

**IHETS Board of Directors
April 13, 2000
IHETS Conference Room
714 North Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana**

Present: John W. Moore, Indiana State University, Chair; Steven C. Beering, Purdue University; Mihir Chaterjee representing Gerald Lamkin, Ivy Tech State College; Ray Ewick, Indiana State Library; H. Ray Hoops, University of Southern Indiana; Dennis Kramer representing John E. Worthen, Ball State University; Michael McRobbie representing Myles Brand, Indiana University; T.K. Olson, Independent Colleges of Indiana; and David A. King, IHETS Executive Director.

Guests: Geoffrey DePriest, Dept. of Workforce Development; John Huie, PU, Chair of IHETS Management Committee; Louis Jensen, ISU, Chair of IPSE Working Group; Robert Ruble, USI; Philip Swain, PU; Ellen Watson, ISU, Chair of Integrated Technologies Committee; Scott Beauregard, Carol Brunty, Tim Fisher, Nancy Millichap, Mark Rottler, Susan Scott, and Edward Tully, IHETS staff.

Call to Order

Moore called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. with introductions.

Election of Chair

Beering nominated Hoops to serve as the next chairman of the Board of Directors. Olson seconded the motion, and Hoops was elected unanimously.

Report from Subcommittee on Independent Status

As chair of the subcommittee formed to review the status of IHETS, Olson reported that the group had considered several management and fiscal implications of shifting IHETS from its current status with Indiana University as fiscal agent to independence. Financial consequences were significant, no particular advantages emerged, so the subcommittee recommends that the Board take no further action but revisit the question in two or three years. Beering endorsed the report as a second. McRobbie added that the next review might also explore what services could more efficiently be provided by the private sector. The motion carried unanimously.

IHETS Operating Budget for FY2000-01

Huie reported that the Management Committee had carefully reviewed the proposed operating budget and forwarded it to the Board of Directors with a recommendation for approval. King described the major issues confronting IHETS in balancing the budget and described the relationship of the IHETS and Access Indiana State Network components. The two key issues were maintaining support for rapidly escalating higher education connections to AISN, which required an increase in the institutional share per circuit and a cap of \$55,000 per campus site, and how best to meet institutional needs for a fifth satellite channel.

Kramer stated that Ball State is very concerned about the budget direction: BSU will realize significant expense from the price increases, and it is extremely important to bring down the total AISN circuit cost. IHETS' main role is as a circuit utility, and other budget items for program support could better be applied to support circuit costs. Huie added that institutions need to consider their uses for Internet access and, if all they need for some purposes is basic connectivity, it may be better to secure that service from another provider. King described AISN's function as a statewide intranet with better connectivity and lighter traffic flow than the commodity Internet. Ewick noted the original intent to create incentives for private-sector development of infrastructure in the state, leading to lower rates in the future. Moore complimented the Management Committee and King on the improved presentation of the financials.

Beering moved approval of the budget as presented, Hoops seconded, and the motion carried with one negative vote from Ball State. Moore added that in view of BSU's concerns, the Board and Management Committee should continue to consider matters of mission and scope. The Board agreed on these directions little more than a year ago, but circumstances are continually changing, so IHETS needs continuing attention to be sure all members are comfortable with consortium directions.

2001-03 Appropriation Request Strategy

Moore stated that staff has put together ambitious thinking requiring careful Board consideration; given the importance of the proposals, the consortium will need broad member support and may therefore need to reconvene the Board before final submission of an appropriation request. King then outlined the major directions proposed for development, noting the fundamental guiding principle as identifying those areas where the consortium can undertake a project better than can the members individually.

Beering advised that King be ready to say what this proposal will do for the State to generate enthusiasm for the investment: what will this proposal do for the K12 community, what for the workforce, what to generate new economic growth? Ewick added that libraries see many educational needs that these kinds of proposals can help address. We need to help convey this as an investment in turning around the economic downslide of the state, and it would be better not to create yet another entity. Libraries can certainly support this direction.

Moore flagged the term "virtual" as problematic, and Beering expressed the perception that the proposal would create a separate university competitive with IHETS member institutions. King explained that such a move was far from intended and that, in fact, no state "virtual universities" actually offer degrees but are instead portals to improve citizens' access to educational opportunities from the state's institutions. That accurately describes the Indiana College Network at present, but it has not kept pace with comparable investments being made by other states and is thus not perceived as an equivalent service for Indiana.

Moore expressed concern that legislators will see this only in the light of taking IHETS' appropriation from \$7.3 million to \$11 million, adding that such an increase is unlikely in

the next legislative session. The danger is to discredit ourselves so that we are perceived as being unrealistic, however wise we may think the direction to be. Beering suggested defining a need, identifying a phasing-in, and having priorities to accommodate negotiations if needed. Hoops recommended that the Management Committee seek formal input from CHE staff as the strategy is refined, and Huie underscored the importance of determining priorities based on partners' perspectives and institutional needs.

McRobbie contended that the proposal is at too high a level of abstraction—committee leaders need detail to determine both efficiencies and the level of institutional support based on demonstrable attention to direct institutional needs. Kramer agreed that BSU has similar concerns, especially about the program development funds, adding that IHETS also needs to reduce the overhead that keeps circuit prices high when we need to be driving them down. Though skeptical, BSU is not necessarily opposed to the virtual learning space concepts but wants a fuller understanding.

Huie suggested that all committees start on the detail work during the next month for Management Committee review and consultation with their Board members in May, working toward another Board meeting in early June. At the same time, discussions with state officials can take place for additional advice. It will be important at this critical juncture to have all the institutions behind whatever approach is adopted. Moore also asked committee members to inform their Board representatives earlier and more fully.

Learning Center Development

Noting that IHETS has some sixty Learning Centers and many communities are becoming more aware of the benefits of having coordinated local action to address educational needs, Huie briefly described Senate Bill 15 as one outcome, with the Lilly Endowment CAPE initiative fueling the interest. Such local activities will be another step in creating demand for the kinds of programs and services King has discussed. On May 18, Purdue University and IHETS will sponsor a conference to generate awareness of the educational services now available from the postsecondary institutions and to create opportunities for discussion with community leaders. It is also likely that the increased attention will generate calls from private entities and large employers to create learning centers. Through IHETS, the institutions have a good mechanism to address these needs.

Recognitions and Adjournment

Thanking all the standing-committee members for their leadership and dedicated service, Moore adjourned the meeting at noon. King then recognized the three retiring Board members—Steven Beering, John Moore, and John Worthen—with deep appreciation for their leadership over many years of service.