

Minutes

VSAC Programs & Services Committee Meeting

September 21, 2020
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Zoom Videoconference Meeting

Committee Members Present: Martha Heath (Chair), Pam Chisholm, Dave Larsen, Dennis O'Brien, Chuck Soule
Committee Members Absent: N/A
Other Members Present: Dodie Mitchell, Chair
VSAC Staff Present: Scott Giles, Marilyn Cargill, Patrick Leduc, Mike Stuart, Tom Little, Laurie Oliver, Jodie Ducharme
Others: N/A

Chair Martha Heath called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. on the Zoom virtual meeting platform with all present able to hear one another throughout the meeting. With a quorum established, the Committee took up the first order of business.

Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion made by Dennis O'Brien and seconded by Dave Larsen, the Committee Members voted to approve the Programs & Services Committee Minutes of May 18, 2020, as presented.

Grant Policy – Ongoing Review

Marilyn Cargill reviewed the following policies, noting that the last time they were reviewed and approved by the Board was in 2017:

- **Confidentiality** – Marilyn reviewed the policy and noted there were no proposed changes.
- **Cost of Attendance** – Marilyn reviewed the policy and noted there were no proposed changes.

In response to member questions, Marilyn explained that miscellaneous expenses for Cost of Attendance are reviewed at a staff level every few years.

Upon a motion made by Chuck Soule and seconded by Pam Chisholm, the Committee Members voted to recommend that the full Board approve the Confidentiality and Cost of Attendance policies, as presented.

Marilyn reviewed the **Civil Union** policy, noting that the policy was set up to recognize a marital status that the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) did not previously recognize. Marilyn explained that the policy allowed couples in a civil union a method to each provide their financial information. Marilyn noted that the FAFSA has since added a question to address this scenario, so a separate policy is no longer needed. Marilyn recommended that the Committee consider terminating this policy.

Upon a motion made by Dennis O'Brien and seconded by Pam Chisholm, the Committee Members voted to recommend that the full Board approve to terminate the Civil Union policy, as presented.

Work Plan Review

Martha Heath directed the Committee's attention to the previously distributed Work Plan, noting that it is similar to previous plans. Martha noted that it is beneficial to have the Work Plan to guide the Committee's work, while also remaining flexible, as needed. Scott Giles noted that as the Board goes through strategic planning it may help the Committee prioritize additional operational reviews that they wish to have added to the agendas.

Operations Updates

Marilyn Cargill briefed the Committee on program efforts since June 15, 2020, including updates on the following:

- VSAC staff and building during COVID-19
- Blackbaud
- COVID-19
 - VSAC Technology Scholarship that was created with Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) Dollars
 - VSAC Appeals for State Grants and funding from CRF Dollars
 - Counseling and support of loan customers during the pandemic
- New/enhanced state scholarships
- Advantage Loans
- Autorenewal of Grant Applications
- Standing Reports

Federal Update

Scott Giles provided an update on efforts to extend the Federal Relief Package and the Department of Education's guidance on defaulted FFELP loans.

Vermont Update –

Scott Giles provided an update on the following:

- Taskforce on Postsecondary Education
- Changes to VHEIP in the tax bill

Other Business

There being no other business, the Committee adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Cargill, Assistant Secretary