

Hope Scholarship Board Meeting Minutes

322 70th Street, SE – 2nd Floor Conference Room
Charleston, WV 25304

June 21, 2022

The meeting of the Hope Scholarship Board was called to order by Treasurer Riley Moore, Chair, on Tuesday, June 21, 2022 at 3:03 pm after determination that a quorum of members was present through a silent roll call. Board members attending the meeting in person were State Auditor's Designee, Anthony Woods, State Attorney General, Patrick Morrissey, and State Superintendent of Schools Designee, Dustin Lambert. State Treasurer, Riley Moore, Chair; Chancellor of Higher Education's Designee, Brian Weingart; and Parent Representatives, Amanda Hoylman and Charles Russell, attended virtually via Microsoft Teams. Director of the Herbert Henderson Office of Minority Affairs, Jill Upson, also joined the meeting virtually at approximately 3:23 pm. Parent Representative Jonathan "Zak" Ritchie was absent.

The following West Virginia State Treasurer's Office (WVSTO) staff members attended the meeting in person: Sarah Canterbury, James Fuerhoff, Jared Hunt, Gina Joynes, Lindsay Marchio, Adam Shuemake, Michelle Storage, Amy Willard and Carly Williams. Steven Travis of the West Virginia Attorney General's Office and Heather Hutchens and Kelli Talbott of the West Virginia Department of Education were also present. Approximately five members of the public attended the meeting virtually.

The agenda for the meeting consisted of the following:

- I. Welcome – Introductions/Roll Call – Call to Order
- II. Approval of Minutes from the April 18, 2022 Meeting
- III. Consideration of Requests for Applications
- IV. Hope Scholarship Program Update
- V. Discuss pending lawsuit *T. Beaver et. al. v. R. Moore et. al.* with counsel - This agenda item may involve an Executive Session as provided in W. Va. Code §6-9A-4 [matters involving attorney-client privilege per *Peters v. County Commission*, 205 W. Va. 481 (1990)]. The Board majority must vote to have an Executive Session. (No action will be taken in Executive Session).
- VI. Future meetings
- VII. Adjournment

Approval of Minutes

The Chair indicated the first item on the agenda was the approval of the minutes of the April 18, 2022 meeting, which were distributed to the members prior to the meeting. The Chair asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes and none were noted. A motion to approve the minutes was

made by Patrick Morrissey and seconded by Brian Weingart. The Chair asked for discussion and there was none. The Chair polled the members and the motion to approve the minutes was adopted.

Consideration of Requests for Applications

The Chair indicated the next item on the agenda was the consideration of requests for Hope Scholarship applications. The Chair recognized Deputy Treasurer of Savings Programs, Amy Willard to give the update.

Ms. Willard indicated that under Section 4.3 of the Hope Scholarship Legislative rules, the Hope Scholarship Board is able to accept applications from eligible students who missed the application period on a case-by-case basis at any time during the academic year as long as all other eligibility criteria are met. In addition, that same section of the legislative rules indicates that students who were not eligible during the application window can submit an application for the scholarship at any time during the academic year after becoming eligible for the program.

Ms. Willard indicated that as of the end of the day on Monday, June 20, 2022, Board staff had received 190 requests to apply for the Hope Scholarship Program outside of the application window. Board staff categorized the 190 requests into the following categories for the reason for the late application:

- Newly Aware of Program - 96
- School Choice Decision - 49
- Other - 30
- Unaware of Application Deadline - 15

Based on the limited information provided on the application request form, of the 190 requests, 108 of the students appear to be eligible, 7 students appear to be ineligible, and staff is unable to make a preliminary eligibility determination for 75 of the students due to missing WVEIS ID#s on the request forms.

Upon conclusion of Ms. Willard's report, the Chair asked if there were any questions. None were heard. The Chair asked for a motion to allow eligible students that have missed the Hope Scholarship application deadline to apply for the program. A motion was made by Brian Weingart and seconded by Amanda Hoylman.

The Chair asked if there was any discussion regarding the question before the Board. Patrick Morrissey inquired why students should be allowed to apply outside the window. Ms. Willard indicated that since the Hope Scholarship is a new program, many individuals who have submitted requests seemed to be unaware of the program and that the Board may want to allow individuals the opportunity to apply after the deadline for this initial year of the program. Ms. Willard indicated the Board may not want to handle the application requests the same in the future once the program has been established. She indicated that Board staff needed direction from the Board on how to handle the application requests. Patrick Morrissey asked if the deadline for Hope Scholarship applications was written in statute. Ms. Canterbury indicated that it was not – that it was included by the Board in the legislative rules. Mr. Morrissey indicated that he felt comfortable moving forward based on Ms. Canterbury's response.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chair polled the members, and the motion was adopted. Dustin Lambert, State Superintendent of Schools designee, abstained from the vote.

The Chair then asked for a motion to permit Hope Scholarship Board staff from the Treasurer's Office to review, approve, or deny applications that are submitted after the application deadline for the 2022-2023 school year. A motion was made by Brian Weingart and seconded by Anthony Woods. The Chair asked for discussion and none was heard. The Chair polled the members and the motion was adopted.

Hope Scholarship Program Update

The Chair indicated the next item on the agenda was a general update regarding the Hope Scholarship Program. The Chair recognized Deputy Treasurer of Savings Programs, Amy Willard to give the update.

Ms. Willard stated that as of Monday, June 20, 2022, the application counts were as follows by category:

- o Awarded - 3146
- o Declined - 41
- o Eligible - 2
- o Ineligible - 229
- o In review - 5
- o On hold - 247
- o Submitted - 21

She further indicated the Hope Scholarship team is slowly making progress on the on-hold applications. Many applications have issues with the WVEIS ID number provided by the parent, so it takes time to research that with the West Virginia Department of Education and the county boards of education.

Ms. Willard also announced the application process for education service providers to participate in the Hope Scholarship Program will begin on Thursday, June 30, 2022. This will also include the second phase for the West Virginia non-public schools who were sent unique links to sign up to participate in the program.

Upon conclusion of Ms. Willard's report, the Chair asked if there were any questions. Patrick Morrissey asked currently how much money will be allocated in total to Hope Scholarship recipients. Amy Willard indicated that approximately \$13.5 million will be awarded based on the current number of approved applications. Mr. Morrissey then asked about the financial implications for the county boards of education. Ms. Willard indicated that funding for the county boards of education for next school year was based on their enrollment during the current school year, so county boards of education will not see a reduction in funding due to the Hope Scholarship Program until the subsequent school year.

Discuss pending lawsuit *T. Beaver et. al. v. R. Moore et. al.* with counsel

The Chair indicated the next order of business on the agenda was a discussion on the pending lawsuit, *T. Beaver et. al. v. R. Moore et. al.* with counsel.

Patrick Morrissey made a motion to enter Executive Session as provided in *West Virginia Code, Chapter 6, Article 9A, Section (4), Subsection (b), Subdivision (12)*, based on *Attorney Client Privilege and the Internal Memorandum exception to the WV Freedom of Information Act*. Charles Russell seconded the motion. Upon hearing no discussion, the Chair polled the members, and the motion was approved to move into Executive Session.

The Chair issued a reminder that no action will be taken in Executive Session. All non-board members except for board staff were asked to vacate the conference room and wait downstairs and virtual guests were asked to wait in the TEAMS lobby.

The board entered Executive Session at 3:16 p.m. The board returned to order at 3:22 p.m. All attendees reentered the meeting, either in person or virtually. The Chair reiterated that no action was taken during Executive Session.

Future Meetings

The Chair indicated that the next order of business was to discuss future meetings. He stated the next meeting of the full Hope Scholarship Board will be announced later in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Adjournment

The Chair asked if there was any other business to come before the board. Patrick Morrisey commended and thanked the Hope Scholarship staff for processing 3600 applications and emphasized that this is a tremendous opportunity for education. The Chair agreed with Mr. Morrisey's comments.

Patrick Morrisey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Charles Russell seconded the motion. Upon hearing no discussion, the Chair polled the members and the motion to adjourn the meeting passed. The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 P.M.

Minutes prepared by Amy Willard & Carly Williams

Minutes approved by the Board on October 12, 2022



Riley Moore, Treasurer
Chair of Hope Scholarship Board