Committee of the Whole
Call to Order

Monday, November 10, 2014
9:30 – 10:00 am
Ballroom
Monday, November 10, 2014

9:30 - 10:00 am
Ballroom

Committee of the Whole – Call to Order

Call to order: Dianne Harrison, WICHE chair

Welcome: Steve Jordan, president, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Introduction of new commissioners and guests 2-3

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Report of the Nominating Committee
Leah Bornstein, committee chair and immediate past WICHE chair

Report of the chair

Report of the president

Reminder to caucus on selection of 2015 committee members

Recess until November 11, 2014, at 8:45 am
New Commissioners

Wendy Horman was elected to the Idaho House of Representatives in 2012 and serves on the House Education Committee. Horman served as a member of the Bonneville School District Board of Trustees from 2002 to 2013, including seven years as treasurer. She also served as president of the Idaho School Boards Association. Horman is a member of the board of directors of Education Northwest in Portland, Oregon. She is currently serving on the Governor's Task Force for Improving Education and is a member of the National Conference of State Legislatures’ International Education Study Group. She has also served on numerous other local, state and national education committees, including the U.S. Department of Education Northwest Regional Advisory Committee. As an avid supporter of the arts, Wendy served on the Idaho Falls Symphony advisory board, is a member of the American Guild of Organists and serves as a musician in her church. Horman gained an Associate’s degree from Dixie State University and a B.A. from Brigham Young University-Idaho.

Kari Reichert is vice president of people services at Mandan-based National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC), an information technology cooperative that develops and supports software and hardware solutions for rural utility and telephone cooperatives in 47 states and Canada. In that capacity, she is responsible for employee relations, including employee compensation and benefits, recruitment, retention, and employee engagement, talent management, human resources policies, and corporate wellness. Prior to joining NISC, Reichert, a native of Dickinson, ND, was in private practice with the Vogel Law Firm in Bismarck, where her practice included commercial litigation, health care law, employment law, natural resources law, and contract disputes. She is a member of the State Bar Association of North Dakota and the Big Muddy Bar Association. Reichert gained a bachelor’s degree from the University of Minnesota and a juris doctorate from Yale Law School.
ACTION ITEM
Minutes of the Committee of the Whole

Session I: Call to Order
Monday, May 12, 2014

Commissioners Present
Dianne Harrison (CA), chair
Mike Rush (ID), vice chair
Leah Bornstein (AZ), immediate past chair
Susan Anderson (AK)
Jim Johnsen (AK)
Eileen Klein (AZ)
Chris Bustamante (AZ)
Christopher Cabaldon (CA)
Linda Thor (CA)
Joe Garcia (CO)
Loretta Martinez (CO)
Dene Thomas (CO)
Sharon Hart (CNMI)
Jude Hofschneider (CNMI)
Joshua Sasamoto (CNMI)
Carol Mon Lee (HI)
Tony Fernandez (ID)
Franke Wilmer (MT)
Mark Moores (NM)
Patricia Sullivan (NM)
Duaine Espegard (ND)
Ray Holmberg (ND)
Larry Skogen (ND)
Vance Farrow (NV)
Vic Redding (NV)
Ryan Deckert (OR)
Camille Preus (OR)
Hilda Rosselli (OR)
Dave Buhler (UT)
Don Bennett (WA)
Jeanne Kohl-Welles (WA)
Frank Galey (WY)

Commissioners Absent
Diane Barrans (AK)
Francisco Hernandez (HI)
Steven Wheelwright (HI)
Dick Anderson (MT)
Clayton Christian (MT)
José Garcia (NM)
Robert Burns (SD)
James Hansen (SD)
Jack Warner (SD)
Dan Campbell (UT)

Guests/Speakers
Mia Candelaria, program coordinator, New Mexico Higher Education Department
Russell Chan, education specialist, University of Hawai‘i
Christine Inos, outreach counselor, Northern Marianas College
Louise Lynch, certifying officer, Arizona Board of Regents
Darren Marshall, WICHE certifying officer, Utah System of Higher Education
Samantha Moreno, senior associate dean for admissions, University of Colorado School of Dental Medicine
Loreen Olney, executive assistant, Utah System of Higher Education
Lisa Shipley, manager of student advising, University of Wyoming
Laurie Tobol, Montana certifying officer, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education
Glenn Walters, deputy cabinet secretary, New Mexico Higher Education Department
Jeannine Warner, certifying officer, Nevada System of Higher Education

WICHE Staff Present
Erin Barber, executive assistant to the president and to the commission
Margo Colalancia, director, Student Exchange Program
Rhonda Epper, director, W-SARA
Patrick Lane, senior policy analyst and project coordinator, Policy Analysis and Research
David Longanecker, president, WICHE
Mollie McGill, interim co-executive director, WCET
Demarée Michelau, director of policy analysis, Policy Analysis and Research
Craig Milburn, chief financial officer, WICHE
Jere Mock, vice president, Programs and Services
Dennis Mohatt, vice president for Behavioral Health
Russ Poulin, interim co-executive director, WCET
Brian Prescott, director of policy research, Policy Analysis and Research
Pat Shea, director, Academic Leadership Initiatives

Peter Knudson (UT)
Larry Seaquist (WA)
Sam Krone (WY)
Karla Leach (WY)
Chair Dianne Harrison called the meeting to order and welcomed the commissioners to the meeting.

Chair Harrison introduced newly appointed commissioners:

- Linda Thor, California
- Franke Wilmer, Montana
- Larry Skogen, North Dakota
- Frank Galey, Wyoming

Chair Harrison announced commissioners whose terms are expiring: Susan Anderson (AK), Steven Wheelwright (HI), Duaine Espegard (ND), Ryan Deckert (OR), Jack Warner (SD), Peter Knudson (Utah), and Don Bennett (WA).

**ACTION ITEM**

**Approval of the November 11 - 12, 2013 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Christopher Cabaldon moved TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 11 - 12, 2013, COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING. Commissioner Bornstein seconded the motion. Commissioner Susan Anderson noted a typo on page 2-7. The minutes were approved unanimously with the noted correction.

Chair Harrison gave the Report of the Chair. She updated the committee on the February WICHE Officers’ retreat, committee appointments that have been made, and the ongoing discussions on the budget and succession planning. David Longanecker was asked to give the Report of the President. Longanecker introduced WICHE staff in attendance. He also provided an update on SARA and other major grant projects.

The first session of the Committee of the Whole was concluded and the committee went into recess until Tuesday, May 13, 2014.
Commissioners Present
Dianne Harrison (CA), chair
Mike Rush (ID), vice chair
Leah Bornstein (AZ), immediate past chair

Susan Anderson (AK)
Eileen Klein (AZ)
Chris Bustamante (AZ)
Linda Thor (CA)
Joe Garcia (CO)
Loretta Martinez (CO)
Dene Thomas (CO)
Sharon Hart (CNMI)
Jude Hofschneider (CNMI)
Joshua Sasamoto (CNMI)
Carol Mon Lee (HI)
Mark Moores (NM)
Patricia Sullivan (NM)
Duaine Espegard (ND)
Ray Holmberg (ND)
Larry Skogen (ND)
Vance Farrow (NV)
Vic Redding (NV)
Camille Preus (OR)
Dave Buhler (UT)
Don Bennett (WA)
Jeanne Kohl-Welles (WA)
Frank Galey (WY)

Commissioners Absent
Diane Barrans (AK)
Jim Johnsen (AK)
Christopher Cabaldon (CA)
Francisco Hernandez (HI)
Steven Wheelwright (HI)
Tony Fernandez (ID)
Dick Anderson (MT)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Franke Wilmer (MT)
José Garcia (NM)
Ryan Deckert (OR)
Hilda Rosselli (OR)
Robert Burns (SD)
James Hansen (SD)
Jack Warner (SD)
Dan Campbell (UT)
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Lisa Shipley, manager of student advising, University of Wyoming
Glenn Walters, deputy cabinet secretary, New Mexico Higher Education Department

WICHE Staff Present
Erin Barber, executive assistant to the president and to the commission
Margo Colalancia, director, Student Exchange Program
Rhonda Epper, director, W-SARA
Patrick Lane, senior policy analyst and project coordinator, Policy Analysis and Research
David Longanecker, president, WICHE
Mollie McGill, interim co-executive director, WCET
Demarée Michelau, director of policy analysis, Policy Analysis and Research
Craig Milburn, chief financial officer, WICHE
Jere Mock, vice president, Programs and Services
Dennis Mohatt, vice president for Behavioral Health
Russ Poulin, interim co-executive director, WCET
Brian Prescott, director of policy research, Policy Analysis and Research
Pat Shea, director, Academic Leadership Initiatives
Chair Dianne Harrison called the meeting to order.

Report of the Executive Committee
Chair Harrison reported that the Executive Committee met before the Committee of the Whole - Call to Order. The committee approved minutes from its March 18, 2014 teleconference, and David provided a summary of the sessions and events that would take place during the commission meeting. David also provided a document to the committee entitled *Higher Ed for Higher Standards: Call to Action for Postsecondary Leaders* issued by a coalition of postsecondary leaders, including SHEEO, AGB, APLU, and AASCU. The document calls for a unified message among higher education leaders for higher standards in elementary and secondary education. Commissioner Jeanne Kohl-Welles, chair of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee, will be providing more information on this document and discussions that came out of their committee meeting yesterday. The committee discussed holding a special meeting in August via teleconference or webinar for the Committee of the Whole to approve additional states into the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement. Staff will be sending out a notice for this meeting within the next few weeks. The committee discussed the upcoming search for WCET’s next executive director and gave David feedback on the type of individual needed for the position, salary constraints and possible solutions to hiring within the salary range currently posted in the job description. Finally, the committee went into a closed session to discuss David’s FY 2015 self-evaluation and performance objectives for FY 2016. The committee will consider the process of conducting the annual evaluation of the WICHE president at the November commission meeting. The Executive Committee will also continue to consider and discuss both “emergency” and “non-emergency” succession planning for the position of WICHE president.

Report of the Programs and Services Committee
Committee Chair Patricia Sullivan reported that the Programs and Services Committee voted to recommend to the Committee of the Whole approval of two action items during their meeting:

- The FY 2015 Workplan for the Programs and Services Unit
- A 1.8 percent increase in support fees for the Professional Student Exchange Program for academic years 2015-2016 and 2016-2017.

Committee chair Sullivan moved TO APPROVE THE FY 2015 WORKPLAN FOR THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES UNIT. Commissioner Galey seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Committee chair Sullivan moved TO APPROVE A 1.8 PERCENT INCREASE FOR THE PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM FOR ACADEMIC YEARS 2015-16 AND 2016-17. Commissioner Galey seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Approval of the participation of private institutions in the Western Undergraduate Exchange program was considered by the committee but failed for lack of a motion to approve the action. Committee chair Sullivan reported that the committee heard updates on W-SARA and phase two of the Interstate Passport project.

Report of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee
Committee chair Jeanne Kohl-Welles reported that the committee reviewed the FY 2015 workplan for the Policy Analysis and Research unit. The committee discussed putting a systematic process in place so they can give feedback and input to staff throughout the year. Committee chair Kohl-Welles reported that the committee had discussions on the common core state standards and recognized their importance to the West and to the nation but also recognized the political implications that have come up around this area. She reported that the committee approved a motion on a 10-1 vote to recommend to the Committee of the Whole that WICHE endorse the Call to Action on Higher Ed for Higher Standards. The committee additionally recommended staff issue a statement acknowledging the specific issues and benefits of these standards that relate to Western states and that higher standards encourages creativity and innovation. A motion was made TO APPROVE ENDORSEMENT OF *Higher Ed for Higher Standards: Call to Action for Postsecondary Leaders* ALONG WITH AN ADDITIONAL STATEMENT TO BE ISSUED BY WICHE. Commission Bustamante seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Committee chair Kohl-Welles reported that the committee approved a project related to the common core state standards in which staff would convene a meeting that brings together education leaders from across the West with a particular focus on addressing cross-state issues in their implementation. If funding is received, the meeting would take place in late summer. The committee also approved a project for states developing outcomes-based funding formulas that would bring together state policymakers and institutional leaders to better inform the implementation of these systems. The FY 2015 workplan for the Policy Analysis and Research Unit was approved with an amendment to include the “New Models of Student Financial Support” project under “Existing Activities.” This project is currently in a no-cost extension phase, and staff are planning a meeting on state financial aid for the fall. The committee heard updates on the Adult College
Completion Network, College Access Regional Network, and the Legislative Advisory Committee, and plans to pursue funding for a project to reduce recidivism of former inmates through education programs.

**Report of the Self-funded Units Committee**

WICHE Vice Chair Mike Rush reported that the FY 2015 workplans for both the Mental Health Program and WCET were approved by the committee. The committee heard a report on the Mental Health program, including current staffing, the Psychology Internship Development initiative, and a new research partnership with the Veteran’s Administration Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Centers (MIRECC) at the Denver VA. Vice chair Rush reported that the Mental Health Program would end FY 2014 with a negative fund balance of $140,000. The deficit is due to the result of contractual delays created by sequestration in federal funding and project delays due to leadership changes in the states.

The committee heard a report from WCET including an update on current membership and staffing. Vice chair Rush reported that the committee discussed the upcoming recruitment of an Executive Director for WCET and PAR’s transition to its own 501(c)(3) organization by January 2015.

**ACTION ITEM**  
Approval of Five States into the WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement

David Longanecker called on Rhonda Epper, director of W-SARA, to present the action item to the committee. Epper explained the key requirements states must meet before entering into the reciprocity agreement. The W-SARA steering committee met on April 21 to review the state applications. Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, and Washington have met the requirements and staff recommend approval of these states into W-SARA. Nevada has met the requirements, but staff recommend conditional approval, pending the final approval of an MOU between the Nevada System of Higher Education and the Nevada Commission on Postsecondary Education. Commissioner Bornstein moved TO APPROVE FIVE STATES INTO THE WICHE STATE AUTHORIZATION RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT. Commissioner Joe Garcia seconded the motion. The motion as approved unanimously.

**ACTION ITEM**  
Approval of the FY 2015 Annual Operating Budget

Longanecker called on Craig Milburn, chief financial officer, to review the budgets. Milburn reported that the FY 2014 budget was projected to end with a surplus of $73,776. The proposed budget for FY 2015 is balanced. Longanecker noted that he had received word that payment for the $87,000 in past dues from the California Community College System would be coming soon. This presents a budgeting dilemma for staff, since they anticipated receiving this revenue in FY 2015, not FY 2014. Receiving the $87,000 in this fiscal year would cause a deficit in the FY 2015 budget. Commissioner Redding suggested that, if the $87,000 is received in FY 2014, staff accrue the amount into FY 2015. Longanecker and Milburn agreed this would be helpful, and Longanecker noted he would not have to approach the commissioners for approval to draw from the reserves. Milburn reviewed the program budgets with the committee along with the reserve categories. Longanecker noted that during the March 18, 2014 Executive Committee teleconference, a question was asked about the policy for establishing the percentage for the reserve category “Unexpected Shortfall.” Currently, the percentage is set at 10 percent and this was established at the May 2007 meeting. The commission established this category going into the recession to provide a cushion to the organization should one of the states not pay its dues. Longanecker noted that they’ve never had to use the reserve since it’s been established. Vice chair Rush suggested leaving the category as is. Commissioner Galey agreed that it is fiscally prudent to have this category and thought 10 percent was reasonable. Commissioner Redding asked if the amount in this reserve category would be enough to cover an unexpected shortfall. Longanecker said the amount is about two years worth of WICHE dues, so if a state pulled out of membership this category would provide enough for an orderly transition. Commissioner Redding moved TO APPROVE THE FY 2015 ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET WITH THE CAVEAT THAT $87,000 CAN BE ACCRUED FROM FY 2014 TO FY 2015 IF NECESSARY. Commissioner Rush seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

**ACTION ITEM**  
Approval of FY 2015 Salary and Benefit Recommendations

Longanecker reported to the committee that there was no salary increase included in the FY 2015 budget. He is disappointed to not be able to include the salary increase for staff but said there were no resources in the budget to recognize the merit of the staff. He proposed approval of a salary increase pool of 3 percent, contingent upon improvements in projected revenues above and beyond those anticipated in the FY 2015 budget approved by the
commission. Longanecker noted that the Colorado Educational and Cultural Facilities Authority (CECFA) bond will be paid off at the end of FY 2015, which will free up resources for the organizations. Commissioner Martinez asked Longanecker how the 3 percent pool is divided among the staff. Longanecker said he establishes several levels, such as “exceeded standards,” “met standards,” and “did not meet standards,” and staff are given a percentage based on performance. Commissioner Martinez commented that staff are experiencing an erosion in salaries due to increased benefit costs. Longanecker said equity adjustments are made when necessary and acknowledged that staff have lost significant ground on their salaries due to the rise in benefit costs. Commissioner Anderson asked about moving to a combined paid time off system, rather than breaking out staff leave time between vacation, sick time, personal days, and holidays. Longanecker said that the staff Administrative Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) had considered this some time ago but the organization is very generous with sick and vacation policies, so they felt comfortable with the current leave policies. Commissioner Anderson also asked how it was determined that 3 percent would be the pool if salary increases become possible. Longanecker said the amount was recommended by Mountain States Employers Council and that it was a reasonable range among what other organizations are paying. Longanecker noted that WICHE’s staff salaries are not competitive. He said that there is a possibility he will lose staff and good candidates for open positions, but staff enjoy the strong benefits the organization provides. He said SHEEO and NCHEMS pay much better than WICHE and that the commission will need to address this in the future. Commissioner Harrison commented that the Executive Committee had encouraged Longanecker not to raise the salary for the new executive director of WCET because of the impact it would have on other existing staff salaries. Longanecker said they need to come up with a staff salary program that gets phased in over time and deals with the erosion staff have experienced. Commissioner Redding asked if the $40,000 pool for increases would be enough. Longanecker said he would have to come to the commission for approval on the pool, so there could be discussions about the amount if revenue is available. Commissioner Sullivan asked about a plan to increase staff salaries over time and suggested that a comparison of staff salaries be presented at the November 2014 commission meeting that would show how WICHE’s salaries compare to NCHEMS, SHEEO, and other similar organizations. Longanecker noted that this could be done and he might consider using Mountain State Employers Council, which had done a survey for WICHE in the past. Longanecker said that WICHE operates both in the non-profit sector where salaries are more modest and also in the higher education sector where salaries tend to be higher. Commissioner Skogen asked if there should also be a comparison about how WICHE handles its dues compared to the other regional organizations. Longanecker said the other regional organizations have different business models and don’t rely as heavily on dues as WICHE does. Commissioner Joe Garcia moved TO APPROVE FY 2015 SALARY AND BENEFIT RECOMMENDATIONS. Commissioner Skogen seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

**ACTION ITEM**
Approval of FY 2016 and FY 2017 WICHE Dues

Longanecker explained to the committee that staff are recommending a $4,000 increase in dues over the next two years. Dues for FY 2015 were established at $137,000 at the May 2012 commission meeting. Staff recommends an increase from $137,000 to $141,000 (2.9 percent) for FY 2016, and another increase of $4,000, from $141,000 to $145,000 (2.8 percent) for FY 2017. Commissioner Bennett moved TO APPROVE THE FY 2016 AND FY 2017 WICHE DUES. Commissioner Redding seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

**ACTION ITEM**
Approval of the FY 2015 Workplan

Commissioner Harrison asked for discussion on the FY 2015 WORKPLAN. Hearing none, a motion was made TO APPROVE THE FY 2015 WORKPLAN. Commissioner Sullivan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

**ACTION ITEM**
Approval of Future Dates and Locations for WICHE Commission Meetings

Longanecker told the committee that the dates of the next meeting, which will be held in Denver, CO, are November 10 - 11, 2014. The commissioners noted an error with the dates in the agenda book. Longanecker said staff are proposing May 2015 in Anchorage, AK, and the fall 2015 meeting in Boulder, CO, so commissioners can see where staff live and work. He said staff are negotiating with commissioners in Wyoming to determine the best location for the May 2016 meeting. Commissioner Hart asked if the commission had met recently in Arizona. Longanecker noted that it had met there in November 2008. Commissioner Rush clarified that the May 2015 meeting would be meeting on Mother’s Day again, and Longanecker said that was the case. The committee discussed changing the dates but June prices in Anchorage increase significantly and moving dates to earlier in May conflicts with commencement activities for many commissioners.
Commissioner Bennett noted that the fall 2016 dates do not fall on Election Day as written in the agenda book. A motion was made TO APPROVE THE FUTURE DATES AND LOCATIONS FOR WICHE COMMISSION MEETINGS. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Chair Harrison reminded commissioners to review the WICHE Commission Code of Ethics included in the agenda book. She said Erin Barber would be sending an electronic meeting evaluation for commissioners to complete. She called for other business. Longanecker mentioned to the committee that the W-SARA Steering Committee would need members from the newly approved states, so W-SARA staff would be getting in touch with commissioners for their recommendations. Commissioner Kohl-Welles asked to affirm the previously approved endorsement of Higher Ed for Higher Standards: Call to Action for Postsecondary Leaders and she said that staff will need to create an additional statement to accompany the endorsement. This statement will include WICHE’s affirming the importance of the Common Core for the West and that high standards contribute to creativity and innovation. Commissioner Kohl-Welles clarified that these additions would not exacerbate the current political issues around the Common Core. Commissioner Joe Garcia moved TO APPROVE THE ENDORSEMENT OF HIGHER ED FOR HIGHER STANDARDS: CALL TO ACTION FOR POSTSECONDARY LEADERS. Commission Preus seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

The committee of the whole was adjourned.
Chair Dianne Harrison called the meeting to order and welcomed the commissioners on the call. She asked Erin Barber to call roll and a quorum was confirmed.

**ACTION ITEM**

**Approval of Montana into the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement**

Chair Harrison called on David Longanecker. Longanecker introduced John Lopez as the new director of W-SARA and asked John to present the action item and recommendation. Lopez told the committee that the Montana Board of Regents voted to join W-SARA on May 23, 2014. SARA staff worked with Montana’s compliance language to bring it into agreement with SARA policies. Montana’s application to join SARA was recommended for approval by the W-SARA Steering Committee on July 30. The Board of Regents will serve as the portal agency, and Jessica Brubaker will continue...
to serve as the steering committee member from Montana. Longanecker asked Clayton Christian for additional comments. Christian said the Board of Regents supports joining SARA enthusiastically and is anxious to be a part of the program. Christian moved TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE W-SARA STEERING COMMITTEE AND APPROVE MONTANA INTO THE STATE AUTHORIZATION RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT. Commissioner Hart seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chair Harrison called for other business. Hearing none, the Committee of the Whole was adjourned.