Commissioner Lokken requested an update in a future strategic planning session.
- 10. Discussion, recommendations and action regarding, appointments to Legislative Advisory Board of the Nevada System of Higher Education.** Commissioner Lokken stated this could be delayed to a future strategic planning meeting. The Board works for WICHE, it has two representatives in the state and it meets in the fall. It informs legislators about WICHE and advocates for its programs. There is one long serving member and one vacancy.
- 11. Discussion, recommendations and action regarding, appointments to the Veterinary Sciences advisory Board.** Commissioner Lokken stated this board establishes the criteria for selection and rankings of veterinary medicine applicants. A legislator and a staff member from UNR/Agriculture are usually considered. The current appointee requested to step down and a new candidate for appointment is needed. Commissioner Lokken stated he would forward that information to Regional WICHE.
- 12. Discussion, recommendations and action regarding, Regional WICHE Committee assignments.** Commissioner Lokken explained that Commissioner Barclay and Commissioner Reilly need to notify Regional WICHE of which committees they wish to serve on.

- 13. Discussion, recommendations and action regarding, end of check payments to Nevada WICHE's Carson City office.** Commissioner Lokken requested to add this item to the next meeting agenda.
- 14. Discussion, recommendations and action regarding, criteria to fill the fourth Veterinary Medicine slot.** Commissioner Lokken requested to add this item to the next meeting agenda.
- 15. New Business: Propose future meeting dates.** Commissioner Lokken requested to schedule the next six months of meetings between July and December 2019. He suggested a schedule of eight times per year, not including the meetings scheduled during the Session.
- 16. Public comment:\*** There was no public comment.
- 17. Adjournment.** Having no further business and receiving no public comment the meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.