

Board of Directors Meeting

DRAFT Minutes

Friday, June 19, 2020, 2:00 PM

Location: Virtual via ZOOM

Participants:

CSI Board Members: Mr. Rolf Blizzard (Chair), Mr. Malcolm Fearing, Mr. Steve Keen, Mr. Paul O’Neal, Mr. James Rispoli, and Mr. Irvin Aldridge (Emeritus)

CSI Board Ex-Officio Members: Dr. Reide Corbett, Dr. Ron Mitchelson, Dr. Christopher Finelli, Mr. Wally Overman, Dr. Kuldeep Rawat, Dr. Harvey Seim, and Dr. Michael Van Scott

CSI Board Ex-Officio Members Not Participating: Dr. Kimberly van Noort and Dr. Margery Overton

CSI Staff: Mr. George Bonner and Mr. Robert McClendon

Guests: Captain Keith Wheeler, USN, Retired, Executive Director of the Office of National Security and Industry Initiatives, Division of Research, Economic Development and Engagement, ECU, and Mr. Michael Kelly, CSI Representative, ECU Foundation

Convene:

Mr. Rolf Blizzard, Chair, welcomed everyone. As Interim Chancellor Mitchelson had set aside time to participate in the meeting, Mr. Blizzard invited him to proceed with his comments.

Interim Chancellor Mitchelson’s Report:

Dr. Mitchelson discussed the appointment of Mr. Peter Hans as President of the UNC System, effective August 1. Dr. Mitchelson believes that Mr. Hans will be a real advocate for ECU. Regarding the ECU Chancellor search, it will resume after having been put on pause for a few months. The search committee will commence reviewing the pool of candidates on July 9. The plan is to have interviews in late August/early September and a start date of Jan 1, 2021 for the new chancellor. Dr. Mitchelson stated there has been much time spent discussing how to reopen (considering COVID-19) the campus, including the OBX campus, in the fall. Classes are set to begin Aug 10 and the semester will be complete (including finals) by Thanksgiving. Spring semester will begin Jan 18, 2021. Masks will be required of everyone (students, faculty, staff, etc.) everywhere on campus. The plan for the return to the campus is called “Return of the Pirates.” Dr. Mitchelson will be conducting “Town Hall” meetings online to discuss the plan and there will be ample opportunity for questions. Student enrollment figures are surprisingly good – freshman class size is 4300. The administration is awaiting budget information - may not be available until the end of July. There is some level of budget cut anticipated but “we will cope as best we can.” Dr. Mitchelson said he is optimistic about the future.

Mr. Blizzard asked whether the elimination of some of the sports team will have a detrimental effect.

Dr. Mitchelson stated that ECU had 20 sports teams. Four of the teams were cut: men's and women's tennis, and men's and women's swimming and diving. There have been furloughs enacted in some of the athletic departments and in other departments with reduced work requirements - traffic, parking, bookstore, printing & graphics will have to undergo a temporary salary cut.

Convene (cont'd.):

Mr. Blizzard requested approval of the minutes from the October 30, 2019 meeting. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Michael Kelly and seconded by Mr. Malcom Fearing. All were in favor. Minutes were approved. Mr. Blizzard invited Dr. Reide Corbett to present his Director's report.

Director's report:

Dr. Reide Corbett stated he has worked to maintain communication with the Board through emails and updates. He has been sharing Dr. Mitchelson's *First Monday* with members to make them aware of ongoing work at CSI and ICP. He has also been sending along the CSI/ICP newsletters (the spring newsletter was just recently released) to make people aware of all the good work going on within the organization.

New Faculty: As of January 2020, all new faculty and staff are here on the Outer Banks campus. Mr. Mike Muglia completed his PhD and is now a research assistant professor in ICP. Parker Kellam has been brought on as an outreach specialist, helping him on the college side with communication and outreach and helping Mr. John McCord (Assistant Director of Engagement and Outreach) with K-12 activities. Dr. Corbett said he is very excited about all the activity and actually have very little room for more growth as far as office space is concerned.

Semester Experience at the Coast: This program for undergraduates was held during the spring and although the enrollment was less than hoped for, it was a success. There were aspirations of having 20 students enrolled but in the end six registered but only four students followed through. Nevertheless, the students had only positive comments about the experience. The program is a great opportunity for ECU students, and he hopes to increase the numbers next spring (15 to 20). Earlier in the year, Dr. Corbett rented an ECU pirate bus to transport about 35 ECU student advisors to the campus and introduce them to CSI, the facility, and the Semester Experience program so that they could enthusiastically promote the program when advising students. The program focuses on sophomores and juniors. Dr. Corbett plans to offer the program again in spring 2021. The former students will act as ambassadors on campus to help promote the program.

NC Renewable Ocean Energy Program: Dr. Corbett provided a handout in the Board packet highlighting accomplishments of this state-funded program. He stated it is important to demonstrate a return on investment in this program. CSI shares 1.2 million dollars in research funds with three other universities annually. The NCROEP researchers are encouraged to look for funding from other agencies (such as Department of Energy and Department of Defense).

Recently funded projects that were initiated through the NCROEP include a project funded by Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). Researchers from NC State and CSI are part of this 5.5-million-dollar project to develop high-efficiency unmanned underwater vehicle technology coupled with marine hydrokinetic energy harvesting technology. In addition, researchers from the same team are pursuing an Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy funding opportunity (\$38 million) to design economically attractive Hydrokinetic Turbines. And an ECU/CSI research team will be awarded a UNC System Research Opportunity Initiative (\$1.42 million) for a proposal titled, “Water-Energy Nexus: Off Grid, Zero Waste Desalination Technology.”

Dr. Corbett is excited about having been chosen, with Jennette’s Pier, to host the Waves to Water (W2W) Prize. W2W is a five-stage competition sponsored by DOE to develop a desalination system that relies on the power of ocean waves to operate. The final stage (Drink) will take place at Jennette’s and the event will be great exposure for Jennette’s and for CSI. Dr. Corbett said that Jennette’s Pier is being established as a test center with permits already in place for testing instruments.

Mr. Blizzard asked if CSI is responsible for maintenance at Jennette’s Pier.

Dr. Corbett stated that CSI provided original funding for the “research hut” and is responsible for maintaining instruments and for communication costs. It is a huge asset and W2W will be good exposure for the pier.

Dr. Corbett stated the DOE will support the creation of a new National Marine Renewable Energy Center in the Atlantic Region. The goal of the funding opportunity announcement is to increase the likelihood of commercial adoption of marine energy technologies, while developing intellectual capital for U.S. technology leadership in ocean sciences and marine energy. Dr. Corbett feels optimistic about CSI’s proposal which includes a strong team of collaborators: University of New Hampshire, LeHigh University, and SUNY – Stony Brook. The award will consist of \$5 million over the course of four years to be spread amongst the partners.

Due to COVID-19, a virtual Ocean Energy symposium was held and was a success. There were two high-profile guest speakers: Jason Bush, Director of DOE’s Testing Expertise and Access for Marine Energy Research (TEAMER) Program, and Alejandro Moreno, director of DOE’s Water Power Technology Office. CSI is creating great partnerships which are important in the development of the program.

Mr. Blizzard asked, “What kind of multiple are we getting out of the \$1.2 million in state funds spent on the various research projects?”

Dr. Corbett responded that the NCROEP team is working on gathering data that will demonstrate return on investment. Currently, he would say a multiple of 2 but would like to get to a multiple of 5. CSI is connecting with researchers to determine what they have had funded that directly relates to what CSI has funded. He would like to have this information to provide as a one-page report.

Dr. Corbett stated that CSI hopes to provide \$1 million to fund 10 - 14 NCROEP projects. He is waiting to find out about budget cuts. One project is quite interesting and shows potential: Long-endurance Autonomous Underwater Vehicle with Energy-Harvesting Cross-Current Kit. This project has also received funding from DOE. Mr. Muglia is assisting with research regarding this concept.

National Science Foundation (NSF) grant: Dr. Corbett stated that CSI has received an NSF grant - Research Experience for Undergraduates. It is a one-year pilot study to begin this academic year, with students at CSI in May 2021. The subject matter is *Resilience and Adaptation to Coastal Change Across Virtual Communities*. The University of Puerto Rico and the University of Clemson will also be participating.

Advancement Initiative: Dr. Corbett stated that one of his goals is increasing advancement. He discussed the handout which listed priorities: scholarships for students interested in participating in the undergraduate semester experience; establishment of a distinguished professorship in maritime history; outdoor classroom and boardwalk (currently working with design group at NC State); art and science fellowship; campus renewables solar roof, wind energy); student housing; and coastal fellows program (opportunity for faculty to spend a semester at the coast). The goal is to raise \$500,000 by 2025. He stated there is a Pirate Nation Gives day scheduled for June 24. He has been working with Ms. Melissa Adamson, Advancement Officer, ECU Foundation. Dr. Corbett stated he needs the Board's help to make it a success.

Financial Report:

Dr. Corbett discussed financial information provided on handouts. There has been significant increase in external research proposal submission and awards won. The increase is not just a result of the new hires but due to a new strategic focus (creation of ICP). He says that CSI is moving in the right direction.

There has been increased focus on student-related facility upgrades. Created a student Collaboratory in room that had previously been used as a computer lab. Students can congregate here, work on assignments, socialize, and extend their time spent on campus.

Took a 4.7% budget cut and as a result lost a faculty position in ICP. Lot of uncertainty regarding the FY'21 budget. Dedicated to protecting newly hired faculty.

Dr. Corbett stated that when CSI was first established there was a start-up fund which was established as a grant to CSI from the UNC Systems Office. This fund, currently in the amount of \$38,741.22, has been transferred into a "residual" fund. The fund rolls over each year and there is no requirement to request an extension.

Dr. Corbett presented a pie chart that illustrates the breakdown of federal, state, local, and private grant funds. The chart was created in response to a request for information regarding sources of funding. Mr. James Rispoli commented that the chart helped to clarify the data.

Collaboratory for Coastal Adaptation over Space and Time: Dr. Corbett stated this program is funded by the NSF and its purpose is to address coastal resilience challenges. Involving coastal researchers, stakeholders, and practitioner expertise, it is an integrative initiative that builds

capacity for a comprehensive understanding of the human-natural coastal system. By collaborating with residents, county and town staff, agency representatives, and researchers from the three counties of Dare, Carteret, and New Hanover, an actionable research agenda will be developed.

Harnessing Big Data to Support the Conservation and Rehabilitation of Mangrove Forests

Globally: Drs. David Lagomasino and Siddharth Narayan, research scientists in ICP, recently published an important paper on this topic in the scientific journal *One Earth*. They have both performed research regarding mangrove forests and have collected a large amount of data which emphasizes the importance of the forests as a nature-based solution for coastal erosion and a range of other benefits. These datasets will be disseminated to the global science community, non-governmental organizations, government officials, and rehabilitation practitioners.

SAVE Currituck Sound – Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Evaluation in Currituck Sound,

NC: The final report has been submitted. NC Department of Transportation is interested in the findings regarding mitigation and will be considered regarding the mid-county bridge project. NC Department of Environmental Quality has also requested a copy of the report.

Dr. Corbett highlighted an article published in the Coastal Review Online by Dr. Michael O’Driscoll. His research focused on evaluating decentralizing wastewater treatment systems (septic tanks) considering rising sea levels.

Board Member Initiatives:

New Board Members: Mr. Blizzard reminded everyone at the last BOD meeting that changes were recommended to the bylaws. It was suggested that the term limits for some members be adjusted in order to provide continuity. Those changes have been approved. There are members whose terms have expired. He stated that the Governance and Nominating committee need to work on repopulating the Board. The vacancy left by Dr. John Wells needs to be filled. Mr. Malcolm Fearing, Mr. Irvin Aldridge, and Mr. Blizzard’s terms have expired – they can remain until successors are named to fill their seats. The Board can have as many as nine at-large appointments. Mr. Blizzard tasked Mr. Wally Overman with the Governance committee to take this up and nominate two people for members. The recommendation of that committee will go to the executive committee and then to the Board and then to the chancellor for his consideration. Mr. Blizzard stated that Board committees may meet anytime they wish – they don’t want to wait for next regularly scheduled Board meeting. He would like to provide the recommendations to the chancellor before the next Board meeting.

Interim Chancellor Mitchelson added that with the departure of Dr. Jay Golden, a new ECU representative will need to be appointed to the Board.

Future Student Housing:

Mr. Overman stated that they have contracted with the NC school of government, they specifically work with housing issues. Under review now is the Bowsertown land owned by Dare County. They will also assess other options throughout the county. Mr. Fearing stated the

Roanoke Island Historical Association property utilized for housing the Lost Colony participants may also be under review.

ECU Foundation:

Mr. Michael Kelly stated that he would like to invite the ECU Foundation to hold their Spring meeting in Dare County at CSI. The support for this idea was unanimous.

Mr. Blizzard stated that he will schedule the next BOD meeting within the next couple of months.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Armstrong