

VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS FULL BOARD MEETING

9:00 a.m., Friday, March 22, 2024

Gateway Dining & Events Center

(on the campus of Virginia State University)

(No Public Comment Period Scheduled)

' AGENDA

Rector Valerie K. Brown, D.M., Presiding

CALL TO ORDERRector Valerie K. Brown

ROLL CALLMs. Pamela Currey, Secretary

INVOCATION..... Pastor Seth Ahmad-McQueen, Director of Campus Ministries

RECTOR'S REMARKS

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: FEBRUARY 8, 2024

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS.....Dr. Makola M. Abdullah

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Resolution for Approval of Tuition & Fees for Fiscal Year 2025 presented by Mr. Kevin Davenport, Senior Vice President, Finance & Administration/CFO

LEGAL COUNSEL UPDATE (IF ANY)

BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT OF ITS PERFORMANCE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

3.20.202

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
FULL BOARD MEETING
MARCH 22, 2024
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Rector Shavonne Gordon called the meeting of the Virginia State University (VSU) Board of Visitors (Board) to order in the Gateway Dining and Events Center on the Campus of Virginia State University at approximately 9:06 a.m. The Vice Rector informed the Board and others present that this meeting was being live streamed per the Commonwealth of Virginia open meeting laws and conducted in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Rector also informed viewers how to contact the VSU Helpdesk if there was a technical interruption in the live stream.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was present

Board Members Present:

Dr. Valerie Brown – (*Participated electronically due to professional business*)

Mr. Victor Branch

Dr. Joseph A.F. Chase, Jr.

Mr. Thomas Cosgrove

Ms. Pam Currey

Dr. Robert Denton, Jr.

Ms. Shavonne Gordon (*Vice Rector*)

Dr. Leonard Haynes, III

Ms. Daphne Meeks

Mr. Jon Moore

Mr. William Murray

Mr. Edward Owens (*Absent*)

General Dennis L. Via (*Absent*)

Board Appointments:

Dr. Tracy Jackson, Faculty Representative (*Represented for Dr. Leonard Githinji*)

Ms. Kailyn Haye, Student Representative

Administration Present:

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President

Dr. Tia Minnis, Interim Provost/Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs

Mr. Kevin Davenport, Senior Vice President for Finance & Administration/Chief Financial Officer

Ms. Shawri King-Casey, Vice President for Integrity & Compliance

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Ms. Tonya S. Hall, Vice President for Advancement and External Engagement
Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walter, Vice President for Student Affairs/Enrollment Management
Dr. Annie Redd, Chief of Staff/Director, Board Operations and Relations

Legal Counsel (Absent)

INVOCATION

Vice Rector Gordon invited Pastor Seth Ahmad-McQueen to offer the invocation.

RECTOR'S OPENING REMARKS

Rector Brown congratulated VSU on its 142nd Founders Day, which was celebrated on March 21, 2024. In addition, Rector Brown expressed gratitude to the BOV members who attended the ceremony.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Vice Rector called for approval of the agenda. The motion was received, properly seconded, and approved by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Vice Rector called for approval of the previous minutes from February 8, 2024, Full Board Meeting, Motions were received, properly seconded, and approved by voice vote.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Dr. Abdullah extended his thanks to Visitors Dr. Chase and Ms. Meeks for their participation in yesterday's Founder's Day celebration. Additionally, he expressed gratitude to Mr. Davenport and SGA President Kailyn Haye for their work on tuition and fees.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Davenport began by noting that he and Ms. Haye had reached an agreement on a \$35 fee to fund SGA projects. This fee would provide roughly \$156k in annual funding to the SGA.

A Visitor inquired about the state budget's current state. The incompleteness of the state budget was confirmed by both Mr. Davenport and Dr. Abdullah.

A Visitor inquired on how the University is expected to fare in this year's state budget. Dr. Abdullah described a dual amendment for HBCUs, including a capital amendment. He stated that there have been some big adjustments from the House to the Senate, and we are still waiting to see what happens at the Governor's level. The Visitor then inquired whether state budget decisions will have an impact on what VSU should do regarding tuition and fees. Dr. Abdullah stated that the state budget could have an impact on how the university handles tuition and fees. The trustee also inquired about the university's tuition and fee decision-making deadline. Dr. Abdullah said that the practical deadline is June 30th, but there is no actual deadline.

The Finance Committee Chair suggested that it could be beneficial to have a finance and budget briefing in April and suggested delaying the tuition and fees resolution until then. The board approved this motion. A Visitor inquired as to how the FAFSA update was going. In an update, Dr. Books-Walter listed a number of difficulties that have arisen since the Department of Education updated the FAFSA form.

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Dr. Brooks-Walter cited many technological, logistical, and practical obstacles that have resulted in the VSU student FAFSA completion rate falling 49% behind where it was at this time last year. Dr. Brooks-Walter mentioned that three major improvements to VSU's Banner system would need to be made to support the new form. Only one of these modifications has been handled, while the remaining two are awaiting information from the Department of Education.

Dr. Abdullah added, "The HBCU community is very concerned about the FAFSA update." He expressed gratitude to the Visitor for asking. He mentioned that there will be an update in April about this matter.

The Visitor then stated that the Department of Education was caught off guard by the complexity of this adjustment. The Vice Rector stated that the DOE is working around the clock to resolve the issue, but they are still behind schedule.

A Visitor inquired about the notice that was issued about the process for escalating grievances within the university, specifically whether the contents of this notice would be codified in official university policy. Dr. Abdullah stated that he will speak with the Faculty Senate to ensure that people understood the significance of the statement. He also stated that he will seek clarification on the extent to which the content of the notice is reflected in official policy.


A Visitor highlighted the positive comments she received following presentations by Regina Barnett Tyler and Dr. Brooks-Walter at this year's Generation Hope Conference. The Visitor emphasized the significance of VSU faculty and staff having a large representation at external events like this conference, both in terms of maintaining strong enrollment and improving the university's reputation.

The Finance Committee Chair asked that the upcoming Finance Committee be scheduled in such a way to maximize attendance. The Vice Rector stated that it would be good if all trustees could attend the upcoming Finance Committee meeting.

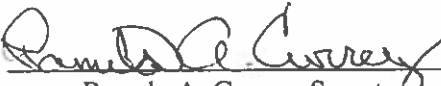
The Vice Rector inquired whether there were any comments on the BOV performance evaluations, requesting BOVs to complete their evaluations and provide any feedback that may be forwarded to the President. A Visitor noted that evaluations are due today. The Vice Rector requested that BOV members follow VSU on social media if they haven't already, emphasizing the excellent content, which includes newly posted information on future debates and a land grant conference.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Vice Rector Gordon called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was received, and properly seconded, and the Committee voted by voice vote. The Vice Rector adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:38 A.M.



Valerie Brown, Rector



Pamela A. Currey, Secretary

4/26/24
Date

4-26-2024
Date

Student perspective on the 3% tuition increase
February 8, 2024

The student body of VSU understands the value of the 3% increase for the state of the university, but is hesitant to fully embrace it. In short, they feel it will maintain what is already present and only contribute to public health, safety, and the rising inflation rate.

On one hand, students think that there should not be an increase. They'd prefer to stay with what has been consistent and, because of its lower price, what brought them to Virginia State University. Students are also concerned that the 3% increase will not increase the quality of what's already seen but maintain it, so they inquire about the need to raise it. They disagree with the increase because it does not add to the fuller experience of attending VSU. With the rise, they expect something they can see and experience to show for it. Be it a fully connected wifi-institution, connected issues within the dormitories, more timely and varied transit to and from the university, parking options, security concerns, and more.

On the other hand, students think that the tuition increase should be higher. Again, maintaining what is already present should not be the goal in their eyes with an increase. They feel as though they should be paying for something more. Changes must be seen and executed if tuition increases so students realize where the money goes. Seeing an increase to maintain the same amenities with the current inflation rate isn't comforting. However, if there were actual new changes and amenities that students have been requesting, they would highly appreciate it. Others feel that VSU needs to work from the inside out for the increase of tuition: correcting the small things, like issues in dormitories, facilities, cafes, the weight room exercise equipment, and computer labs, should be mandatory. VSU's increase of 3% in tuition needs to be higher to make it worthwhile from the student perspective because increasing this percentage will maintain the

same issues that students complain about. If it rises, it must address all problems collectively while maintaining the proper financial aid balance for scholars. With the increase, they want to see what they have been asking for, coming to town halls for, and what I've been advocating towards, to be considered in VSU's next stages towards advancement and betterment as a university.

The current SGA makes the recommendation on behalf of the student body to increase the tuition between 4-6% to not only maintain conditions at VSU, but to correct issues students have steadily voiced concern about and more. We would like for our consistent concerns and issues to be corrected as soon as possible. The increase in tuition is an opportunity to advance upon improving conditions more completely, but the current 3% is not enough to do this. More contributions, with consideration towards the 4-6%, budget wise can then be made towards student success and engagement and entity budgets like Royal Court, the Trojan Activities Board, the Department of Student Activities, and SGA.

- Kailyn Haye, Student Government Association President 2023-2024 and the Visionary Administration