



**GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CITIZENS (GACEC)**  
**Leadership Committee Meeting**  
**5:30 PM, April 30, 2024**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Al Cavalier, Bill Doolittle, Ann Fisher, Tika Hartsock, Jessica Mensack, Beth Mineo, Trenee Parker, and Jennifer Pulcinella.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Pam Weir/Executive Director, Theresa Moore/Operations Support Specialist.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Meedra Surratte, and Erik Warner.

- I. **Call to order:** The meeting was started at 5:33 pm. There was a quorum of the members present at this meeting. At the last Leadership Committee Meeting (February) there was not a quorum, so there were no formal meeting minutes. Tika Hartsock stated that she had emailed corrections for the December meeting minutes. Staff does not have them, so Tika is going to resend them. There was a motion by Bill and seconded by Tika to hold off on approval of the December Minutes, until the info is received from Tika and changes can be made and sent out to the Leadership Committee for review. Motion was approved. A motion was made by Trenee Parker and seconded by Bill Doolittle to approve tonight's agenda. The motion was approved.
- II. **Policy and Procedure Manual:** During the April General Membership meeting the Vice Chair and Member at Large election took place. We had some hiccups because there was no actual policy to refer to. The election took place based on how it was always done. Pam discussed the challenges encountered during the nominating process in the April Council meeting due to the lack of a written policy manual. She explained that they had asked for volunteers for the Nominating Committee but received no volunteers. Ann had to reach out to find Council members to get them to work on the Nominating Committee. Bill Doolittle proposed that they involve more members in the process of creating a policy manual to distribute the workload, while Tika questioned the absence of a policy manual that could have served as a guide. Pam stated that everyone is busy, but we have the same small handful of people who are responding to do things. Staff is not getting a lot of responses and Pam voiced concern to be fully transparent and that we will get the same small group of people to agree to work on the policy manual. That could lead to really overburdening these members and will make it hard to complete the process. Pam will talk with Ann and Eric

about putting some funding towards having the Policy Manual drafted by the DeIDHub contractor with any historic information and then given to the Leadership Committee for review and feedback. The aim is to have it reviewed and approved by the full Council within a year. We can decide how you want that done. If approved, you may decide that you want to devote part of the agenda at every Leadership Committee meeting to work on a section of the Policy Manual to review and make necessary changes. Ultimately the goal is to have all sections given to full Council to review, discuss, edit, and have a fully approved implemented Policy Manual within the year. The discussion continued back and forth on implementing a Policy Manual. Some members think there is already one written. Al Cavalier stated that a lot of things have been done by historical precedent. We have followed precedent, and we have not stumbled very often, and when we did, we created an ad hoc committee, or we worked it out in other ways. Al thinks it's more productive for us to use our time to talk about creating a Policy Manual. I've been on the Council for over 30 years. I don't know of any Policy Manual. When people referred to a specific GACEC policy manual, I've never seen it. It may be in existence, but it's a relic. I think it's more productive to say, now's the time. Let's continue to move forward and improve how we do things as all organizations should be doing. Let's focus on what to do, to make things better, as opposed to looking backward. Tika Hartsock doesn't know if something on paper existed. But we did have policies and procedures around these issues. I think that it would be good if we had a starting point. We start from what was already working and then we figure out what isn't working and build from that. It might be helpful to get people that have been the veterans on the Council that can help build that historical knowledge. Al Cavalier stated that Pam has been getting a lot of historical procedural details from Kathie Cherry who has kind of been the institutional memory for this institution. This Policy Manual will mirror the State of Delaware policies. For those who have been on Council for a long time, this should not be new information. There will be a new section on Social Media use. The Leadership Committee asked that Pam outline the process of the creation of the Policy Manual to include the sections that will be included and provide that at the next Leadership Meeting. Al Cavalier asked that when the sections are sent out to the full Council, it should be with the charge to review the content, the overall procedural content and policy, not wordsmithing. Beth Mineo would like to make sure the Leadership Committee takes as much time as needed to reach consensus among us before taking the Policy Manual sections to full Council. We only meet nine times per year and don't have time to spend debating the Policy Manual draft in General Membership meetings. Trenee Parker made a motion that money be transferred to support the contractor that supports the DeIDHub process to begin the creation of a policy manual with a deadline established for the first draft to be submitted to the Leadership Committee. I don't know what a reasonable amount of time would be, perhaps two months from the inception of the contract of the money being transferred so that we can begin the process to have a written policy manual. Jen Pulcinella seconded the motion. The motion passed.

- III. **The 2024 Retreat:** After the retreat last year many people described in their evaluation that they would like the retreat next year to be in person. With the hybrid model people had a hard time hearing and it was too much to get anything done. Bill Doolittle made the motion that the annual retreat be held 100% in person. Treenee Parker seconded the motion. Discussion ensued after the motion was made. Tika Hartsock would like to change up the date now that Council would like to have the meeting 100% in person. Jessica Mensack stated that there was a doodle poll taken back in November of 2023. The consensus of the vote was to have the retreat on October 12<sup>th</sup>. There was no mention whether it would be held in person or hybrid when the poll was taken. Tika Hartsock feels that since the retreat has been virtual since Covid and not stating it would be in person this year is a little misleading. She would like to do a Doodle Poll again if the retreat will be held 100% in person. Ann Fisher reminded members that each member would still be heard. They can communicate with their committees at the September meeting to discuss their committee goals and other information to be brought to the retreat. Jennifer Pulcinella feels that a lot of meetings are going back to 100% in person. You can get more work done in person. After the discussion concluded the vote was taken. The motion for the retreat to be held in person passed. Tika Hartsock is recorded as a no, because of equity concerns.
- IV. **Education Equity Council:** Bill Doolittle gave an update on the Education Equity Council (EEC). Jessica Mensack is the GACEC representative on the EEC. Bill feels the Ombudsman program may shut down for a short period of time starting in July. He is hoping it will be back up and running by the beginning of the school year.
- V. **Adjournment:** Ann Fisher officially adjourned the meeting at 6:34pm.

#### **New Action Items:**

- Pam to create a map of the Policy Manual project timeline to share with the Leadership Committee.