

**Communications Committee  
Ohio Board of Regents  
Minutes of the Meeting of May 23, 2002**

The meeting of the Communications Committee was held at the Ohio Board of Regents in Columbus, Ohio. In attendance were the following:

Ohio Board of Regents members:

Edmund J. Adams  
Tahlman Krumm, Jr.  
Jerry Miller

Ohio Board of Regents staff:

Jamie Abel	Harry Andrist
David Barber	Rod Chu
Randall Edwards	Deborah Gavlik
Kris Frost	Char Rogge
Janet Schilk	Robert Sheehan
Yavonne Stertzner	Garry Walters

Guests:

Robert Burke, Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio  
John Buttlewerth, Two-Year Faculty Senate  
Laurie Day, Ohio State University  
Cindy McQuade, Inter-University Council  
Jan Neiger, Office of the Attorney General, Education Section  
Sally Perz, University of Toledo  
Terry Thomas, Ohio Association of Community Colleges

The meeting was called to order by Regent Miller. The minutes of the April 2002 Committee meeting were approved without objection.

**Governmental Relations**

Director Gavlik updated the committee on the state budget. The House continues to work on Senate Bill 261 to address the budget deficit. The Senate passed the bill on Wednesday, May 22, 2002. The version passed by the Senate would completely deplete the Budget Stabilization Fund by taking \$408 million from the fund in FY2002 and \$200 million in FY2003. The Senate bill also included a \$50 million appropriation to start the Third Frontier Initiative. The Department of Development would administer the program and award the grants. There was concern about how this appropriation might affect the Regents' upcoming capital bill, but the Office of Budget and Management has assured Regents' staff that this appropriation is over and above the Regents' capital appropriation. Regent Miller inquired about the source of the debt service for state bonds. Ms. Gavlik replied that the source is the General Revenue Fund.

The bill also transfers unused FY2002 Ohio Instruction Grants up to \$3.8 million to the Student Workforce Development line item. It is uncertain how much will be in this account at the end of the fiscal year. Additional executive appropriation reductions as high as a 4% cut are expected.

Chancellor Chu testified before the Senate Finance and Financial Institutions Committee in support of S.B. 261. Chancellor Chu thanked the Senate for its leadership on the Third Frontier initiative, but also reminded the committee of the disproportionately high cuts taken by higher education in the previous budget-balancing bill (H.B. 405).

Director Gavlik updated the committee on meetings with House majority members to discuss OBR budget issues. Themes discussed were cutting programs, duplication of programs, and the idea of privatization of college dorms. On the dorms issue, Vice Chancellor Rich Petrick voiced his concern about the potential negative effect on Ohio's bond rating, and how implementation of such an idea would cause logistical, operating, and financial problems for the institutions.

Director Gavlik briefed the committee on the May edition of *The Issue*, a newsletter produced for legislators and other leaders. The most recent issue was titled "The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce" and served as a synopsis of the projected fastest growing occupations and the need to invest in human capital. Committee members suggested mailing a hard copy of *The Issue* to college and university Boards of Trustees. *The Issue* is a collaborative effort of the Governmental Relations and Budget team and is distributed to legislators and higher education governmental relations representatives and public information officers. Committee members discussed the need for a personal approach to topics and talked about possible future topics of *The Issue* including:

- a summary of the transition from High School to College report once the report is published; and
- a report of families who cannot afford higher education and the expected percentage of a family's income needed to pay for higher education.

It was cautioned that this topic may have negative implications for financial aid. Chancellor Chu responded that an in-depth study can provide more information about who is not getting educated and why. Regent Miller suggested that the answer might not be financial. Regent Krumm asked if the workload could be handled. Chancellor Chu responded that OBR is operating with less resources and is doing more. Regent Krumm added that an upcoming retreat would help determine what can and can not be done with limited resources.

Director Gavlik updated the committee on H.B. 482. H.B. 482 would restrict government agencies from providing e-commerce services. David Barber shared a summary and concerns of this bill with the committee. E-services comprise a wide range of services including distance learning, broad band services, and internal IT operations on campuses. The bill would require a governmental agency to complete an analysis of services, and hold public hearings if it

decided to provide services that could be provided by the private sector. When asked about the origin of the bill, David Barber responded that this was an ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) model bill. Regent Krumm inquired about the prospects of the bill going forward. Vice Chancellor Kris Frost responded that this was a model bill with many opponents and is not written with sensitivity to Ohio. The current bill provides a cumbersome process and assumes that commercial e-services are superior to e-services provided by governmental agencies.

## **Communications**

Associate Vice Chancellor Rob Sheehan briefed the committee on upcoming meetings with editorial boards. This week eight editorial boards will be contacted to discuss economic development and the role of higher education. Vice Chancellor Sheehan asked for and invited the participation of the Regents and the Chancellor in these discussions. Chancellor Chu stated that working closely with the associations was effective in the last round of budget discussions.

Jamie Abel briefed the committee on the Ohio Higher Ed Update and the following topics:

- Central State - out of fiscal watch
- State budget issues
- Tuition hikes
- Case Western Reserve University and Cleveland Clinic collaboration
- Graduation Stories, Options programs in Urbana, Ohio
- Series including “Knowledge economy” and “Losing Ground”

Associate Vice Chancellor Sheehan commented on the accurate perspective portrayed in the Dayton Daily News series as a result of consistent interactions with the reporter.

Jamie Abel updated the committee on the progress of the Full State Press Initiative. The core components of the presentation need to be flexible to enable presenters to add local information. After fine-tuning, the presentation will be available on CD and zip disks or on-line in a downloadable version.

Sally Perz suggested a closer look at positive messages to send to legislators. The committee discussed highlighting examples of bold steps taken in tough economic times that resulted in future successes. Using examples of bold investments as positive messages can be more effective in providing messages of hope rather than gloom.