Committee of the Whole
Call to Order/Introductions

Monday, May 21, 2007 – 8.30 - 8.45 am

Continental Divide
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Committee of the Whole, Call to Order

Agenda

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Report of the chair

Report of the executive director
NEW COMMISSIONERS

Ann Daley was appointed in January as the executive director of the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board, a position she held previously, from 1989 to 1993 (during which time she also served as a WICHE commissioner). Previous to taking the position this year, she was executive director of Washington Learns, where she led a review of the state’s public education system, from early learning through higher education; this year, the Washington Learns report formed the basis of a legislative proposal by Governor Chris Gregoire to improve public education funding and accountability. Daley also served as director of the Office of Financial Management, as assistant state treasurer, as a senior policy adviser to Governor Booth Gardner and Governor Gary Locke, as vice president for administration and finance at The Evergreen State College, and in other positions.

David Skaggs is the executive director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. Previous to this, he served as the 2nd Congressional District representative for 12 years. Before that, he served in the Colorado House from 1981-87 and was chief of staff to then-Congressman Timothy Wirth. He is the founder and executive director of the Center for Democracy & Citizenship at the Council for Excellence in Government, which works to strengthen American democracy through several projects and activities, many of them school-based. He earned a bachelor’s degree from Wesleyan University and a law degree from Yale Law School. Skaggs is a decorated Marine who served in Vietnam. He is of-counsel with the firm Hogan & Hartson.
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Committee of the Whole
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PARTICIPANTS

Commissioners
* Executive Committee member 2006

A L A S K A
*Diane M. Barrans, WICHE Chair 2005
Executive Director
Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Juneau

Patricia Heller
Director
Alaska Governor’s Office
Anchorage

*Marshall L. Lind
Former Chancellor of Higher Education
University of Alaska Fairbanks
Juneau

A R I Z O N A
*Joel Sideman
Executive Director
Arizona Board of Regents
Phoenix

C O L O R A D O
*William F. Byers
Consumer and Public Relations Manager
Grand Valley Power
Fruita

William Hybl
Chairman and CEO
El Pomar Foundation
Colorado Springs

H A W A I I
Roy T. Ogawa
Attorney at Law
Honolulu

*Roberta M. Richards
State Officer
Hawaii Department of Education
Honolulu

Helen Sokugawa
Institutional Analyst
Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
University of Hawaii
Manoa

I D A H O
Arthur Vailas
President
Idaho State University
Pocatello

M O N T A N A
Dan W. Harrington
State Senator
Montana State Senate
Helena

*Ed Jasmin
Immediate Past Chair
Montana Board of Regents
Big Fork

Mary Sheehy Moe
Dean
Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology
Great Falls

N E V A D A
Jane Nichols
Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs
Nevada System of Higher Education
Reno

*Carl Shaff
Educational Consultant
Nevada State Department of Education
Reno

N E W M E X I C O
Dede Feldman
State Senator
Albuquerque

*Patricia Sullivan
Assistant Dean
College of Engineering
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces

N O R T H  D A K O T A
Pamela J. Kostelecky
Member
State Board of Higher Education
Dickinson

*David E. Nething, WICHE Chair, 2006
State Senator
Jamestown
OREGON
Ryan Deckert
State Senator
Portland

*Camille Preus-Braly, WICHE Vice Chair Commissioner
Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development
Salem

SOUTH DAKOTA
Robert Burns
Distinguished Professor
Political Science Department
South Dakota State University
Brookings

James O. Hansen
Regent
South Dakota Board of Regents
Pierre

UTAH
Bonnie Jean Beesley
Utah Board of Regents
Salt Lake City

*Richard E. Kendell
Commissioner of Higher Education
Utah System of Higher Education
Salt Lake City

WASHINGTON
Jeanne Kohl-Welles
State Senator
Olympia

WYOMING
Thomas Buchanan
President
University of Wyoming
Laramie

*Klaus Hanson
Professor of German and Chair
Department of Modern and Classical Languages
University of Wyoming
Laramie

Staff Present
David Longanecker
Executive Director

Erin Barber
Executive Assistant

Louis Fox
Executive Director
WCET

Susan Vermeer Lopez
Project Coordinator
Programs and Services

Mimi McFaul
Research Associate
Mental Health Program

Craig Milburn
Director
Accounting Services

Jere Mock
Director
Programs and Services

Dennis Mohatt
Director
Mental Health Program

Jeanette Porter
Administrative Assistant
Mental Health Program

Terese Rainwater
Program Director, State Scholars Initiative
Programs and Services

Margo Schultz
Program Coordinator, Student Exchange Programs
Programs and Services

Jenny Shaw
Administrative/Project Coordinator
Mental Health Program

Scott Adams
Senior Research and Technical Assistance Associate
Mental Health Program

Guests Present
Art Hauptman
Consultant

Carol Liu
California Assembly Member

David Iha
WICHE certifying officer, Hawaii

Lisa Shipley
WICHE certifying officer, Wyoming
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, FIRST SESSION: CALL TO ORDER
Monday, November 13, 2006

David Nething, WICHE chair, called the meeting to order and introduced the eight newly appointed commissioners:

- Patricia Brown Heller, director of the Office of the Governor in Anchorage.
- Eddie Dunn, chancellor of the North Dakota University System.
- Dan W. Harrington, a senator from Montana and former member of the state’s House of Representatives.
- Peter C. Knudson, a Utah state senator and assistant majority whip.
- Pamela J. Kostelecky, a member of the North Dakota State Board of Education.
- Mary Sheehy Moe, dean of Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology.
- Helene I. Sakugawa, an institutional analyst in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the University of Hawaii, Manoa.
- Arthur C. Vailas, president of Idaho State University.

Ed Dunn and Peter Knudson were unable to attend this meeting.

Chair Nething welcomed the new commissioners and everyone to the meeting. He outlined the agenda for the day and the logistical arrangements.

David Longanecker, executive director of WICHE, reported the appointment of the following WICHE staff members: Louis Fox, executive director of WCET; Susan Vermeer Lopez, Programs and Services project director; and Candice Tate, Mental Health Program. He also introduced the guests and staff present.

ACTION ITEM
Approval of the Minutes of May 22-23, 2006


Report of the Chair
David Nething, WICHE Chair

Chair Nething stated that he’d had an interesting year as chair of the commission. It was challenging with respect to the staff members who have moved on to other things. Although it is a great loss to WICHE to have key staff members leave the organization, it’s also a compliment because it speaks to the exceptional quality of the staff, indicating they are attractive to other organizations.

Nething reported that he’d attended several higher education meetings in the past six months. He said that he’d come to the commission as a practicing lawyer rather than as an academician, and he’d also served as a legislator. He feels he has learned a great deal about higher education. Having attended a variety of meetings, he believes that several things are critically important, not only to the states but to the country, as well. Helping college freshmen become successful students is very important, and we must start reaching students earlier, beginning no later than middle school. The biggest problem seems to be students’ need for remedial courses. Fifty percent of high school seniors who apply to college require remediation, particularly in math and science. He encourages states to focus a renewed emphasis regarding ways to better serve students.

Nething also recommended that there be a change in educational terminology: “job development” should be changed to “career development.” It is important to help students prepare for a career, and higher education must provide the national leadership in that direction. Higher education institutions willing to be leaders in this area will provide more job opportunities for their graduates in the private sector. In addition, there is a need for a new emphasis on ethics, and higher education should take the leadership role in this area. There is a need for a review of ethics by campuses, the private business sector, and students, so that everyone knows what it means to deliver a day’s work for a day’s pay. Higher education is the only sector that can provide national leadership on this issue.
Report of the Executive Director
David Longanecker, Executive Director

David Longanecker commended Chair Nething for his service and leadership as chair of the commission, stating that he was instrumental in working with the California and with Governor Schwarzenegger’s appointment secretary in reengaging that state with WICHE.

Longanecker reported that this has been an interesting year. WICHE is making a huge contribution to West and nationally. The current WICHE staff is one of the strongest in the organization’s history, and WICHE has had a history of hiring exceptional staff members, who left enormous imprints. He recognized those who have left the organization and updated the commission on the search processes to date, again stating his excitement about the recent appointment of Louis Fox to WCET.

Report of the Nominating Committee
Diane Barrans, Committee Chair

Diane Barrans, chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that the committee’s task was to select a new vice chair of the commission. She recognized commissioners Ed Jasmin and Jim Sulton, who also served on the committee. The committee received several outstanding nominations, which was a reflection on the quality of the organization. The committee nominee for vice chair was Commissioner Roy Ogawa. There was strong support from the commission for this nomination.

Chair Nething thanked the Nominating Committee for its efforts. The first session of the Committee of the Whole was concluded, and the committee went into recess until Tuesday, November 14, 2006, at 10:30 a.m.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, SECOND SESSION
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2006

Chair Nething reconvened the Committee of the Whole at 10:30 a.m.

Report and Recommended Action of the Audit Committee
Diane Barrans, Committee Chair

Commissioner Barrans reported that the members of the Audit Committee included Linda Blessing and commissioners Roy Ogawa, Ed Jasmin, and Jane Nicholas. The Audit Committee requested an audit because the consolidated financial statements were brief and prepared differently than they had been in the past. The Audit Committee conducted a meeting by telephone on October 3, 2006, at 4:00 p.m., without staff. Later, staff members David Longanecker and Craig Milburn were included in the teleconference. They responded to Audit Committee questions. The Audit Committee found the audit to be cogent and found the staff responses to be appropriate.

COMMISSIONERS BARRANS/JASMIN MOVED ACCEPTANCE OF THE FY 2006 AUDIT REPORT FROM CLIFTON GUNDERSOHN. The motion carried unanimously.

Report and Recommended Action of the Executive Committee
David Longanecker, for Cam Preus-Braly, Committee Chair

In the absence of the Vice Chair Cam Preus-Braly, Dave Longanecker reported that the Executive Committee approved the minutes of the last two Executive Committee meetings of May 22, 2006, and August 21, 2006; received a report on the Mental Health Program, which is as strong financially as it has ever been; discussed the schedule for the November 13-14, 2006, meeting; and convened in executive session to discuss the executive director. There were no recommendations made by the Executive Committee.
Report and Recommended Action of the Programs and Services Committee
Carl Shaff, Committee Chair

Commissioner Shaff reported that the committee heard an overview of the three WICHE Student Exchange Programs by Jere Mock and Margo Schultz. He stated that Mock also described WICHE’s plan to develop a regional health care advisory council, with the goal of helping to develop regional initiatives to encourage and motivate students to enter a range health care fields in rural and underserved areas in the West. The committee also discussed the proposed restructuring of some of the low-use fields in the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP), including inactivating a few of the underutilized fields and increasing support fees for pharmacy. Action on the staff recommendation will be taken at the May 2007 meeting.

Chair Shaff stated that Teresa Rainwater provided a report on the State Scholars Initiative (SSI), which she directs and WICHE administers for the U.S. Department of Education. He reported that WICHE has a $6.6 million grant to work with states to encourage middle and high school students to take a more rigorous high school curriculum. WICHE is currently working with 18 states, and four more states are slated to join this project later this month.

Chair Shaff reported that the national SSI Advisory Board and state representatives will meet in Denver on December 7, 2006. Commissioner Marshall Lind, vice chair of the Programs and Services Committee, serves on this national board along with WICHE Commissioner Jane Nichols. The committee also received an update by Susan Lopez on the new WICHE Internet Course Exchange (WICHE ICE) program, which has 11 two- and four-year institutions as charter members. Shaff reported that the Programs and Services Committee has no recommendations for action items at this time.

Commissioner Mary Sheehy Moe of Montana asked for clarification on the SSI timeline and on the criteria for the rigorous high school curriculum. Teresa Rainwater responded that the RFP has closed and that by November 20, 2006, an expert panel of national scholars will present recommendations to WICHE and the U.S. Department of Education for new SSI members. Up to four states will be selected by November 27, 2006. The U.S. Department of Education has the prerogative to change the date if additional information is required. Rainwater reported that Wyoming and South Dakota have submitted proposals.

Committee Chair Shaff thanked Jere Mock and the WICHE staff for their excellent work and for the reports they have provided to the Programs and Services Committee.

Report and Recommended Action of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee
Jane Nichols, Committee Chair

Commissioner Jane Nichols reported that the committee had had an opportunity to get to know Louis Fox, newly appointed executive director of WCET, and to hear about his plans for that organization. In addition, David Longanecker updated the committee on Policy Analysis and Research, WCET, and other WICHE initiatives. Chair Nichols said there is still an effort to find $1 million to complete the learning center and mentioned something Louis Fox had said: “It’s a little ironic that I’m working for a high tech organization which doesn’t have a high tech facility.”

Nichols stated that the committee received a report on several projects in the workplan:

- The residency study needs a funding source.
- The affordability study is underway.
- There has been no success in finding funding for the Academic Competitiveness Grant project, so it is off the table.
- The Changing Direction grant is ending January 2007. Money is available in this grant that needs to be spent by February; it can be used for up to four states to conduct roundtables or other such activities that link finance and financial aid policy. Interested states should contact the WICHE office.
- The final item was an action item to seek approval for the staff to seek funding for a higher education productivity study. The study will be done in conjunction with the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS).
COMMISSIONERS NICHOLS/OGAWA MOVED AND SECONDED A MOTION TO GRANT THE WICHE STAFF PERMISSION TO SEEK FUNDING FOR THE HIGHER EDUCATION PRODUCTIVITY STUDY. The motion passed unanimously.

Review of the General Fund Budget
David Longanecker, WICHE Executive Director

David Longanecker presented the WICHE general fund budget for FY 2006 and FY 2007. He stated that Craig Milburn is the new chief financial officer. Milburn was ill and unable to attend this meeting. The budget in the agenda packet was prepared by Marv Myers while he was still on the WICHE staff. In the future the budget format will be modified and will use the American Accounting System format, which is designed for lay consumption. Longanecker stated that WICHE’s financial conditions are actually stronger than reflected in the budget in the agenda.

Longanecker succinctly explained the budget, which shows projected revenue of $2,241,000 in 2007. Commissioner Jasmin asked if the California had paid its dues, and Longanecker responded that they’d been paid for the current year. The California community colleges have not yet paid the $87,000 they owe in arrears. (Henceforth, the community colleges will not pay any further dues). If they don’t pay their arrears, Longanecker will take action against them in the California branch deficiency side of California state government.

Longanecker reported that the revenue side of the budget is running very close to projected figures. Currently, it is difficult to be precise about the interest and indirect cost recoveries because it’s not known what grants may come in; also, the interest amount depends greatly upon when PSEP fees are paid. He encouraged states to pay their dues.

On the expenditure side of the budget, Longanecker reported that this was originally anticipated to be a deficit figure. However, there is a surplus of $95,000, since expenses were less than anticipated and because the organization starting 2007 with a reserve of $1 million. He reported that one of the reasons for the reserve is due to salary savings because of the resignations of top staff, which is not a good thing for the organization.

Longanecker and Craig Milburn will revise the budget format to focus more attention on the total funding of the organization, which includes SSI (with $2.4 million) and the Mental Health Program (with $1.4 million). The one area most at risk is WCET. Sally Johnstone left in June and had not been fundraising for a few months prior to her departure; therefore, the reserves in that program are being depleted at this time. WICHE will be helping WCET rebuild its reserves. Longanecker reported that staff will revise the budget format and present a preliminary draft for FY 2008 at the May 2007 meeting.

Commissioner Byers recommended a different budget-reporting method, which had been presented to the commission some time ago by former commissioner Don Carlson. Longanecker responded that that is the budget format staff will pursue.

Commissioner Jasmin asked if the commission had approved the budget, and Longanecker responded that it was approved at the May 2006 meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEM
Review of Policy Regarding Reserves

Longanecker reported that the commission, at its May 2000 meeting, revised its policy regarding minimum reserve requirements. He outlined the current policy, which was included in the agenda. The current policy required WICHE to maintain a reserve of at least 12 percent of the general fund budget. The intent of that policy was that reserves were not intended to be a balancing wheel for operating fund deficits. That policy has worked reasonably well for the organization. He recommended that it now makes sense to adopt a new reserve policy and suggested that the commission adopt one at the May 2007 meeting.

He outlined the reasons for reviewing the policy. First, it’s been six years since the policy has been reviewed, and it is appropriate to consider whether the policy has worked to protect the financial integrity of the organization. Second, the organization now has a substantial asset/liability in the new State Higher Education Policy Center (SHEPC) building,
which requires fiduciary responsibility. It is imperative to rethink the policy to sustain the obligation and responsibility to WICHE, NCHEMS, and SHEEO. Third, unanticipated circumstances (such as the midyear reduction in staff experienced this year) may require the budget to be adjusted.

The proposed recommendations would be to maintain the minimum reserve at 12 percent for the purposes it was originally intended; to maintain a reserve to protect the agency’s capacity to meet WICHE’s building payment, equal to half the annual facilities cost of $250,000; to allow reserves of up to 10 percent of budgeted general fund expenditures for unanticipated operating fund shortfalls; and to encourage all self-funded units to strive to maintain a reserve equal to at least 25 percent of their operating budget.

Chair Nething said that unless there was an objection, a policy as outlined in the agenda will be presented to the commission for action at the May 2007 meeting.

Commission Pamela Kostelecky wanted to know if the other partners in the building have a reserve policy. Longanecker responded that he will have a discussion with NCHEMS and SHEEO regarding their reserve policies. At the present time, both of those agencies maintain a higher than 25 percent reserve.

Commissioner Roy Ogawa asked if the percentages and the $250,000 were cumulative. Longanecker responded affirmatively, stating that the total percentage in reserve could possibly be higher than 45 percent of general fund appropriations.

Commissioner Mary Sheehy Moe asked if the reserves included coverage of deferred maintenance. Longanecker responded that the building costs cover all the deferred maintenance. In a few years the building will be paid in full, and there will no longer be the same nature of liability.

Commissioner Klaus Hanson asked why the 5 percent residual is needed once Mental Health and WCET have their own funds. Longanecker said it would allow WICHE to go into negative fund balance without having to release staff. In essence, this would provide the equivalent of a rainy day fund to protect against modest unanticipated perturbations in financial circumstances.

Commissioner Helene Sokugawa asked where the facility costs are reflected in the budget. Longanecker stated that the facility costs are reflected within the budgets of the different units. A more comprehensive budget, costing out the facility, was provided in the May 2006 agenda.

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

**Review of Senior Officer Salary Comparisons**

David Longanecker reported that at the May 2006 meeting, the Executive Committee asked him to present a plan to bring the executive director’s salary into line with that of other higher education leaders throughout the nation and to include a way to align the salaries of other senior staff in proportion to that of the executive director. He outlined the straightforward analysis of trying to reach a target annual salary of $200,000, as suggested by the Executive Committee. The analysis was developed based upon 10 percent incremental increases to reach the desired goal. To reach a $200,000 annual salary would require an increase of $31,500, an 18.7 percent increase. The fiscal consequence of that would require that each state’s WICHE dues would be increased by 3 percent.

Longanecker pointed out that increasing the executive director’s salary would also necessitate increasing the salaries of other professional staff to maintain alignment in managing the organization. When increasing the salary of senior officers in an organization, it is important to maintain the balance with other professional staff. This is one dilemma. Another dilemma is that WICHE staff members live between two differently funded arenas – higher education and state government. Higher education has increased senior salaries at a higher rate than state agencies. Compared to state employees, WICHE staff members are well compensated, and WICHE has been able to attract strong staff. He outlined the fiscal consequences of salary increases for the executive director, senior level staff, and support staff. It would result in an increase in state dues of 3 percent, at a minimum. Dues are currently increased by the amount of inflation on an annual basis.

Commissioner Nichols asked for clarification on the assumption that staff salaries are paid by dues. She said it would be difficult to ask states to increase dues at the 3 percent level. Could WICHE salaries be paid on a bonus system?
Longanecker responded that currently there is bonus system in place in the self-funded units. He could provide the commission with an analysis of a bonus system and will also provide an analysis of how much WICHE could expect the impact on the budget to be for every 1 percent increase in salary. He also suggested that the commission may want to consider waiting to initiate salary increases until the debt-service requirement on the building is complete. At that point the commission will have more flexibility in the budget to increase salaries, with minimal impact on state dues.

There was a question raised as to whether the current salary is an impediment to the executive director accomplishing his work, particularly with the search for senior staff replacements. Longanecker responded that as he searches for new staff, the issue is more poignant today than it was a year ago because candidates seek higher salaries. WICHE was very fortunate in the hiring of Louis Fox, thanks to the financial cooperation of the University of Washington.

Commissioner Kendell asked if grants and contracts could provide a source of revenue over and above the reimbursed overhead to fund the executive director’s salary. Longanecker said it could be a possibility, though in the past the commission has believed strongly that the executive director’s salary should be paid for entirely from the general fund.

Longanecker said that the purpose of this discussion was to provide an opportunity for the commission to look at the options. Discussion of this item will continue at the May 2007 meeting.

Chair Nething explained that the Executive Committee had requested that Executive Director Longanecker prepare a plan to bring his salary into a more competitive stance of $200,000. The comparison study included the impact on senior staff salaries. Commissioner Jasmin suggested that further discussions on salary should be done in executive session. Chair Nething said he will pass that suggestion on to the new chair.

**ACTION ITEM**

**Election of Chair, Vice Chair, and Immediate Past Chair**

Chair Nething reported that at the November 13, 2006, meeting of the Committee of the Whole, Commissioner Barran, chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that the committee had selected Commissioner Roy Ogawa as incoming vice chair of the commission.

COMMISSIONERS BYERS/HYBL MOVED AND SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE COMMISSIONER CAM PREUS-BRALY AS CHAIR AND COMMISSIONER ROY OGAWA AS VICE CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION FOR 2007, AND COMMISSIONER DAVID NETHING AS IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR. The motion carried unanimously.

**Other Business**

David Longanecker thanked staff members Erin Barber and Jeannette Porter for their exceptional assistance in organizing the November 2006 commission meeting. He also thanked Candy Allen and Annie Finnigan for their help in putting together the agenda book, which was above their normal responsibilities. He reported that the next commission meeting will be held in Whitefish, MT, on May 21-22, 2007. Montana Commissioner Jasmin from advised that no neckties are allowed in the state, and he outlined the various modes of transportation available to those coming to Montana.

On behalf of the commission Longanecker thanked Commissioner Nething for his excellent chairmanship of the commission, jokingly commending Nething for making it possible for the two of them to walk into California Governor Schwarzenegger’s office for a successful meeting.

Longanecker also commended Commissioner Byers, whose term will end in 2007, for his service on the commission.

The Committee of the Whole adjourned into recess at 10:30 a.m. in order to participate in a teleconference presentation by Vickie Schray, deputy director for management and planning at the U.S. Department of Education.
The Committee of the Whole Reconvenes

Chair Nething reconvened the meeting of the Committee of the Whole to pass the gavel to the new vice chair, Roy Ogawa. The new chair, Cam Preus-Braly, was not present. Chair Nething asked the commission to designate one commissioner from each state to serve on the Executive Committee. The following is the list for the Executive Committee:

- Alaska    Diane Barrans
- Arizona   Joel Sideman
- Colorado  William Hybl
- Hawaii    Roy Ogawa and Helene Sokugawa
- Idaho     Dwight Johnson
- Montana   Ed Jasmin
- Nevada    Carl Shaff
- New Mexico Patricia Sullivan
- North Dakota Pamela Kostelecky and David Nething
- Oregon    Cam Preus-Braly
- South Dakota Robert “Tad” Perry
- Utah      Richard Kendell
- Washington Jim Sulton (need to confirm)
- Wyoming   Klaus Hansen

Executive Director Longanecker will confirm the Executive Committee membership with states.

The commission commended Commissioner Hybl for providing the meeting facilities at the El Polmar Foundation's Penrose House and for providing exceptional hospitality to commissioners and staff.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.