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Minutes of the
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING
November 3rd, 2021

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Members Present: Laura Butler, Sheri Snyder, Ron Cambiano, Zach Miles, Charles Harrison, Jordyn Fraizer, John Claybon, John Hanak, Pete Seldon, Jaime Henson, Krystle Lane, Jillian Bray, Kelsey Martin, Patricia Purdue, Rob Miles, Doug Misak, Travis Hurst.

Guests and Staff: Sheri Mauck, Brad Griffith, Cass Minx, Joel Dean, David Pecha, and Debbie Blanke.

1. **Welcome and introductions of all members and guests: Laura Butler**

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

2. **Budget Update: Sheri Mauck**

Sheri Mauck explained the budget cycle. After the State Regents determine higher-ed system's budget need, they submit a budget request to the legislature. Then the cycle begins with legislative session. During this time we hope to build constituency and advocacy for our budget request. We wait for the legislature to approve a lump sum to the State Regents for allocations for the fiscal year. We are hopeful to have new allocations for new initiatives that are for workforce, campus operations, and student financial aid programs. Once allocations are complete in May, the institutions begin their budget cycle and submit to State Regents for approval. Budgets are due to us in June. Our process mirrors the state budget cycle. All we do meets state deadlines as well.

For FY22, we received 812.8 million dollars, just shy of the amount we received in 2001. Considerations the State Regents include special funding for target programs and initiatives and a performance funding formula. Institutions budget by function and expenditure. For FY22, we had a lot of CARES money. Performance funding metrics include degrees and certificates conferred, first-year retention for first-time full-time freshman, first-year retention of students that receive PELL grant fund, gateway courses completion, percentage of CCA target retention, graduation rates, college completion plan, maintaining accreditation.

We consider higher education budgets to have two parts. First is for campus operations, the second is for work done on campus from an outside agency.

Capital improvement budgets are for capital expenditures. This can be funded through grants and some state appropriations, but state appropriations are not the main source.

Agency special accounts are self-supporting activities on campus such as dormitories, athletic facilities, food cafeterias, etc.

State revenue for FY22, we are ahead of estimates by 18.3%. We have had consecutive months, we have had double digit increases, which is a positive outlook for economic recovery for higher education.

Sheri mentioned ARPA funding that is being directed by the President's Council. There is a survey out to the institutions to collect projects that institutions are working on.

3. **Finalizing Calendar Dates: Laura Butler**

November 3rd, January 12th, March 9th, and July 13th from 2pm-4pm. The council raised no concerns. Joel Dean mentioned there will be a floating date for an optional training. Laura Butler recommended an informal lunch following a meeting. John Claybon gave the first motion, followed by Jordyn providing a second motion to approve calendar dates.

4. **Joel Dean – Legislative Update**

Joel Dean provided legislative updates regarding workforce and economic development. Several items include workforce development to fulfill workforce shortages. No specific legislation was mentioned at this time. A workforce study took place in October to discuss new and emerging industries. New industries in the state include the film industry, where Prairie Surf Studios discussed a need for film crews. Joel mentioned requesting Prairie Surf Studios speaking to the EDC to potentially partner with institutions to aid them in meeting their need for film crews. Several discussions revolved around solar energy. Our state needs substantial development in technology to move forward with solar energy. Another conversation discussed retraining security clearances on military bases. These are topics that could be focused on at future EDC meetings with some of the same speakers as the interim studies if the committee wishes. .

ARPA funding process is ongoing. We have settled on our state goals, and have opened for projects and proposals. One goal is to build a stronger economy in Oklahoma, enhance capabilities of services for the well-being of all citizens – especially the most vulnerable, and invest in digital infrastructure. Higher education will be intricately involved in all of this. The website is live now to submit a project or questionnaire. Oklahoma.gov/ARPA can give more information.

Special session starts in two weeks for redistricting. They will finalize new district maps.
No new legislation quite yet.

5. **Micro-Credentialing Updates: Brad Griffith**

Brad Griffith gave an update on micro-credentials. Micro-credentials can be a stand-alone program or be embedded in existing programs like certificates, associate's degrees, or bachelor's degrees. The State Regents has started two pilots, the first being Credly. Individual institutions have the opportunity to buy Credly that sit outside of the policies the State Regents has approved at a lower rate. Your institution must meet a minimum amount of badge earners. Beyond Credly, the State Regents has partnered with Coursera. Coursera serves as a skill building course suppository. They have partnered with institutions and organizations to build a catalog of courses in a variety of areas in technology, leadership, social media, etc. All are relevant to today's market. Institutions can also purchase Coursera, but this window has closed. We have received interest from institutions and we could potentially reopen with a purchase minimum. More information will be available on learning more on Coursera. Courses will be available to institutions with scholarship incentives for IT Coursera completions. More information on this to come.

The State Regents provides definitions for digital badges and micro-credentials. It's important to note that micro-credentials programs contain up to 9 hours of credit bearing courses or non-credit experiences that are measurable. There must be a competency gained through assessment. These

will be ratified by the Chancellor on a monthly basis. This is a much faster process than the traditional academic programs. The State Regents has new policy outlines for the submission of micro-credentials. Digital badges can be issued for micro-credentials as well as other programs for certificates all the way up to graduate degrees. More support will be coming to jumpstart these programs on your campuses and build partners within the community. Funding has been secured from the Oklahoma Legislature to support workforce and STEM initiatives. Hopefully this funding can help expand micro-credentials, develop them, and connect with employers to grow these initiatives. We are targeting a new market here that may not qualify for financial aid. We have a proposal for scholarship funding to aid students directly in earning these micro-credentials. The challenge is to start engaging with new partners that look different than our traditional academic offerings. Individual institutions may opt-in to be an affiliate with Credly. Badges have been developed for the State Regents affiliated badges. These designs are used in a consistent way to identify our 27 institutions.

Coursera fits in as a stand-alone product or you can create micro-credentials based on Coursera content. Coursera has pre-designed courses that can aid in developing course content for micro-credentials.

The State Regents has three webpages for micro-credentials one for students, one for institutions, and one for employers. We also have a new general contact for questions that can be directed to the State Regents at badges@osrhe.edu. You can find the three pages on the Reach Higher website.

Pete Seldon asked if Brad would be willing to conduct trainings on individual campuses. Brad is available to provide training on individual campuses on digital badging and micro-credentials. Dr. Blanke noted that funding will likely be coming for scholarships and development of micro-credentials and digital badging.

6. **RBPEA Event Discussion – Laura Butler**

   Laura led the discussion on the RBPEA ceremony. The council decided on March 9th as the official date for the ceremony. The next item is discussion is for location. In previous years, UCO has hosted the RBPEA event. Laura opened the discussion for ideas on other locations. Ron Cambiano asked if the two dates had been presented to the Council of Presidents. The date has not yet been approved by the COP, but will be presented in the December meeting. Laura recommended a new format as a networking event with heavy hors d'oevres with more of networking focus. There will still be photo opportunities for outreach purposes and for partners to feel recognized. Laura also recommended allowing fewer guests, around 4-6 to give the event a more intimate feel. Jordyn Frazier recommended moving forward with networking hour. Kelsey Martin mentioned the end of the day may be difficult considering some institutions have long drives. The recommendation of the Council is to move forward with the event at the end of the day.

7. **Adjournment.**

   The meeting was adjourned at 4:36 p.m.