I. Call to Order

The Alabama Commission on Higher Education met in regular session on Friday, June 27, 2008 in the Public Service Commission Hearing Room, RSA Union Building, Montgomery, Alabama. Commissioner Brooks called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Commissioner Brooks welcomed guests, institutional representatives, and Presidents in attendance.

II. Roll Call of Members and Determination of Quorum

Members present:  J. R. Brooks, Tom Davis, Charles Ball, Steve Shaw, William Powell, Larry Hughes, Drew Linn, Ralph Buffkin, and Ron Wise.  A quorum was determined by voice roll call of members present.

III. Approval of Agenda

RESOLVED:  Commissioner Davis moved for approval of the agenda.  Commissioner Ball seconded.  The agenda was approved.

IV. Consideration of Minutes

RESOLVED:  Commissioner Ball moved for the approval of the March 28, 2008 minutes.  Commissioner Linn seconded.  The minutes were approved.

V. Chairman’s Report

Commissioner Brooks announced the appointment of a Nominating Committee:  Commissioners Drew Linn, Chair, Missy Smith, and Billy Powell.  The purpose of the committee is to submit candidates for Chair and Vice-Chair of the Commission at the September, 2008 meeting.  Meetings held by the Nominating Committee are subject to the Open Meetings Act.

Commissioner Brooks thanked Dr. Fitch and the staff for their efforts with the PK-20 Initiative.  He stated that the concept is a very important one and conveyed special thanks for the efforts taken in attempting to include the Governor’s staff and others.

He also commended Margaret Gunter for the work done during the legislative session.

Commissioner Brooks stated that in his opinion, the selection of Dr. Fitch as executive director of ACHE was the best work done by the Commission in his eight years of service.

VI. Executive Director’s Report

Dr. Fitch pointed out that the Statewide Plan for Alabama Higher Education will be presented by Dr. Pamela Arrington, which includes for the first time, members of business and industry and the Dothan Chamber of Commerce.  In addition, there are representatives from all levels of education.  To monitor information and progress on the State Plan, a website has been developed and can be accessed by logging on to:  www.highered.alabama.gov/spac.  The Commission’s agenda items for the Plan will be reported under discussion and information items.

He then thanked the four-year institutions, K-12, and postsecondary education for their continued support for ACHE’s information technology and research.  He stated that neither the Statewide Plan
nor the PK-20 efforts could be accomplished without the work of the ACHE research department, IT, and the collaboration of K-12, postsecondary education, and the higher education institutions.

Dr. Fitch responded to questions regarding the purpose of the ACHE Committee of the Whole meeting. He stated that historically the Commission has met many times during the year which gave opportunity for members to break into smaller committee groups and carry information over to the next meeting. Currently, the Commission meets on a quarterly basis according to statute. Therefore, the Committee of the Whole meeting satisfies several issues: 1) agenda items can be considered by all the Commissioners at the same time; 2) allows the Commissioners and interested parties to discuss controversial issues in an open environment; 3) creates a work session that allows for questions, responses to Commission concerns, and allows for public comment; 4) reduces the time spent repeating items from a small committee and reduces the politics surrounding controversial issues to provide for objective and open decision making; and 5) saves time and expense for Commissioners and institutional representatives. The Chairman may call for other committee meetings -- of the standing committees -- as needed.

After encouraging suggestions and recommendations to improve the process, Dr. Fitch thanked the Chair and the Commissioners.

VII. Institutional Accountability Reports on Progress Toward Goals Identified in the State Plan

A. Trenholm State Technical College-Guest Presenter: Mr. Sam Munnerlyn, President

A power point presentation of institutional progress on meeting the goals of the Alabama State Plan for Higher Education 2003-04 to 2008-09 for Trenholm State Technical College was given by Mr. Sam Munnerlyn. A copy of the presentation is attached.

Commissioner Brooks commended President Munnerlyn on his presentation.

VIII. Discussion Items

Items for discussion were presented at the Committee of the Whole meeting on June 26, 2008:

A. 2008 Regular and First Special Session Update
   ACHE O&M Budget

B. State Plan for Alabama Higher Education 2009-10 to 2013-14

IX. Decision Items

RESOLVED: Commissioner Davis stated that the Committee of the Whole recommends to the Commission the approval of Decision Items A-1 through A-9. The Chair called for the vote. The recommendation of the Committee of the Whole was unanimously approved.

A. Academic Programs (Policies and Procedures Manual, Tab 5B, Criteria for the Evaluation of Proposals for New Programs of Instruction)

1. Auburn University, Master of Science in Geography (CIP 45.0701)

2. Alabama State University, Master of Rehabilitation Counseling in Rehabilitation Counseling (CIP 51.2310)

3. The University of Alabama, University of Alabama at Birmingham, and the University of Alabama in Huntsville, Joint Doctor of Nursing Practice in Nursing (CIP 51.1602)

4. University of Alabama in Huntsville, Bachelor of Science in Earth System Science with Specialty Tracks (CIP 40.9999)