



## Board of Directors Meeting

*DRAFT* Minutes

Friday, October 30, 2020, 10:00 AM

Location: Virtual via ZOOM and Room 262, CSI

### **Participants:**

**CSI Board Members:** Mr. Rolf Blizzard (Chair) (virtual), Mr. Malcolm Fearing (Room 262), Mr. Steve Keen (virtual), Mr. Paul O’Neal (virtual), and Mr. James Rispoli (virtual)

**CSI Board Ex-Officio Members:** Dr. Reide Corbett (Room 262), Mr. Michael Kelly (CSI Representative, ECU Foundation) (virtual), Dr. Lynn Leonard, UNCW (for Dr. Christopher Finelli) (virtual), Dr. Ron Mitchelson (virtual), Mr. Wally Overman (Room 262), Dr. Harvey Seim (virtual), and Captain Keith Wheeler, USN, Retired (for Dr. Michael Van Scott) (virtual)

**CSI Staff:** Ms. Kimberly Armstrong (virtual), Mr. George Bonner (Room 262), and Mr. Robert McClendon (virtual)

### **Absent:**

**CSI Board Member (Emeritus):** Mr. Irvin Aldridge

**CSI Board Ex-Officio Members:** Dr. Christopher Finelli, Dr. Grant Hayes, Dr. Margery Overton, Dr. Kuldeep Rawat, Dr. Kimberly van Noort, and Dr. Michael Van Scott

### ***Convene***

Mr. Rolf Blizzard, Chair, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Mr. Malcolm Fearing made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wally Overman. All were in favor. Agenda was approved. Mr. Overman made a motion to approve minutes from the last BOD meeting held on June 19, 2020. Mr. Fearing seconded the motion. All were in favor. Minutes were approved.

Mr. Blizzard invited Interim Chancellor Ron Mitchelson to proceed with his report.

### ***Interim Chancellor Mitchelson’s Report***

Dr. Mitchelson stated that when the Board met in June, he was optimistic about having students on campus in the Fall. The semester began well but then there was a three-week period with a surge of positive COVID-19 tests. The unfavorable situation resulted in the necessity to revert to remote learning. Students moved out of the dorms and returned home. Plans are for students to return to campus for the Spring semester. Residence halls will be single occupancy. There will be about 2000 students on campus. There will be an abundance of quarantine and isolation spaces available. The Spring plan is much improved over what was attempted in the Fall. The semester will begin January 19, 2021. Spring Break has been eliminated – want to play it safe.

Dr. Mitchelson stated that the estimate in revenue decline for ECU is around \$40 million. There will be an announcement regarding more furloughs next week. He stated the ECU chancellor search is ongoing with significant progress. The committee has presented two recommendations to Mr. Peter Hans and the UNC Board of Trustees. May know who the new chancellor will be by early January. Regarding the state budget and funding for next fiscal year, there is a fiscal sustainability coordinating group (led by Dr. Michael Van Scott) reviewing new sources of revenue, such as new degree programs and extending online learning to adult learners and military members. Recommendations will be presented to the new chancellor, no later than early June. Dr. Mitchelson stated that he remains a strong advocate for CSI.

Mr. Blizzard thanked Dr. Mitchelson for his service and support. He invited Dr. Reide Corbett to present his report.

### ***Director's Report***

Dr. Corbett relayed to the Board that he had spoken with Mr. Irvin Aldridge shortly before the Board meeting began. Mr. Aldridge is currently hospitalized, and he requested to be removed from the Board. Dr. Corbett shared that Mr. Aldridge expressed his enjoyment in having been involved with CSI and in his service to the Board.

Dr. Corbett presented a slide show and discussed the strategic planning annual progress report. He explained that Integrated Coastal Programs (ICP) is the umbrella organization that CSI falls under. CSI is an extremely important cornerstone for the program and is an integral part of ECU's coastal initiative. Efforts are underway to steer more academic programs and research towards the OBX campus.

**Semester Experience at the Coast – Spring 2021:** Dr. Corbett shared a marketing video for the program. The plan is to accept 15 – 20 students. Students will stay at Friends of Elizabeth Guesthouse in single rooms. The program will be a full semester and students will meet face-to-face. Courses include natural and social sciences and art. COVID safeguards will be in place throughout the program just as the OBX Field School instructors have done by creating a safe environment for their students at CSI this fall. Semester at the Coast students will be afforded opportunities for independent research and internships. Dr. Corbett has promoted the program on campus and has held a virtual Town Hall. In addition, former students act as ambassadors on campus to help promote the program. Upon completion of the program, students can earn as many as 15 semester credit hours.

**OBX Field School:** There are 10 students participating in the program. Students have internships and are involved in a capstone project which is wrapping up the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a 3-year study regarding wastewater treatment. The capstone presentation will be virtual and will be live-streamed. Board members will be notified of the date and time of the presentation.

**Research Experience for Undergraduates:** This initiative is funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and addresses Resilience and Adaptation to Coastal Changes Across Virtual Communities. It comprises a coastal emphasis with an interdisciplinary team focus in multiple locations. ECU is the lead with partners Clemson University and the University of Puerto Rico. The program will begin on CSI's campus. Selected students will be notified early next year and will begin work in the summer. The duration of the program is 10-weeks. Participating students will receive a stipend.

**North Carolina Renewable Ocean Energy Program (NCROEP) Update:** Mr. George Bonner (Director, NCROEP) stated due to COVID, the NCROEP spring symposium was held online.

Last week, the team conducted a webinar with 110 registered participants. Mr. Bonner stated that NC A & T (one of CSI's partner universities) received a Rising Star Award in the Marine Energy Collegiate Competition sponsored by U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). The competition challenged multidisciplinary teams of undergraduate and graduate students to develop unique solutions to advance the marine energy industry and to support the blue economy.

Mr. Bonner stated it is an exciting time for renewable energy around the world. The program has received \$6.76 million in external funding from agencies such as DOE, National Science Foundation, and DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency).

Dr. Corbett inserted that North Carolina is investing in renewable energy and CSI is encouraging researchers to think beyond the state for funding.

Mr. Bonner stated the program has received \$335,000 from DOE for a study titled, "Resilience in Remote Island Communities." It addresses issues such as planning an affordable, resilient, and sustainable NC power grid.

Mr. Bonner provided updates on the DOE sponsored Waves to Water (W2W) competition – developing a desalination system that relies on the power of ocean waves to function. The schedule has been impacted by COVID and they are now in the mid part of the 5-stage competition. Competitors for the final drink stage will travel to Jennette's Pier in Spring 2022 for in-the-water testing of devices. The W2W competition presents CSI with opportunities for education – K -12, undergraduates – and for business and engineering firm sponsorships.

Mr. Bonner stated that a researcher in the NCROEP has been selected for a national energy education award through the Energy, Education, and Empowerment program. He can't reveal her identity now, but an announcement will be made in December.

***University Advancement:*** Dr. Corbett stated that he and Mr. Michael Kelly joined in a meeting yesterday (10/29) with ECU University Advancement officials Ms. Melissa Adamson, Mr. Christopher Dyba, and Ms. Kendra Alexander. A goal has been set to raise \$500,000 in the next 5 years. This past year, \$2500 was raised. Dr. Corbett encouraged members to give and asked that they encourage others to give. Ms. Adamson joined in on the phone to talk about efforts to obtain philanthropic support for CSI. She spent time during the previous evening meeting with ECU alumni and potential donors on the Outer Banks. She would like to meet in person with the Board members and discuss what they would like to accomplish and to share ideas that would inspire financial contributions to support CSI's mission.

Dr. Corbett stated he would like to help students financially to attend classes at CSI. He is committing to give \$5,000 to a scholarship fund to assist students in offsetting various costs. He stated that recently, the family of a former student made a \$50,000 donation to ECU's Dive, Water, Safety program. He stated that he held an hour-long virtual Town Hall which introduced participants to CSI's coastal initiatives. He plans to hold another Town Hall in the Spring.

He stated a special project that he would like to see funded is an Outdoor Boardwalk Classroom. He shared design renderings and said the boardwalk would expand opportunities for research in the Croatan Sound.

***Student Housing Update:*** Dr. Corbett stated that CSI continues to utilize Friends of Elizabeth for undergraduate housing.

## ***Financial Report***

Dr. Corbett provided handouts and slides of spreadsheets. ICP and CSI had a budget cut in FY'21 of about \$80,000. Many questions remain regarding budget cuts for FY'22. A committee of faculty and staff are running scenarios for 5 -15% budget reductions and thinking about how to meet a reduction of that size.

He stated there is an ongoing effort to make the Outer Banks campus student and researcher friendly. CSI will now have its own street name: Coastal Campus Way. A new street sign will be erected within the next two weeks.

At CSI, a Coastal Computing Laboratory has been created to provide a collaborative space for intensive modeling and analyses of data regarding our complex coastal environments. This is a great addition for researchers and graduate students.

Dr. Corbett stated there are COP (Certificate of Participation) Funds (money left over from facility construction) available in the amount of \$80,000. These funds are limited to items that were "value-engineered" out during construction. Consideration is being given to utilizing the funds to construct a boat storage structure. The total cost for this project is estimated at \$200,000. It's possible that funds from CSI and ICP can be used to fund the remaining \$120,000.

***Centers and Institutes Reporting:*** Dr. Corbett discussed proposals and grants. He stated that for metrics purposes, it is important for institutes and centers to establish "membership" in the organization. There are 17 scientists physically located at CSI. CSI also has affiliated scientists, such as the ones associated with the NCROEP. CSI had a strong growth in research (proposals and grants) this past fiscal year. Indications suggest FY'21 will surpass FY'20.

Dr. Corbett talked about an NSF program: CoPe Coastlines and People – CoPe Large-scale Hub: Collaboratory for Coastal Adaptation Over Space and Time. It is focused on scientific research into complex coastal systems and the interplay with coastal hazards and is vital for predicting, responding to, and mitigating threats in these regions. The funding is \$20 million and includes UNC Chapel Hill, ECU, Duke, NCSU, and Ohio State. The work utilizes NC as a laboratory and brings together a unique network of scientists across and beyond the NC System.

He stated that Dr. David Lagomasino (Assistant Professor, Department of Coastal Studies) is using remote sensing (the tools he uses to collect data in coastal environments) in a unique way. Dr. Lagomasino has teamed with colleagues from MIT and Harvard University to determine changes that COVID is having across the world. They have collected remote data sets regarding changes in areas such as transportation, shipping, and vehicular traffic.

Dr. Corbett stated that Dr. Andy Keeler (Public Policy and Coastal Sustainability) is retiring in January 2021. Dr. Keeler will be missed at CSI and ECU. He has been involved as Associate Director of the OBX Field School and plans to remain engaged to some extent next Fall. Dr. Keeler's salary is derived from the UNC System (recruitment and retention fund). When he leaves, \$50,000 will remain in this fund but can only be used for other salaries. When FY'21 ends, the funds will no longer be available.

## ***Board Member Initiatives***

***New Board Members:*** Mr. Blizzard stated that Mr. Overman (Chair, Governance Committee) was tasked with addressing Board member replacements and reappointments.

Mr. Overman stated that Mr. Blizzard and Mr. James Rispoli were reappointed to serve through 2021. The new appointees brought before the Board for consideration are: Dr. Kirk Havens (Virginia Institute for Marine Science), Dr. Jack Bagwell (President, College of the Albemarle), and Dr. Walter Holton (retired physician, Manteo). Mr. Overman made a motion to accept the new members. Mr. Fearing seconded the motion. All were in favor. New Board appointees were approved.

Mr. Blizzard stated the names of the prospective Board members will now be forwarded to ECU Interim Chancellor Dr. Mitchelson for consideration and approval.

***Student Housing:*** Mr. Overman stated that Dare County is moving ahead with the Bowser Town (in Manteo near the public boat ramp) proposal. The project will consist of 48 one- and two-bedroom apartment units with rent estimated at \$600 - \$800 a month. He stated there are also two other potential sites under review.

Mr. Fearing suggested that current Board members and possibly new members work together to evaluate potential property for housing and make a proposal to the Board. He would like to extend the invitation to Dr. Corbett and ECU Campus Housing department representatives.

Mr. Fearing stated that the Friends of Elizabeth housing currently being utilized by CSI is listed for sale at 2.57 million. Two additional adjacent lots are included in the listing.

***Other New Business:*** Mr. Blizzard stated that since the last Board meeting, Mr. Tom Murphy has passed away and reminded everyone that Mr. Murphy was an important part of CSI's history. He stated that this event reemphasizes the need to formally honor and recognize those who have contributed to the existence and success of CSI. It is time to begin acting on naming rooms or buildings and displaying plaques, etc. He stated that all efforts to accomplish this must be consistent with ECU policy. It also presents an opportunity to leverage these opportunities with fund-raising efforts. Mr. Blizzard charged the Governance Committee with this assignment. Mr. Overman will oversee the assignment with recommendations provided to the Board. Mr. Blizzard encouraged Mr. Overton to include Mr. Kelly in the discussion. He also suggested that this type of honorarium information could be included on the CSI website. Dr. Corbett will provide ECU's policy to Mr. Overman.

Mr. Fearing suggested that Mr. Aldridge be recognized with a letter and/or plaque for his long service and support to CSI. Mr. Blizzard agreed and stated that he will coordinate this effort with Dr. Corbett and Dr. Mitchelson.

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Fearing made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Rispoli seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Armstrong