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5 EDUCATION COMMITTEE
6

7 Tuesday, October 21, 2003 - 1:30 p.m.
8 University of Virginia at Wise
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11 **APPEARANCES:**

12 The Honorable Frank M. Ruff, Jr. - Chairman
13 The Honorable Phillip P. Puckett - Vice Chairman
14 The Honorable Joseph P. Johnson, Jr.
15 The Honorable Thomas C. Wright, Jr.
16 The Honorable Isiah G. Hopkins
17 Mr. Stephen S. Banner
18 Mr. Fred M. Fields
19 Mr. Buddy Mayhew
20 Mr. John M. Stallard
21 Mr. John T. Taylor
22

23 COMMISSION STAFF:

24 Carthan F. Currin, III - Executive Director
25 Mary Cabell Sherrod - Manager of Communications and Committee Operations
26 Tim Pfohl - Grants Program Administration Manager
27 Britt Nelson - Grants Program Administrator, Southside
28 Jerry Fouse - Grants Program Administrator, Southwest
29

30 ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE:

31 Anne Marie Cushmac, Sr. Assistant Attorney General
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34 SENATOR RUFF: Good afternoon, everyone. Carthan, would you call the roll ?

35 MR. CURRIN: Mr. Banner?

36 MR. BANNER: Here.

37 MR. CURRIN: Mr. Fields?

38 MR. FIELDS: Here.

39 MR. CURRIN: Mr. Hopkins?

40 MR. HOPKINS: Here.

41 MR. CURRIN: Delegate Johnson?

42 DELEGATE JOHNSON: Here.

43 MR. CURRIN: Mr. Mayhew?

44 MR. MAYHEW: Here.

45 MR. CURRIN: Senator Puckett?

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1 SENATOR PUCKETT: (No response.)

2 MR. CURRIN: Mr. Stallard?

3 MR. STALLARD: Here.

4 MR. CURRIN: Mr. Taylor?

5 MR. TAYLOR: Here.

6 MR. CURRIN: Delegate Wright?

7 DELEGATE WRIGHT: Here.

8 MR. CURRIN: Mr. Chairman?

9 SENATOR RUFF: Here. Welcome, everyone, I want to thank the people here at Wise for their
10 hospitality. I'm sure you'll hear that again, but at least I got a chance to say it first, and others
11 will say it more eloquently.

12 Now, approval of the Minutes. The Minutes were sent to you to review and approve.

13 DELEGATE JOHNSON: I move that we accept the Minutes as presented.

14 SENATOR RUFF: All right, it's been moved and seconded that we accept the Minutes. All in
15 favor say aye? (Ayes.) Opposed? (No response.) All right, the Minutes are approved.

16 Tim, you were discussing the new guidelines for several weeks now, and there's a
17 couple of proposals that we need to talk about at this time. So, if you will address that.

18 MR. PFOHL: Thank you, Senator Ruff and members of the Committee. I'm Tim Pfohl, Branch
19 Manager for the Tobacco Commission. As Senator Ruff said, about a month ago you received a
20 set of revised Education guidelines that were drafted by the Staff with significant input from
21 Libby Ausband, who administered the Education Grant Program last year but now has moved on
22 to a new position. A couple of things that we pointed out in the cover letter when we transmitted
23 the guidelines to you. What we attempted to do with the guidelines was a couple of different
24 things including a description of the funding policies with regard to operating expenses. Since
25 the last economic development, or the Education grant cycle, the Commission received the long-
26 range planning and funding policies, and the long-range plan calls for annual operating expenses
27 in the case of start-up programs. I'm hoping that our guidelines hopefully and clearly transmit
28 and convey the appropriate message to prospective applicants.

29 We also had the applicants clarify the timing and the use of matching funds trying to
30 make it clear that funds that were spent on projects in the past years are evidence of commitment
31 to that project but don't necessarily represent the type of current match that we've been looking
32 for. Hopefully we can clarify that and ask for a little bit of additional clarification from the
33 applicant as far as what those matching funds will be used for and the timing of their use and the
34 purpose for their use.

35 We've revised the budget page to clarify what we can and cannot reimburse with the
36 grant award. Hopefully we have clarified information that we need to have in order to make
37 more decisions about projects and ask for a little more specific information about supportive
38 materials and ask the applicants where their distinctive elements are. If there's a construction
39 element to it and an operating program element to it and have a break-out budget to reflect those
40 two distinct activities. And that's what we tried to capture, although we didn't capture.

41 A couple of the explanations are very important ones, and the first one is on page three
42 at the bottom where we have the intent of the program and some of the feedback we've gotten
43 since we sent out the guidelines, that is that it does not clearly enough state the education
44 objectives that we're looking to accomplish with the grant program. I think what we're trying to
45 convey in the program is that the objective is education with an ultimate objective of creating job
46 opportunities and employment opportunities and work force development, but we need to

1 articulate that better. I think with the Committee's permission and direction the Staff would ask
2 that we need to reflect some of the specific type of activities or discussing the long-range plan
3 under building conditions of human infrastructure elements of our long-range plan. That include
4 things like the core and intent of the program, fund adult education, adult higher education,
5 education facilities, programs where there are new facilities rather than renovation and
6 continuation of existing programs, facilities and so forth. We're hoping to make a better
7 distinction between the types of programs we want to fund. So I think that's what we need to do
8 in order to get to these conditions and post them on our web site. As you may remember, the last
9 time the Commission met in July at Longwood, we talked about having grants for the type of
10 education grant programs due on November 30th. That's a Sunday, so I'd suggest we do this at
11 the close of business on Monday, December 1st. There will be approximately two and a quarter
12 million dollars available for the Education Grant Program to fill those requests. With the
13 Committee's feedback and permission we'll make those final adjustments to the guidelines and
14 post them on our web site and alert the eligible localities as well as former grantees and make
15 public notice that the grant funds are available.

16 SENATOR RUFF: I'm going to assume everybody looked at these proposals and are satisfied
17 with them or we would have heard something by now. Do you have any specific language you
18 would add to that section, talking about the concept?

19 MR. PFOHL: There were some guidelines drafted last year during the course of the Education
20 Grant Program, and there's a bullet type list that I'll be happy to read to you and make copies
21 available if necessary, but what was drafted last year and distributed somehow didn't make it into
22 this version this year, and it's simply something that I think we've drawn on to try to explain what
23 we're looking for. I can read from this. Projects requested and eligible for funding through
24 Education funding include creation and support of educational programs. Number two is
25 scholarship programs, number three is distance learning instruction, number four, education
26 materials and equipment, number five, education facility renovation and new buildings when
27 necessary. The last one is work force training initiatives.

28 SENATOR RUFF: When you use the term, distance learning instruction, does that eliminate the
29 development of a course, or do you consider course part of it?

30 MR. PFOHL: I think that would be captured under the creation and support of education
31 programs.

32 SENATOR RUFF: You don't believe that would block them out?

33 MR. PFOHL: No, sir.

34 MR. CURRIN: You're referring to Secretary Schewel, when we met with him on some of these
35 comments?

36 MR. PFOHL: Yes.

37 SENATOR RUFF: At this point does anyone have any questions about the proposals? Are you
38 comfortable with them?

39 MR. PFOHL: Do we need to take action on the guidelines?

40 SENATOR RUFF: Carthan, you referred to Secretary Schewel, did he have any conflict with
41 these in any way?

42 MR. PFOHL: No, sir.

43 SENATOR RUFF: We don't need to amend them before we do that.

44 MR. PFOHL: His comments and concerns were specific with the, what he was concerned about
45 has been expressed to you.

46 MR. FIELDS: Are you going to insert those in this draft somewhere?

1 MR. PFOHL: Yes, sir. I think the place that specifically is mentioned, the bottom of page three
2 where it talks about the intent of the grant program.

3 MR. FIELDS: Would you read them one more time?

4 SENATOR RUFF: He wants you to read them again, do you have any copies that you can pass
5 out?

6 MR. PFOHL: These guidelines were drafted and made available last year during the fall
7 education grant cycle. Projects requested eligible for funding from the Education Fund include
8 creation and support of educational programs, scholarship programs, distance learning center
9 construction, educational materials and equipment, education facility renovation and new
10 buildings when necessary and work force training initiatives.

11 SENATOR RUFF: Fred, do you want a copy of them?

12 MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I have a problem with the new building situation in those
13 guidelines.

14 SENATOR RUFF: Tim, do you want to address that?

15 MR. PFOHL: New buildings?

16 SENATOR RUFF: Yes, there's concern about new building construction.

17 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, as part of these guidelines.

18 MR. PFOHL: I think we probably want to make some sort of distinction between a wonderful
19 building like this probably would be beyond the means of the Tobacco Commission, every
20 college in the tobacco region would probably be after money. Construction specifically
21 mentions distance learning centers, I think that can be taken out of the realm of capital
22 improvements on existing four-year colleges and community college campuses. If there's a case
23 involving distance learning and work force, I don't know how tightly you want to draw that
24 distinction. I think looking back at the track record over the last few years, distance learning
25 centers included places like the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center and Southern
26 Virginia Higher Education Center, South Boston, all representing distance learning centers.

27 MR. TAYLOR: Was that new construction?

28 MR. PFOHL: One was a renovation of an old theater, and Southern Virginia was a renovation of
29 an old tobacco warehouse, and Southwest Virginia was new construction. I stand corrected,
30 there was no Tobacco Commission money that went into the Southwest Higher Education
31 Center.

32 SENATOR RUFF: One way of making sure we address that correctly is make sure that the
33 scoring system raises the program higher than it is so they would have first crack at it. I hate to
34 see us close the door completely on something that we may have to consider at some point.

35 MR. TAYLOR: The only thing I'm trying to eliminate is that we can get more and more of that
36 all the time.

37 SENATOR RUFF: Do you want to make the motion?

38 MR. TAYLOR: No.

39 DELEGATE JOHNSON: What is the definition of equipment?

40 MR. PFOHL: I would suggest that's probably something we need to tighten up. Last year we
41 talked about educational materials and equipment, annual replacement of materials and
42 equipment that are needed on an ongoing basis. I don't know if that's necessarily the proper role
43 for the Commission. I suggest maybe the distinction there is material and equipment from new
44 programs or enhancement to existing programs where it pushes the ball forward as far as offering
45 some new skill training and work force development. That may be where we make the
46 distinction in scoring or eligibility that we're looking for. Materials and equipment for new

1 programs that provide new offerings for students as opposed to ongoing programs that are
2 basically just replacing things that have been needed year after year. I'm not sure that gets to the
3 issue that you're thinking of there.

4 DELEGATE JOHNSON: Would that include computers?

5 MR. PFOHL: It certainly has in the past. Computers, projection systems, audio-visual,
6 microphone systems, video link-ups with disabled distance learning.

7 SENATOR RUFF: It appears we need a motion to amend what was originally set out first.

8 MR. FIELDS: To add that. I so move.

9 MR. STALLARD: I'll second it.

10 SENATOR RUFF: Any discussion on that? Hearing none, all in favor of amending the
11 guidelines as recommended say aye? (Ayes.) All opposed? (No response.)

12 Take us back to the grant program. Do I hear a motion on that?

13 DELEGATE JOHNSON: I so move.

14 DELEGATE WRIGHT: I'll second it.

15 SENATOR RUFF: Any discussion? The motion before you is that we accept the grant proposal
16 programs, the grant program proposal as amended. All in favor aye? (Ayes.) Opposed? (No
17 response.)

18 We need to back up for a second, I guess you all have copies of the guidelines. I
19 suppose you all remember when we talked about this last year, and I hope you all are happy. I
20 assume you'll tell us before the Full Commission meeting tomorrow if you see something that
21 you're not happy about, make sure we catch it before we make a mistake. Tim, would you give
22 us the deadlines that you're talking about?

23 MR. PFOHL: The close of business on December 1, 2003 for competitive education grants.

24 SENATOR RUFF: They would have to be in the office by that date?

25 MR. PFOHL: Yes.

26 SENATOR RUFF: You'll take about how long to consider those?

27 MR. PFOHL: I think it's probably a little bit of a fast track to have recommendations at the mid-
28 January meeting, but we can certainly do that if that is the Committee's desire. We have
29 scheduled an Education Committee meeting to present those to you. I think six weeks is a pretty
30 fast turnaround, to get the proposals on December 1st and get them through the Committee
31 review and to the Commission in January. The next Commission meeting beyond that is
32 scheduled tentatively for mid-May, and that would allow us to know for a fact what our MSA
33 payment was in April, and we'll be able to make funding decisions based on what we know and
34 what we actually receive.

35 MR. CURRIN: I hope we can handle this in January at the Commission meeting.

36 SENATOR RUFF: We won't tell you what our deadline will be, and that depends on how many
37 applications there are and how complicated, as we see what's available on December 1st and try
38 to make some kind of judgment.

39 Before you have a recap of the Scholarship Program. Does anyone have any questions
40 or any thoughts they want to communicate?

41 MR. MAYHEW: This may not be the time, and maybe another year, but I was wondering
42 because I'm new on the Committee, but Southwest Virginia doesn't have a restriction to teach
43 nursing and that sort of thing. I was just wondering about the scholarships, whereas Southside
44 does. I'm wondering if anyone besides me is interested in that.

45 SENATOR RUFF: Probably ought to let Southwest answer that. Because they're are two
46 distinct areas we didn't want anyone to think that we were trying to run roughshod over anyone

1 else, just two groups that go the way they felt it was better for them. Have you all watched what
2 we've done in Southside, or do you have any thoughts?

3 MR. FIELDS: I think the Scholarship Program has worked well.

4 MR. BANNER: I don't see a problem.

5 SENATOR RUFF: Are you talking about the same situation?

6 MR. MAYHEW: Just the opposite. I'm sorry, I didn't make it clear. I hadn't really discussed it
7 with too many people and talked about it, but I've heard some comments from people in the
8 community and parents and students that thought it was a little unfair that their students couldn't
9 go in but one or two areas, and they otherwise would have been eligible, and the fact that they
10 weren't. Also, I've heard some feedback that some of the students that do tend to get into one of
11 these programs get into it knowing that they're not going to follow up, and they're just using it as
12 a means or a loan system, or use the system, and then do what they want to do later. I for one
13 wonder if it wouldn't be good to consider looking at the possibility of opening it up and not
14 restricting it, and that's just my opinion.

15 MR. BANNER: Southside has restricted it to nursing and education, is that correct?

16 SENATOR RUFF: Not exactly, we're moving not just into the direction of nursing, but all allied
17 medical fields as needed. When we first went into this we had a very short time to get it up and
18 running, and we believe we might have used too much of a shotgun approach, and we know
19 we're short of teachers, so we believe that was a good place to start with. We know we're short
20 in a lot of medical fields, and that's good, too. I'd like to see us expand that program to other
21 fields. I'd like to have it in those professions that we can use to bring those young people back to
22 Virginia and back to Southside. It doesn't do us a whole lot of good to train somebody to be a
23 nuclear physicist, because they're not going to come back and not going to help the next
24 generation. We've got young people that may be using this just as a means for a loan, and maybe
25 they come back and teach for four years, so then we've got four years of good education, and
26 they can help the next generation. I don't see a problem with that. If they don't come back here
27 at all and they're willing to pay back the loan, no problem. I'd rather have them come back,
28 because we need that talent.

29 MR. MAYHEW: I understand, I just had a concern that there were students out there that could
30 benefit and should have an opportunity that otherwise they wouldn't, because they are not
31 interested in those two areas.

32 SENATOR RUFF: What particular areas are they interested in?

33 MR. MAYHEW: I'm not sure. I know one person mentioned to me a pharmacy. They're going
34 to have to borrow the money to do it. I was asked why it was restricted like that. On the other
35 hand if there are students from tobacco families that could follow other lines of study and go into
36 different fields, I think it's a little unfair that they're penalized.

37 SENATOR RUFF: We can go into that part next year, and let's all keep that in mind. Another
38 direction that we talked about the other day, about folks that are interested in getting a Master's
39 Degree. I don't think we ought to open it up to everyone that wants a Master's Degree. If we're
40 short in the areas like Special Education, that may be a good investment to pay for a Master's
41 Degree and get that kind of training. Those are some things we need to talk about.

42 MR. FIELDS: I guess you folks in Southside, and I guess I can speak for most of Southwest, we
43 never got into that too much, but it's a wonderful program. It's really good and has done a lot of
44 good, and if we can get these kids back or they'll pay the money back, that's the nice thing about
45 it. If you all want to change it, I'm sure every one of us will help you folks to do what you want
46 to do and what you think is best for Southside.

1 MR. BANNER: Our program in Southwest, I've heard no complaints. I think it's working good.

2 MR. FIELDS: One lady I've been talking to about this program, and we started the scholarship
3 program and she was in school, East Tennessee State, which is very close to Southwest and
4 couldn't get any money, so we changed some of that, and all of a sudden she's out of school.

5 Every time I've seen her now, I catch the devil for making a wise decision as to that.

6 DELEGATE WRIGHT: I think Buddy asked a very good question. Being on the Committee
7 when we first discussed it, and this was in a very short time frame we were trying to set all this
8 up. I think it's worked very good since then. I've got a lot of people telling me that no child left
9 behind and the fact that the teachers have to be certified in specific areas. I think the program
10 has worked out pretty good, and I know there's a critical shortage of teachers and nurses, as well
11 as other fields. I think both programs have worked very good in Southside. I can understand
12 how you can have questions, it'll never be perfect.

13 MR. TAYLOR: Another area in Southside was scholarships for veterinarians.

14 SENATOR RUFF: That's been mentioned also. Anyone have any further statements they'd like
15 to make? As we go into next spring we'll deal with scholarships.

16 DELEGATE JOHNSON: The Southwest burley scholarships under Southwest on the last page,
17 undecided, seventeen. How do you get a scholarship if it's not decided?

18 DR. FOWLKES: You have to attend a workshop. If they don't notify us until spring then we
19 won't know until they do.

20 DELEGATE JOHNSON: If I look at the statistics on the page or the applicants per county,
21 Southwest and Wise County had thirty, looking over at the University of Virginia College at
22 Wise, one hundred and fifty-five.

23 DR. FOWLKES: What you're looking at here is the number of applicants per county. Thirty
24 students from Wise County that applied for scholarships. One hundred fifty-five students
25 attended the University of Virginia at Wise.

26 DELEGATE JOHNSON: Washington County, one hundred and seventy-eight, and then you
27 have Lee, Scott and Russell Counties. My question is why are there so few from Wise?

28 MR. BANNER: One hundred and fifty-five, University of Virginia College at Wise, are there
29 several of these kids from Southside? Is this all burley?

30 DR. FOWLKES: Not from Southside, outside.

31 SENATOR RUFF: Any more questions from anyone? Any questions that need to come before
32 the Committee? If not, we'll open it up for public comment.

33 MS. FRENCH: I'm Joyce French from Southside Planning District. I want to applaud the
34 Commission for these comments, because I think the Southside education pool having it
35 restricted to teachers and nurses is great for our children. I'm speaking from a personal
36 standpoint. I have a daughter that's actually in school and who has worked on her granddaddy's
37 farm, so she's going into technology. I have a hard time believing Southside Virginia doesn't
38 need to bring technology students home. And, if we keep telling them next year and next year,
39 because my daughter will be out of school if we keep saying next year. I certainly would like to
40 see this Committee consider other avenues of education. While we need good teachers and good
41 nurses, we also need technology and engineering. Just like this economic partnership, we need
42 to have industry, and it was brought up that you couldn't get six engineers in your area, could
43 you? So, I just think it's time to open up this education to that type of thing, too. I'd ask the
44 Committee to consider it.

45 SENATOR RUFF: Thank you. Anyone else?

46 DELEGATE JOHNSON: I'd like to ask a question. Can you tell us whether or not as a whole

1 the program has been successful, and are we getting good results, and is it positive or negative?

2 DR. FOWLKES: It's really hard to say long-term benefits, because we're just in our third year
3 for Southside. We've already graduated some students from the program, but we don't have a
4 way of tracking those that have left the region or if they're in Southside, I mean Southwest. The
5 Southside scholarship because it's, the loan program at the end of this May it'll be time to start
6 collecting some of these loans that graduated a year ago and will start to be employed.

7 Somehow we've got to find out how to track people, and that hasn't been established yet, so that's
8 something that needs to be done. From the Southwest point of view I think it's been positive,
9 what's happened over the last two years. As I said, we've had these career workshops. We've
10 helped students, young and old, look at job opportunities that are available to them in Southwest
11 and Southside. I think that's been very enlightening for our students. Students will find out that
12 there are good jobs in the Southwest and Southside and the problem is getting in the right field
13 and obtaining jobs. Some jobs like engineering and foreign languages and other technology
14 jobs, that's been very positive. We have this workshop early on in their college career, and they
15 can look at these job opportunities early on in the career. Making the students aware of what's
16 available is very important.

17 SENATOR RUFF: One of the things in the seminars, I was sent a copy of that information, and
18 I believe it can be done in Southside. Before we close there is a summary of the community
19 college proposals and how we spent four hundred thousand. I guess if anybody has any
20 questions the community college people can answer those questions.

21 MR. CURRIN: They generally reflect the request for awards for the fiscal year and the same
22 general question of the programs and some specifics that we want you to be aware of. The Staff
23 is very pleased with the ongoing relationship with the seven community colleges that serve our
24 region.

25 DELEGATE WRIGHT: I move we accept the Staff's recommendation on the community
26 colleges' requests.

27 MR. TAYLOR: I'll second it.

28 SENATOR RUFF: Any further discussion on that? All right. Anyone have any question on
29 these? All right, if there's no further business we're adjourned.

30
31 **PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED.**

32
33 **CERTIFICATE OF THE COURT REPORTER**

34
35 I, Medford W. Howard, Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public for the State of Virginia
36 at large, do hereby certify that I was the court reporter who took down and transcribed the proceedings of the **Virginia Tobacco**
37 **Indemnification and Community Revitalization Education Committee Meeting when held on Tuesday, October 21, 2003**
38 **at 1:30 p.m. in the Slemo Student Center, University of Virginia's College at Wise.**

39 I further certify this is a true and accurate transcript to the best of my ability to hear and understand
40 the proceedings.

41 Given under my hand this 17th day of November, 2003.

42
43
44
45
46 _____
47 Medford W. Howard

48 Registered Professional Reporter

49 Notary Public for the State of Virginia at Large My Commission Expires: October 31, 2006.