

**Nevada Office of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education  
(Nevada WICHE Commission) Minutes**

Nevada System of Higher Education  
System Administration Building  
2601 Enterprise Road  
Reno, NV 89512  
Room 114

Video or Telephone Conference Connection from the Meeting Site to:

Nevada System of Higher Education  
System Administration Building  
4300 S. Maryland Parkway  
Las Vegas, NV 89119  
Room 105

Tuesday, December 10, 2024, 2:00 pm

**Members Present:**

Mr. Fred Lokken, Executive Commissioner  
Ms. Cathy Dinauer, Commissioner  
Mr. Dale Erquiaga, Commissioner

**Others Present:**

Ms. Patty Porter, Director, Nevada Office of WICHE  
Ms. Carrie Parker, Deputy General Counsel, NSHE  
Dr. Mike Teglas, Associate Professor and Student Advisor, Department of  
Agriculture, Veterinary and Rangeland Sciences, University of Nevada,  
Reno (UNR)  
Dr. Dirk Vanderwall, Dean, Utah State University (USU) College of  
Veterinary Medicine  
Dr. Cathleen Kovarik, USU Associate Dean, College of Veterinary  
Medicine  
Ms. Megan Van, Assistant to the Director of the Nevada Office of WICHE  
Ms. Donna Healy, Executive Assistant, Department of Academic and  
Student Affairs, NSHE

Executive Commissioner Fred Lokken called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

**1. Information Only – Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**2. Minutes**

The Nevada WICHE Commission approved the minutes from its August 1, 2024 meeting. (*Ref. 2-WICHE Commission Meeting Minutes, August 1, 2024*)

Commissioner Dinauer moved approval of the August 1, 2024  
meeting minutes. Commissioner Erquiaga seconded. Motion carried  
unanimously.

**3. Commissioner Updates**

The WICHE Commissioners provided the following updates on their activities as commissioners:

- Executive Commissioner Lokken noted that he attended the November 2024 Commission meeting in Hawaii.
  - They are waiting for the release of the “Knocking on the Door” longitudinal study related to college graduation rates.
  - Commissioner Dinauer stated that they participated in roundtable discussion with legislators, including one regarding Montana; conversations were policy-focused and there were many issues that transcend.
  - The agenda book was shared with Patty Charlton, NSHE Chancellor, and Daniel Archer, NSHE Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, as well as the TMCC campus community.
  - The Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) continues to be an issue with regional WICHE; although it has been declining, there is value.
- Russ Poulin, Vice President, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education and Executive Director, WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) Director, will be retiring on December 31, 2024; Van Davis has been named as the new Vice President and Director.
- Commissioner Dinauer shared that the meeting was thoughtfully organized and that she appreciated the roundtable discussions.
- The May 5-6, 2025 regional WICHE meeting will be held in Utah, then the following meeting will be held November 13-14 in Colorado.
- Commissioner Erquiaga did not provide any updates.

#### **4. Director Updates**

##### **Director Porter shared the following regarding the Nevada WICHE Budget Update:**

- FY 2025 appropriation is \$997,448 and \$17,930 is carryforward from FY 2024 for total of \$1,015,378.
- Loan repayment revenue projection for FY 2025 is \$105,001; as of 11/24/2024 Loan Repayment Revenue collected is \$59,107.67.
- Total projected expenditures for FY 2025 are \$1,097,371 which include PSEP/Health Profession Education Program (HPEP) stipends, \$861,071 and Nevada Department of Behavioral Health Nevada Psychological Internship Consortium, \$112,500.
- Subtracting the projected expenditures from projected revenue (not counting loan repayment revenue), there is a deficit of \$81,993.
- Loan repayment revenue (as of 11/24/2024) is \$59,107.67 which does not cover the deficit; thus, there is a need to disburse HPEP in two rounds fall 2025 and spring 2025 to wait until more loan repayment revenue is received.
- The eight million appropriated by SB 342 and approved this past June 2024 by Interim Finance Committee (IFC) was transferred on October 29, 2024, and received on October 30, 2024, by the Utah State University College of Veterinary Medicine.

##### **Director Porter shared the following regarding the Nevada WICHE Fall 2024 Round 1 Disbursement:**

- PSEP-All 36 slots, \$703,571, filled FY 2025.
- HPEP Round 1: Filled 26 of 49 slots, \$157,500 for FY 2025 as of fall 2024.
- HPEP Round 2: Remaining slots to fill are twenty-three which can be disbursed in January 2025 if we receive estimated amount of \$22,885 in loan repayment revenue.

##### **Director Porter shared the following regarding the Nevada WICHE 2025-2027 Biennial Budget:**

- A correction was made on the projected FY 2026-2027 loan repayment revenue; instead of \$63,093.90 the projection is \$80,800.64.
- Based on this revision of FY 2027 loan repayment revenue, one Pharmacy 3-year accelerated slot and one Master of Social Work slot were added.
- Currently we are in the waiting process as the Governor's Finance Office (GFO) reviews and works on the budgets, which will become public on the day of the Governor Lombardo's State of State speech in January 2025.

## Discussion

- Executive Commissioner Lokken stated that there have been years when Nevada WICHE sought and was granted a waiver from the budget office which allowed them to spend money that they did not have, but then the projections may no longer be accurate.
  - There was potential for the gap issue to be remedied by keeping the money; it is an odd budgeting procedure that the Commission should discuss.
  - Director Porter noted that she thinks that they will be funded; part of this is trying to project biennial slots in the future, which have been done conservatively.
  - Executive Commissioner Lokken shared that he has sat through many budget presentations and has never felt so confident about the numbers and thanked Director Porter for her work on the budget.
  - Director Porter extended thanks to the NSHE Finance Department budgets and accounting staff for their support of Nevada WICHE.

## Director Porter shared the following regarding Nevada WICHE / USU College of Veterinary Medicine Outreach

- Director Porter shared that she and Megan Van were present when the USU College of Veterinary Medicine gave a presentation to students in a UNR Veterinary Medicine 101 class on September 25, 2024.
- Director Porter also attended a USU College of Veterinary Medicine presentation to the UNLV Academic Success Center, October 8, 2024.
- Hopefully, future visits will be scheduled to visit rural and community colleges in Nevada.
- Executive Commissioner Lokken noted that Mike Teglas has been very helpful throughout this process to Dean Vanderwall and his team.

## 5. Update on Nevada WICHE/Utah State University (USU) College of Veterinary Medicine Contract

An update was given by Patty Porter, Director of NV WICHE, Dirk Vanderwall, Dean, USU College of Veterinary Medicine, and Cathleen Kovarik, USU Associate Dean, on implementation of Nevada WICHE/USU College of Veterinary Medicine contract.

- Dean Dirk Vanderwall stated that with the goal to enroll Nevada residents in the inaugural class in fall, 2025, USU needs to obtain a letter of reasonable assurance from their accrediting body, the [American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education](#) (AVMA COE); they feel that they are well-positioned to receive that letter by the next AVMA COE meeting in March, 2025.
  - In October, 2024, the AVMA COE team conducted a comprehensive site visit at USU.
    - The exit interview included very positive comments about having the NV WICHE contract in place.

- The results of the site visit will be considered by the full accreditation body at their March, 2025 meeting.
  - The USU team is working diligently on launching an application cycle for fall, 2025 enrollment.
- Dean Vanderwall noted that a full explanation of the program and contract, including financial information, was provided prior to the site visit.
  - Prior to the site visit some additional details related to the financial agreement were requested and provided.
- There were no additional questions about the agreement at the site visit and the post-visit comments were very positive regarding the cohort of non-residents who will help to serve the needs of Nevada.
  - All around, the sense of the review team was that it was wonderful to have this in place; Dean Vanderwall noted that he concurs with their assessment.
- Executive Commissioner Lokken asked if they are aiming for a particular number of candidates in the first class.
  - Dean Vanderwall shared that the initial cohort goal for fall of 2025, pending receipt of the letter of reasonable assurance, is forty students.
  - Given the collapsed application cycle, they are going to focus heavily on Utah and Nevada students, who will be paying in-state tuition.
  - For the state of Utah, they are targeting about twenty-five positions and about another fifteen for Nevada students.
  - Based on USU's previous partnership with Washington State University in 2012, there was no difficulty in having a wide Utah student applicant pool; they feel that this will be similar with Nevada residents.
- Cathleen Kovarik shared that the recruiting efforts have already included a visit to the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) in fall, 2024 and there are additional visits planned for the spring semester.
  - The USU recruiter, Ryan Soelberg, will also visit Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC), Western Nevada College (WNC), the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), the College of Southern Nevada (CSN), Nevada State University (NSU), and Great Basin College (GBC).
  - Additionally, a survey was sent to pre-vet clubs; seventy-one students have responded and there is strong overall interest.
    - Director Porter offered to provide contact information for all the named institutions.
- Mike Teglas shared that UNR spring classes begin on January 21.
  - Although it is outside of the normal college veterinary application process, there is quite a bit of student interest in the program.
  - Director Porter noted that it may be helpful for UNR to work with the USU recruiter.
- Dean Vanderwall shared that in early March, there will be an on-site, one-day pre-veterinary student and pre-veterinary advisor conference at USU; it may be streamed or recorded to accommodate off-site attendees.
  - It will take place before the AVMA Council on Education's meeting and provide a terrific opportunity for prospective applicants get the latest update on how to apply for this program.
- Cathleen Kovarik addressed a question from Executive Commissioner Lokken regarding the deadline for applications, given that this will be a very truncated cycle.
  - After receipt of the letter of reasonable assurance, an email blast will be sent to anyone who has expressed interest in the program, noting that the portal has been opened.

- Application packets will arrive within that week and cutoff dates will be considered at that time.
- The selection committee members will know that they need to turn around applications within a couple of days.
- Students will be admitted on a rolling basis; after verification, students who meet the standards will receive letters of acceptance and will have a week to reply.
- An announcement will be made once all the seats are full; this may conclude prior to June 1, but it all depends on how many applications are received.
- Prerequisites and other requirements, including an essay, experiences, and letters of recommendation, are outlined on the website.
- The application will be separate from but like the VMCAS application; it will require a \$55 fee.
- Applications will not be ranked, and no letters of non-acceptance will be sent until all the seats are filled; the cutoff will be flexible, depending on the number of applications received.
- Director Porter noted that, in accordance with the contract, funds have been sent to USU.

## **6. Update on Practice Questionnaire Participation**

- Director Patty Porter noted that the Nevada Office of WICHE is conducting a big project researching the [ECSI](#) Open Inventory Report, which currently lists 331 participants.
  - By statute, Nevada WICHE participants are required to provide yearly updates to the Nevada Office of WICHE regarding their participation and practice.
  - The Nevada Office of WICHE requires this reporting twice a year.
- The focus is on stipend grant recipients and categorizing them by separation date.
- Our priority is to focus on stipend grant accounts that have exceeded their 5-year practice obligation or are within one year of exceeding it.
- We are currently working on approximately sixty-six accounts and closed at least six accounts in ECSI due to documentation in their file that they have fulfilled their practice obligation.
- For the stipend grant accounts that are past five years, and we have been unable to contact the participant, the Nevada Office of WICHE will move these accounts over to a new fund code in ECSI called “stipend grant practice failure (SGPF).”
  - The purpose of moving these accounts over to the new fund code is to separate them from those who still have up to five years to complete their practice obligation.
- There are forty-nine stipend grant accounts that will reach their 5-year practice obligation limit by the end of 2025; we are focusing on these participants and their fulfillment of their practice obligation.
  - If they have not fulfilled their practice obligation the participant will be notified that their stipend grant is being converted to a loan per the terms of their promissory note.
- Director Porter noted that if anyone would like to discuss collection efforts or legal issues, she recommends setting up a confidential attorney-client session with Nevada WICHE legal counsel Carrie Parker and herself.

## **Discussion**

- Executive Commissioner Lokken asked if there was an estimated number of failures.
- Director Porter stated that there were up to twenty that were past the 5-year mark and that the rest have more time; the older ones are being prioritized.
  - This process has also served as an account cleanup tool.

## **7. DocuSign 2024-25 Renewal Quote**

- Director Patty Porter presented the DocuSign 2024-2025 renewal quote for approval by the Commission.
  - The \$4,600 quote for 1,000 envelopes does not reflect the credit of \$630.14 for renewing early, which brought the cost to \$3,969.86.
  - At no additional cost, DocuSign also gave Nevada WICHE 100 SMS Authentications and 100 ID Verifications.

### **Discussion**

- Executive Commissioner Lokken asked if the Commission needs to look at all contracts or just approve those of a certain dollar amount.
  - Director Porter noted that NRS 397 requires that any contract binding to Nevada Office of WICHE can be approved by Director Porter, and any contract binding to the Commission requires Commission approval.
  - As far as practice is concerned, Director Porter brings items based on dollar amounts.

Commissioner Dinauer moved to approve the 2024-25 renewal quote for DocuSign as presented by Director Porter. Executive Commissioner Erquiaga seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

### **8. New Business**

- Executive Commissioner Lokken mentioned the selection process regarding how we will get the applications and how will the candidates be best considered.
  - Director Porter noted that she will create a future agenda item to discuss that topic.

### **9. Public Comment**

- There was no public comment.

Meeting adjourned at 2:59pm

Prepared and submitted by:  
Patty A. Porter  
Director, Nevada Office of WICHE