



**Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium
Executive Committee Annual Meeting
MINUTES**

Monday, August 25, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

Attendees:

Dr. Stuart Bell, University of Alabama
Dr. Jack Hawkins, Troy University
Dr. Steven Leath, Auburn University
Dr. Tony Waldrop, University of South Alabama
Dr. John Valentine, Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium
David England, Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium
Shelley Stephens, Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium

Absent:

Dr. John Stewart, University of Montevallo

- Meeting called to order and roll call by Dr. Waldrop, Chair of the Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium (MESC) Executive Committee.
- Dr. Waldrop called to approve minutes from the 2016 MESC Executive Committee conference call on August 8, 2016. Motion made to approve the minutes; motion seconded. Motion to approve minutes carried by unanimous vote of committee members present.
- Dr. Valentine thanked the members of the MESC Executive Committee on behalf of the faculty, staff, and students of the MESC.
- As a point of information, Mr. David England, MESC Director of Finance, and Ms. Shelley Stephens, Executive Assistant to MESC Executive Director, were also on the call to address any technical questions about the budget and to record the meeting minutes.
- There were no open items to be discussed as old business.
- FISCAL YEAR 2017 BUDGET –
 - The budget numbers were broken down categorically to facilitate the discussion on the budget.
 - MESC is conservatively projecting small increases in both expenses and revenues in the coming year, based on historical changes in our budget data this past 5 years, and grants and contracts we have in hand.
 - The total budget set at over \$24.1 million; half of this comes from grants and contracts. Our employment levels remain steady with an even mix of hard and soft money employees. Currently we have 113 employees.
 - I suspect you will spot a difference between project grants and contracts and committed extramural awards listed on the back page of Document A. This seeming discrepancy result of grants spanning 2-3-year periods, plus some no-cost extensions we are filing now.

- In terms of contingency, it is set at 6% which is consistent with the previous six years.
- On the back of Document A as you can see the budget highlights; among the proposed revenue adjustments is those made for the private institutions which have not been adjusted since 2004. The new numbers are based on the average rate charged by private schools, minus the highest and lowest hourly rates among the institutions. You should note that proposed rate increase brings our private institution rate in line with those charged by our public member schools (\$315).
- SUMMER SCHOOL PERFORMANCE METRICS
 - On the next 3 documents in your package (labeled B, C, D), you can find the distributions of credit hours among the member schools of our 22-member schools, 17 schools sent students to DISL this summer, students from 3 institutions enrolled in graduate courses offered throughout the year (Document C). Document D shows the long-term trend in terms of summer enrollment; the data show we are continuing to strongly appeal to student interests
 - Document E provides insights into how well the K-12 program, Discovery Hall, is thought of in Alabama. All the summer programs operated at, or in one case, over capacity this year. Also not mentioned in the graph form, we will be close to 10,000 visiting students participating in DHP in 2016-2017.
 - Document F is the state auditor's annual report. The take home message from this report is a 19th consecutive year of no findings – a clean audit.
- CAMPUS RENOVATION STATUS
 - Updates on the campus renovations are covered in the budget highlights (Document A). We have made a difference with the bond. Anticipated completion is March of 2018.
- USCG PROPERTY
 - USCG has decided to divest themselves from the recreational property located adjacent to the DISL campus. It's listed as a 27-acre parcel but based on property maps located in the tax assessor's office, about half of it is under water. We have since discovered that the county values the property at \$1.6 million. It is not clear if this estimate is based on the 27 acres. We have been in regular communication with a GSA who is handling the process for the USCG.
 - They will not provide us with an estimate of the property value and apparently, they have not had a survey done
 - We have ordered our own appraisal and survey of the property
 - Justification for this effort is that we are becoming space limited and the acquisition of this property would be in the long-term interest of the MESC in terms of physical plant growth.
- MESC OUTREACH
 - Call your attention to our efforts at the local, state, and national levels, plus campus visits to nine of the 22 MESC campuses.
- CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
 - Update on grants, education, and some monitoring
- Dr. Tony Waldrop called for any additional comments or questions.
- Dr. Tony Waldrop called for the call to adjourn to a brief Executive Session.