

MINUTES  
President's Board of Advisors on Tribal Colleges and Universities  
Washington, DC  
February 5-6, 2007

Attendees: Ron His Horse is Thunder, Chair; Eddie Brown; Kathy Domenici; S. Verna Fowler; Joseph Hiller; Deborah His Horse is Thunder; Daniel Keating; Martha McLeod; Carl Morgan; Richard Stephens; Karen Swisher; Edward Thomas; Della Warrior and Richard Williams.

WHITCU Staff: Deborah Cavett, Anselm Davis, Tonya Ewers, James Hafer, and Phillip DeSenze

Ron His Horse is Thunder called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Roll call of Advisory Board members was taken and the WHITCU staff was introduced.

Agenda

Deborah His Horse is Thunder moved to approve the agenda, which was second by Martha McLeod and approved by the Board.

August 2006 Minutes

Deborah His Horse is Thunder moved to approve the August 2006 minutes. Della Warrior seconded the motion, which was approved with one abstention.

WHITCU Update / Deborah Cavett:

- Members of the board were reminded that the government is operating under a continuing resolution, which has an effect on WHITCU activities.
- WHITCU's website is up and running with updated information and has had 18,000 hits in the first quarter of 2007, which indicates that it is a valued and useful tool.
- Federal departments and agencies were asked to submit a three-year plan for FY 06 - 08. Their last three-year plan submission was four years ago. The format of the plan was revamped with instructions to provide salient information and with drop down menus making it user friendly.
- Against the backdrop of the American Competitive Initiative, WHITCU sponsored a technical service workshop in Las Vegas, Nevada, on November 28 and 29, 2006. Thirty-six individuals from 25 tribal and universities colleges (TCUs) participated in the workshop designed to bring participants in contact with "out of the box" funding opportunities.
- James Hafer made a presentation relative to participants' evaluation of the Las Vegas workshop. Participants deemed the workshop a success and suggested that this type of workshop be an annual event.
- FY 04/05 Report to the President is in final draft. The FY 06 reports are due from the federal agencies at the end of April 2007. More effort will be made to get federal agencies to provide more narrative with their data; thus, providing WHITCU with a better performance baseline.
- WHITCU continues to work closely with the White House Intergovernmental Affairs Office and the Indian affairs Working Group. WHITCU is heavily involved with the education committee and chairs the TCU subcommittee. Remediation is a topic of interest of the subcommittee, which is a topic of interest of board members and a number of federal agencies.
- WHITCU will be on the agenda of RES 2007, which also includes Northwest Indian College and Navajo Technical College as part of a panel on education and information technology.
- Daniel Keating was recognized for his work with the Oklahoma tribal colleges that are in various stages of development.

- WHITCU was represented at the Department of Interior's Human Capital Conference held in Houston, the NASA's launch, and the Department of Defense's New Orleans conference where issues relative to minority programs were discussed.
- WHITCU assisted EPA in the planning of their MOU signing ceremony, which involved Salish Kootenai College and will take place in the Russell Senate building. WHITCU has been sitting in on Interior's planning session for the National Native American Economic Policy Summit.

#### Higher Education Reauthorization

Amy Raaf Jones, House/Committee on Education and Labor, addressed the Board regarding the reauthorization (H.R. 609) of the Higher Education Act. One of the results of the mark up process of the Bill was that the student loan provisions were pulled out of H.R 609 and were addressed through the reconciliation process. All the discretionary programs (including the Title III program for TCUs) were reauthorized through H.R. 609, which was passed by the House but not by the Senate.

Congress passed the Native American Language Preservation Act, which awards grants to support and strengthen Native American language immersion programs including language survival schools and language restoration programs. The push now is to reauthorize the Higher Education Act and the No Child Left Behind Act.

#### Focus on TCU Issues through the Senate Indian Affairs Committee

Sara Garland, Senate Committee for Indian Affairs, addressed the concerns of the Board regarding the FY 08 budget. Within the Department of Education three programs have been eliminated—education for Native Hawaiians and Alaska Native education equity programs and the strengthening Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian serving institutions. United Tribes Technical College and Navajo Technical College were level funded in the education budget. In the Interior budget, two new programs were added—the BIA Indian Education Initiative and the BIA Safe Indian Communities Initiative.

The confirmation of Carl Artman as BIA's Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, a position that has been vacant for two years, continues to be a priority as well as the reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act.

Other areas of interest are getting forward funding for TCUs, filling the postsecondary position (associate deputy director) at BIE, sponsoring an economic development summit that is not duplicative of other summits being planned, and initiating a series of listening sessions in a number of locations.

#### Department of Education

Jim Manning, Delegated the Authority of Assistant Secretary-Postsecondary Education, talked generally about the Department's commitment to increase Pell grants incrementally over the next few years, to reauthorize No Child Left Behind and the Higher Education Act, and to hold a summit on higher education in March.

#### Energy Technologies through the ACT and Advanced Energy Initiative

Joseph Martinez, Office of Science, Department of Energy, provided information relative to the American Competitive Initiative, the American Enterprise Initiative, and renewable energy technologies being made available to American Indian tribes. With regard to Title V of the energy bill, TCUs were encouraged to determine their renewable energy interest and needs, and to seek ways to take advantage of the provisions under Title V.

#### White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

Rudy Fernandez, Assistant Deputy Director, informed the Board that Maggie Grant has replaced Ruben Barrales as Director and that Veronica Leal has joined the staff as his deputy.

The White House-led working group, with representatives from the federal government who deal with Indian country issues, has been working on ways to improve the communication between the administration and other parties who have an interest in Indian issues. The working group has several

sub-committees—one being education—that are working on tangible goals, which can be achieved during the next two years.

Members of the Board were thanked for their efforts on behalf of TCUs and were told that the White House looks forward to the submission of their FY 05 Report to the President.

#### Bureau of Indian Education

Tom Dowd, Director, spoke of the struggle to implement a restructuring plan that would help move BIE toward a more highly performing organization that provides good service to the communities, schools and students it serves. Notwithstanding the lawsuits that have been filed as a result of the restructuring effort and the current budget situation, BIE continues to work toward the implementation of the following priorities: providing a safe, secure and helpful learning environment for its students; increasing academic achievement; and helping school officials and students recognize the value of transitioning from high school to postsecondary education.

The BIE along, with other partners including WHITCU, is planning for the National Bureau of Education Conference that will be held in July 2007. The conference will address pre-K through postsecondary education issues that BIE faces in its system.

During the Q & A session, members of the Board were informed that the Central Office West (compliance and monitoring oriented) has been changed to Albuquerque Service Center (solution oriented), and that BIE plans to forward fund TCUs during the '09 budget process.

#### Discussion with AIHEC Executive Committee

Ferlin Clark, President of Diné College and Vice-President of AIHEC, thanked WHITCU for the opportunity to share information and to find ways for both entities to support and work more effectively with one another. AIHEC's strategic plan, AIMS Fact Book 2005, and a copy of the report (The Path of Many Journeys) funded by USA Funds were distributed and were discussed. A brief history of the TCUs and an overview of AIHEC's strategic plan were presented. WHITCU addressed its top priorities: energy, economic development, and technology.

Examples of struggles to obtain funds from federal agencies for needed programs after working with Congress to secure funds for such programs were shared with the Board. Suggestions were made on ways to interact with federal agencies to detect problem areas, to provide useful information, and to recommend solutions. The need to get the Higher Education Act reauthorized and to pass the Indian Healthcare Improvement Act were voiced. Concern, however, was expressed regarding the bureaucracy that advisory boards deal with and members of the board were challenged to overcome the bureaucracy when working with federal agencies on behalf of TCUs

To affect the ongoing work with federal agencies and the development or receipt of reports, AIHEC was requested to provide WHITCU with TCU priorities that contain detailed and specific information. AIHEC also indicated an interest in intervention prior to decisions being made by WHITCU.

#### Working Lunch

Jackie Johnson, NCAI Executive Director, provided information relative to the up coming National Native American Economic Policy Summit scheduled to take place in Phoenix May 2007.

#### Ethics Briefing

Sean Dent, Office of General Counsel, briefed members of the Board regarding regulations affecting advisory boards.

Next Meeting: Mount Pleasant, Michigan, June 18 and 19, 2007

#### Final Review of 2005 Report to the President

The final draft of the FY 04/05 Report to the President was discussed. Comments were to be reviewed during the final modification process with the vetting process beginning immediately afterwards.

Public Comments

Time was provided for public comments of which there were none.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Deborah J. Cavett  
Designated Federal Official  
White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities

Approved on behalf of the Board

Ron His Horse is Thunder  
Chair, President's Board of Advisors on  
Tribal Colleges and Universities