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Government Affairs Committee, February 17, 2011

Coastal Carolina University

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Minutes
Coastal Carolina University
Board of Trustees

Government Affairs Committee
February 17, 2011

Committee Members Present: Mr. Samuel H. Frink, Mr. J. Wayne George, Ms. Natasha M. Hanna, Representative Nelson Hardwick, Mr. Mark S. Kelley, Mr. William L. Lyles Jr., and Horry County Councilman Chairman Tom Rice

Other Board Members Present: Mr. William H. Alford, Mr. Gary W. Brown, Mr. R. Duke Brown, Mr. D. Wyatt Henderson, Mr. Charles J. Hodge, and Mr. Eugene C. Spivey

Others Present: Dr. Debbie Conner, Dr. David A. DeCenzo, Ms. Martha S. Hunn, Ms. Rose Marie Johnson, Dr. Henry Lowenstein, Mr. Tim Meacham, Ms. Anne T. Monk, Councilman Paul Price, Mr. Robert L. Rabon, Dr. Rob Sheehan, Dr. Holley E. Tankersley, Dr. Judy W. Vogt, Ms. Jennifer Packard and Ms. Chyrel Stalvey

(In accordance with the requirements of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, the news media were notified of the time, location, and agenda for the meeting.)

Mr. Lyles brought the meeting to order at 3:25 p.m. Representative Nelson Hardwick, Horry Council Councilman Paul Price, and Horry County Chairman Tom Rice were welcomed to the committee.

Ms. Natasha Hanna moved to approve the Government Affairs Committee minutes of October 22, 2010. Mr. Sam Frink seconded and the motion carried.

Mr. Mark Kelley reported that the Regulatory Relief Bill is on the House floor and set to be debated on February 22. A poll was conducted of House members and 102 of the 223 were contacted. Of that 93 members are in favor of the bill, seven have problems with the bill, and 23 members were unavailable. There is overwhelming support for the bill, including the Horry County Legislative Delegation.

Although there is a proposed proviso that all university professors must teach at least nine hours a semester, he does not believe that it will last very long as it will be a problem for all institutions.

At the last Budget and Control Board meeting, Governor Haley deferred our phase I projects until the next meeting. The Chief of Staff of the Treasurer's Office did not seem to have problems with these projects. Mr. Kelley has an appointment with the Comptroller General to talk about those issues next week. We are hopeful to have three out of the five votes at the next meeting.

**Government Affairs Committee
February 17, 2011**

During February Dr. DeCenzo and Mr. Kelley met with all of our Congressmen and staff of the Senators in Washington, D.C. Both the House and Senate have committed not to have earmarks and our legislators are trying to find ways to provide the needs of our state. Senator Graham's assistant, Andrew King, recommended that we work heavily in the grants program and inform the congressional delegation of the applications we submit. We had requested help for archaeology, science equipment, and the Litchfield campus; but, the earmarks issue stopped this progress. Senator Clyburn stated that if we could find some way to tie the Sandy Island project to grants, he would assist.

Ms. Anne Monk stated that Rob Young is the new Interim Grants Officer and a new Grants Projector Coordinator has been hired. More than 60 grant applications were submitted last year.

Mr. Robert Rabon reported that the Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Corporation has been recast, a strategic plan has been developed, and the committees have been working real hard. Mr. Doug Wendell is the new chairman and Mr. Billy Alford is the vice-chairman.

The website is being updated and will interface with the S.C. Department of Commerce, NESAs, and other key businesses/industries. New business prospects are being courted with the hopes to bring them to the area. On March 10, Governor Haley will be at Pine Lakes for a meet and greet from 4-5 p.m. and there will be a fundraiser event that evening.

Dr. Henry Lowenstein has been asked to assist the EDC with technical research support and is an ex-officio member of the Board. A list of his key projects was distributed. An Horry County resident vendor procurement policy has been developed and has been approved unanimously by the EDC. It will now go through the county and will help with the creation of jobs.

Another important project is the workforce educational analysis. There is a 60% variance in the unemployment rate when a county's population has bachelor degrees of 25% or higher. No county in the Pee Dee has that and Horry County has the highest with 20.4%. There are three ways to get there: attracting jobs that bring in people who have the education, continued migration of a population over 25 years of age with a bachelor's degree, and CCU continuing to grow.

Ms. Rose Marie Johnson continues to work with the strategic planners "Vision for Horry" networking community and the next meeting is March 17. All service providers in Horry and Georgetown Counties will be present. They will have an opportunity to talk about the grants that they are working on and develop strategies for the individual entities to work together. The staff of the Horry County Planning and Development staff will present a comprehensive planning update. North Myrtle Beach will be hosting the lunch and will give an update of their plans. Grand Strand Water and Sewer will host a roundtable.

Dr. DeCenzo thanked Rep. Nelson Hardwick for his assistance when Sandy Island was transferred from DOT to the Nature Conservancy a couple of weeks ago. He was instrumental in making sure that CCU would continue to have research access there.

Government Affairs Committee
February 17, 2011

Senator Hardwick feels that some of the problems in South Carolina are because we do not work together. He would like to develop heritage and eco-tourism by building a Gullah-Geechie Center in Bucksport, and be more appreciative of the historical significance of Sandy Island. While the commemoration events of 150 years since the beginning of the Civil War is taking place, he would like to see the Burgess community have an Emancipation Day Commemoration and bring First Lady Michelle Obama to the area as some of her family may have lived on Sandy Island.

Horry County Council Chairman Tom Rice stated that we all have shrinking budgets and we need to develop initiatives to combine forces within the county and deliver better services. We can be a champion for the taxpayers. Councilman Price is dedicated to making things better in the county by becoming more efficient and expanding businesses.

Dr. DeCenzo stated that Coastal Carolina stands ready to help the county in any way that we can.

There being no further business, Mr. George moved to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Samuel H. Frink
Secretary/Treasurer