

## **WEST VIRGINIA SCIENCE AND RESEARCH COUNCIL**

### **December 10, 2020**

A meeting of the West Virginia Science and Research Council was held on December 10, 2020 at 1:15 p.m. via video conference call. Attendance was as follows:

#### **MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Dr. Sarah Tucker  
Dr. J. Ulises Toledo  
Dr. Fred King  
Dr. Juliana Serafin  
Anne Barth  
Rachel Roberts  
Dr. John Maher  
Kelsey Staggers for Ed Gaunch  
Joey Wiseman for Clayton Burch  
Dr. Laura Gibson  
Dr. Maura McLaughlin  
Dr. Jack Dever  
Dr. Mike Norton

#### **OTHERS**

Annette Carpenter  
Angela Sundstrom  
Dr. Suzanne Strait  
Dr. Sheena Murphy  
Dr. Jack Smith

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

After declaring a quorum was present, Dr. Tucker called the meeting to order at 1:17 p.m. Dr. Tucker introduced one new Council member, Dr. Jack Dever and one new staff member, Dr. Suzanne Strait.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve the minutes from the prior meeting held on June 25, 2020 requested; the motion carried.

#### **APPROVAL OF REPORTS** (Juliana Serafin)

##### Annual Report on the State Science and Technology Plan

A motion to approve the annual report on the State Science and Technology Plan previously approved the Higher Education Policy Commission was requested; the motion carried.

##### Annual Report on the Research Trust Fund

A motion to approve the annual report on Research Trust Fund previously approved the Higher Education Policy Commission was requested; the motion carried.

##### Annual Report on the Research Challenge Fund

A motion to approve the annual report on Research Challenge Fund previously approved the Higher Education Policy Commission was requested; the motion carried.

All reports will be posted the [wvresearch.org](http://wvresearch.org) website.

#### **SELECTION OF PROPOSAL** (Fred King, John Maher, Ulises Toledo)

Dr. King reported that two proposals were considered by a subcommittee of the Science and Research Council in the final phases of the white paper selection for the next NSF EPSCoR RII Track 1 proposal. Both projects were led by WVU but one had significantly more experience (Connectomics) in terms of leadership and is a good match for the state of WV. The other proposal (SmartCity) was forward thinking but is not ready for a Track 1 proposal..

Dr. Maher stated that both proposals had very capable teams and that there was a great effort in collaboration this round. However, he concurred Dr. King's remarks in that experienced leadership is key to success and was the determining factor. The work proposed under Connectomics is topnotch; it does need more development to make it into an RII Track 1 proposal but there is time to do this.

Dr. Toledo agreed with both Drs. Maher and King. He stated that the Connectomics had more potential for the state.

A motion to approve the VPRs' recommendation to proceed with Connectomics was requested. Dr. Serafin and Dr. Norton recused themselves from the voting process; motion carried.

### **VISION 2025 REVISION** (Juliana Serafin)

Before beginning a new Track 1 proposal, it's been determined that *Vision 2025* (the state's science and technology "S&T" plan) needs to be updated to include research topics to align with our proposal. In addition, despite the name of the plan, it's five years old and needs updated. Bids to hire a vendor for assistance were obtained and an award was made to RTI international. Interviews of the Council members are underway and the vendor has set up meetings with the subcommittee of the Council that take place every other week. Dr. Tucker inquired about who else would be interviewed (state government, universities, industry). Dr. Serafin will circulate the spreadsheet with the list to the group and requested that the Council provide feedback. The goal is to have a new plan in place by April 2021.

A motion to proceed with the plan of action/timeline was requested; the motion carried.

### **RII SUPPLEMENT/EXTENSION** (Juliana Serafin, Annette Carpenter)

The current RII Track 1 grant was originally to end on July 31, 2020. A request to extend was granted and the new ending date is July 31, 2021. At the time of the extension, we were not eligible for a supplement because our cash balance was too high. As of December, we are officially under the threshold to request a supplement to support operations and outreach activities. Dr. Serafin is working with the NSF program officer for final approval; she and Annette Carpenter plan to submit the supplemental proposal next week. A second extension will be requested in the spring and will trigger the need for another annual report due in May.

### **COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH** (Suzanne Strait, Angela Sundstrom)

Dr. Strait provided detailed information on our 5 recent Instrumentation and 2 Innovation grant awards; a press release with the same information will be issued soon. Angela Sundstrom gave a brief update on the Division's communication plan, including the expansion of the Neuron magazine, our scientist spotlight video series focusing on industry leaders, branding updates related changes made by HEPC and the STEM speaker series with the possibility of more virtual events.

### **OTHER**

Dr. Toledo reported on the outcome of the RII Track 1 All Hands Meeting that was held virtually in November. Overall, the meeting was a success with video presentations from students. Dr. Serafin noted that permissions from students are underway with the hopes of posting their videos to the web for sharing.

Undergraduate Research Day will be held virtually in March 2021. The division will play a more hands on role this year and will post the presentations on our website.

Dr. McLaughlin requested that we develop a tracking system for students after a projects end. Ideas included adding them to our e-newsletter mailing list, a mentoring plan, a Facebook group, email forwarding for life and adding feature stories to the Neuron "where are they now". Dr. Strait and Ms. Sundstrom are to follow up.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next regular meeting of the Council is slated for April 2021. Dr. Serafin will circulate possible dates soon.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 2:06 p.m.