

**SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION
President and Executive Director Search Committee**

Meeting held at
1122 Lady Street, Suite 300
Columbia, S.C. 29201
10:00 a.m.

Minutes of the Meeting
February 7, 2019

Commissioners Attending

Ms. Dianne Kuhl, Chair of Committee
Mr. Wes Hayes, Chair of Commission
Mr. Paul Batson

Mr. Charles Munns
Ms. Terry Seckinger

Guests Attending

Mr. Dwight Cauthen, Silver Crescent LLC
Mr. Kevin Paul, Division of State Human Resources
Mr. Tim Van Horn, Barr Education
Mr. Karen Wingo, Division of State Human Resources

Commission Staff Present

Mr. Mike LeFever
Ms. Laura Belcher

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Kuhl convened the meeting at 10:11 a.m. and welcomed all in attendance. It was confirmed that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. Ms. Belcher introduced the guests in attendance.

2. Overview of Hiring Process

Chair Kuhl introduced Ms. Karen Wingo, Director of the Division of State Human Resources (DSHR), who presented information on the hiring of an agency head. She referred to Ms. Donna Foster of the Agency Head Salary Commission and commented that Ms. Foster is scheduled to conduct a training to the full Commission at its 1pm meeting. Ms. Wingo stated that agency head positions were not required by law to be publicly posted, but she then explained that if the position is posted, it creates transparency and agencies can potentially avoid the cost of executive search firms. She explained that two agencies have recently engaged in an agency head search: the Office of the Child Advocate which did not elect to use a search firm; and the Department of Social Services which did elect to use one. Ms. Wingo clarified that an agency does not need to choose one option or another, but could choose candidates to interview from submitted applications to a public posting and also at a point in the process engage a search firm.

In regards to engaging a search firm, Ms. Wingo stated that the first step is to request DSHR approval through a simple request letter or email. She then continued by saying once the approval is given, then an agency can engage one of the three search firms on state contract. She distributed a handout with information on the firms: Find Great People, Coleman Lew Associates, and Randi Frank Consulting, LLC. Commissioner Batson asked about the payment process. Ms. Wingo answered that all three firms have set fees to initiate a search and a set percentage of first year salary. Commissioner Kuhl asked whether the search firms pay for the candidates' interview expenses. After consulting with a colleague, Ms. Wingo answered that the firms do not.

Ms. Wingo concluded by stating that the DSHR can serve the Committee and agency in any consulting role needed. She explained that the Division can vet the applicants prior to sending them to the Committee or send all that are submitted. Commissioner Kuhl asked about the vetting process and expressed support for the DSHR to conduct the initial screening. Ms. Wingo replied that the Division usually vets applications according to education requirements. The Committee then discussed the use of a search firm and expressed support for posting the position and then, if necessary, the consideration of hiring a search firm. Commissioner Seckinger expressed support for a candidate that is knowledgeable of South Carolina government. Commissioner Munns asked whether the Committee could stipulate what type of information is provided in the application process. Ms. Wingo responded affirmatively and gave examples of adding supplemental questions to the application and asking for references. Ms. Wingo distributed information regarding FOIA rules on the final three candidates, and an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) guidance document on prohibited employment policies and practices.

3. Discussion of Position Description

Chair Kuhl began the discussion on the draft position description distributed to the Search Committee. She expressed concern that the description included a statement about a terminal degree being preferred. She continued by stating that, in her opinion, experience in a leadership role was more important than a certain earned degree. Commissioner Batson suggested that the language be presented in such a way that would not discourage an individual without a terminal degree or an individual with a terminal degree from applying for the position. Commissioner Munns stated that he thinks the position should require a Master's degree. Chair Kuhl asked for feedback from Ms. Wingo. Ms. Wingo replied that most agencies specify the degree level required but some agencies specify a degree level "plus" certain number of years' experience in the field (Bachelor's plus 10 or Master's plus 5). The Committee discussed and expressed support for the statement "graduate degree is preferred." The Committee discussed the importance of the position's responsibility in managing a state agency while also balancing the need for the position to coordinate higher education institutions. CHE Chair Hayes stressed the importance of the position's relationship with the General Assembly. Chair Kuhl concluded the discussion stating that she will revise the position description based on the Committee's conversation and feedback submitted by Commissioner members. She then stated that the Committee will review the revised draft.

4. Executive Session

The Committee did not consider or enter Executive Session.

5. Other Business

Chair Kuhl then discussed administrative concerns. She asked Interim President and Executive Director Mike LeFever which staff would be assigned to the Committee. Mr. LeFever answered that Laura Belcher would serve in that role. Chair Kuhl asked staff to prepare a budget for the Committee. Mr. LeFever agreed to provide a draft budget for the Committee to consider. Chair Kuhl distributed a confidentiality agreement to Committee members for their signatures. She stated that a tentative timeline would be considered at the next meeting. She expressed support for the DSHR to conduct an initial screening of candidates with Committee members then reviewing and scoring the screened applicants using defined evaluation metrics. The Committee then reviewed the draft "Charge to the Committee" and suggested striking language about an advisory group and including the language "one or more candidates." The Committee discussed the development of a press release that would be sent when the position posting is live. The Committee also discussed the use of ads in national publications.

With no other business to discuss, Chair Kuhl adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.