

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS  
ELECTRONIC FULL BOARD MEETING  
Via CISCO WEBEX; Livestream at VSU.edu  
Friday; February 5, 2021**

**DRAFT AGENDA**

12:30 p.m.

**Full Board Meeting Convened**  
*(No Public Comment Period Scheduled)*

12:30 – 5:00 pm

Rector Huron F. Winstead, Presiding

- Roll Call
- Invocation *(Mr. Rodney Hall)*
- Approval of Agenda
- Rector’s Remarks
- President’s Remarks

**Board Approval(s)**

- Minutes, November 20, 2020 Full Board Meeting

**Committee Reports**

- Facilities, Finance & Audit Committee
  - Approval Item(s): Resolution authorizing Tuition & Fees for Academic Year 2021-2022
  - Information Items
    - Summary of Updates the Division of Finance, Internal Audit, Technology Services
- Academic & Student Affairs Committee
  - Approval Item(s): None
  - Information Item(s)
    - Dr. Dawit Haile, Dean, College of Engineering & Technology/College of Health & Natural Sciences
    - Summary of Updates from Enrollment Management, Academic & Student Affairs Division

**Break (20 minutes)**

**FULL BOARD MEETING**  
**Via Cisco WebEx**  
**February 5, 2021**

**Committee Reports (continued)**

- Reports from the Faculty and Student Representatives
  - Dr. Ceslav Ciobanu, Faculty Representative
  - Mr. Kameron Gray, Student Representative
- Remarks from the Staff Senate
  - Ms. Monica Brown, Chair
- Institutional Advancement Committee
  - Approval Item: Resolution to Un-name Byrd Hall, Eggleston Hall, Trinkle Hall, Vawter Hall
  - Information Item(s)
    - Summary of Updates (Sponsored Programs, Government Relations, Communications, Office of Institutional Advancement)

***Break (15 minutes)***

- Personnel, Compensation & Governance Committee
  - Approval Item(s): Approval to Develop Board Matrix:
  - Information Item(s):
    - Board Matrix
    - Board Assessment
    - President's Performance Evaluation

**Report of Affiliated Foundation(s)**

- Ms. Brenda Stith-Finch, Chair, VSU Foundation

**Legal Counsel Update *(if necessary)***

**Announcements**

**Adjournment**

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS  
ELECTRONIC FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
February 5, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Huron Winstead, Rector, called the meeting of the Virginia State University (VSU) Board of Visitors (Board) to order at approximately 12:30 p.m. The meeting was held via Cisco WebEx.

**ROLL CALL**

A quorum was present.

*Board Members Present:*

Mr. Huron F. Winstead, Rector

Mr. Charlie W. Hill, Vice Rector

Ms. Thursa Crittenden, Secretary

Dr. Valerie Brown

Ms. Pamela A. Currey

Dr. Christine M. Darden

Mr. Michael Flemming (*absent*)

Ms. Shavonne Gordon

Mr. Raul Herrera

Mr. William L. Murray

Mr. Xavier Richardson (*absent*)

Mr. Glenn Sessoms

Mr. James J.L. Stegmaier

Mr. Wayne Turnage (*absent*)

Mr. Gregory Whirley

Dr. Ceslav Ciobanu, Faculty Representative to the Board

Mr. Kameron K. Gray, Student Representative to the Board (*electronic communication*)

*Administration Present:*

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President

Dr. Donald Palm, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

Kevin Davenport, Vice President for Finance & Administration/CFO

Tonya Hall, Vice President for External Relations

Regina Barnett-Tyler, Interim Associate Vice President for Student Success and Engagement

Rodney Hall, Assistant Vice President, Enrollment Management

Sheila Alves, Chief Audit Executive, Internal Audit

Dr. Gwendolyn Dandridge, Director of Communications

Eldon Burton, Director of Government Relations

Dr. Annie C. Redd, Special Assistant to the President/Board Liaison

Dr. Tia Minnis, Associate Vice Provost/Executive Dir., Office of Planning & Effectiveness

*Legal Counsel Present:*

Deborah A. Love, Senior Assistant Attorney General and Chief, Education Section

**FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**FEBRUARY 5, 2021**  
**PAGE 2**

*Other Attendees:*

Ms. Brenda Stith-Finch, Chair, VSU Foundation Board  
Travis Edmonds, Information Technology Services  
Yourdonus James, Office of Conference Services  
Sylvia Jones, Staff Senate (representing the Staff Senate Chair)  
Dr. Danika Clemmons, Student Health Center

**OPENING REMARKS**

Rector Winstead invited Mr. Rodney Hall to give the invocation.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Board approved the agenda by roll call vote.

**RECTOR'S REMARKS**

Rector Winstead thanked Board members for their attendance and participation at the February committee meetings and for their attendance today. The Rector expressed appreciation to Ms. MacKenzie Scott for the \$30 million gift to VSU.

The Rector also shared information about the college governing board accountability assessment conducted by partners for college affordability and public trust (PCAPT), which is a nonprofit think-tank organization in the higher education space. The assessment focused upon institutional performance related to board transparency, board member accessibility, and receptiveness. It dealt with matters of public access to board members, public comment, postings, meetings, availability of minutes, and other administrative matters related to board governance. The Rector assured the Board that its governance and meetings comply with state Code and Freedom of Information Act authority in addition to regular guidance from legal counsel and contact with the Office of the State Attorney General. The General Assembly is considering new legislation as it relates to governance, transparency, and accessibility. Discussion of the new legislation will be deferred until after the General Assembly votes.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Rector Winstead announced the call for nominations of Board officers will be sent out to Board members within a few days after this meeting. He reviewed the timeline for nominations as well as the elections process. Election of officers will take place during the April 23, 2021 Annual Board meeting.

**PRESIDENT'S REMARKS**

President Abdullah welcomed the Board members and thanked them for their service to VSU. The President shared that students had returned to campus and classes started on February 1<sup>st</sup>, and he expressed appreciation to administrators and staff for their diligence in preparing for the campus to re-open. President Abdullah also presented highlights since the November 2020 meeting, which included the \$30 million donation from Ms. MacKenzie Scott. The donation will be used in several initiatives such as setting up a fund where faculty and staff can apply and write proposals for the betterment of Virginia State University, to offer free tuition for computer science and computer engineering majors,

**FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**FEBRUARY 5, 2021**  
**PAGE 3**

and to make some financial investments for the future to support VSU students. Highlights included funding from the coronavirus relief package passed by the federal government, re-allocation of funding for the Virginia College Access Network (VCAN) from the Commonwealth of Virginia, and funding for scholarships from Dominion Energy.

In recognition of outstanding student leaders, the President acknowledged Ms. Anita Wynn who presented Mr. VSU, Miss VSU, and 4 students who are current fellows in the Charlie W. Hill Leadership Institute. Vice Rector Hill shared that he had the privilege of investing in an idea to help students to develop higher skills, the idea became the Hill Leadership Institute, and that it was one of the best investments he has ever made.

**BOARD APPROVALS**

Action on the November 20, 2020 minutes of the Full Board meeting (Approved). The motion passed by roll call vote. Visitors Michael Flemming, Wayne Turnage, and Xavier Richardson were not present for the vote.

Action on the Resolution for Approval of Tuition, Fees, Room and Board for FY 2021-22 (Approved). The motion passed by roll call vote. Visitors Michael Flemming, Wayne Turnage, and Xavier Richardson were not present for the vote.

Action on the Resolution for Approval of Un-Naming Byrd Hall, Trinkle Hall, Eggleston Hall, and Vawter Hall (Approved). The motion passed by roll call vote. Visitors Michael Flemming, Wayne Turnage, and Xavier Richardson were not present for the vote.

Action on the motion for the Personnel, Compensation and Governance Committee to move forward in developing a board matrix (Approved). The motion passed by roll call vote. Visitors Michael Flemming, Wayne Turnage, Xavier Richardson, and Gregory Whirley were not present for the vote.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Facilities, Finance & Audit (FFA) Committee

On behalf of the Committee, Dr. Valerie Brown, Chair, brought forward one item for approval from the FFA Committee--the Resolution for Approval of Tuition, Fees, Room and Board for FY 2021-22 and presented an executive summary of the reports presented by the Division of Finance & Administration and Internal Audit. There was not a formal report today from Technology Services. The Committee looks forward to an update from Technology Services at the April meeting.

Mr. Davenport presented one action item for approval—the resolution authorizing tuition and fees rates for 2021-2022. The University is presenting the resolution at the February meeting in an effort to set fees earlier rather than waiting until the April meeting. The charges are to be set at a rate that allows the University to be cost competitive and to generate non-general fund revenue within the limits established by the biennium budget. The staff, in preparation of the University's annual budget, has reviewed the current tuition and fees being charged and is not making recommendations for increases. In addition,

**FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**FEBRUARY 5, 2021**  
**PAGE 4**

Mr. Davenport presented several information items including Budget to Actual Financial Statements as of 12/31/2020, Actual to Actual Financial Statements as of 12/31/2020, and the Annual Debt Report. Mr. Davenport indicated that the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) will mail out the 2019 audit within the next week, and he gave a brief overview of items the Board can expect to see in the report. The Board received updates on the University investments from Spider Management Investments and Greystone Consulting/Morgan Stanley Investments. Mr. Davenport also shared the status of funding received from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA).

Ms. Sheila Alves, Chief Audit Executive, presented status reports on the University's corrective action plans and the department's audit plan as well as updates on the Office of Inspector General hotlines and internal special investigations. The report addressed Internal Audit's concerns about timely completing or closing items identified in audits and the department's recommendations to management. Internal Audit has been given approval by the University to fill the open position to assist with the office caseload. The department continues to provide consulting services to the University such as process improvement to the Bursar's Office, allocations and budget to the Office of Procurement, and process improvement to Accounts Receivable.

Academic & Student Affairs Committee

On behalf of the Committee, Pamela Currey, Chair, presented an executive summary from the reports presented by the Division of Student & Academic Affairs. There were no action items presented for approval. The Committee received reports on the following information items.

- A. The Virginia State University Computer Science Initiative.
- B. Virginia State University Enrollment Numbers and Recruitment Plan
- C. The Spring 2021 Reopening Plan
- D. Strategic Plan Update
- E. The Virginia State University SCHEV Performance Measures Remediation Plan

Dean Dawit Haile and Dr. Pamela Leigh-Mack from the College of Engineering and Technology provided an overview of the College and the proposed Computer Science Initiative. The Computer Science Initiative will be launched in the fall of 2021.

Mr. Rodney Hall, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management provided the admissions report for the spring 2021 and fall 2021 semesters. Mr. Hall also presented a recruitment plan to the committee. The plan outlines several specific initiatives and highlights the processes needed to improve efficiency and meet enrollment goals. These goals are in support of Priority 1 of the Strategic Plan-- Increase Student Opportunity and Access to Higher Education. The plan includes tactical, short- and long-term strategies and activities which will fuel a more comprehensive Strategic Enrollment Management Plan. The 2020-2021 recruitment plan focuses on new first-time freshmen and transfer students.

**FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**FEBRUARY 5, 2021**  
**PAGE 5**

Dr. Palm provided an update on the spring 2021 reopening plan. The Virginia State University Campus Reopening Plan addresses the requirements detailed in the state guidance document, "[Higher Education Reopening Guidance](#)" and aligns with the Governor's four areas of focus: Repopulation of the Campus; Monitoring Health Conditions to Detect Infection; Containment to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 when detected; Shut Down Considerations if necessitated by severe conditions and/or public health guidance.

Virginia State University began spring classes on Monday, February 1, 2021. The last day of classes are scheduled for May 7<sup>th</sup> with finals ending on May 17<sup>th</sup>. While Spring-Break will be cancelled, the university will observe a few wellness days throughout the semester. To adhere to social distancing guidelines, VSU has prepared for a reduced on-campus student population of 1,570. To repopulate the campus, a staggered scheduled check-in process beginning January 15, 2021 was used. The staggered check-in process afforded testing for all on-campus and commuter students using both the Rapid Antigen (BinaxNow) - Point of Care Testing and the LabCorp-PCR test. Students are being housed in single rooms with Whiting Hall designated as isolation and quarantine space with a capacity of 55 single rooms.

Faculty, Staff and Students will follow the Mandatory Social Distancing and Face-Mask policies/rules in accordance with Governor Northam's Executive Order 63. In addition, faculty and staff are encouraged to test for COVID-19 on a regular basis and will have access to COVID-19 testing on campus or they can use their personal care provider. The university will use surveillance testing and implement hands-free temperature screening stations in high traffic areas to monitor health conditions and to assist with detection and containment. Decisions regarding a campus shutdown will be made in consultation with local and state public officials. An example of VSU's COVID Dashboard was included in the Diligent materials. This dashboard will keep the VSU community up to date on COVID activity.

Dr. Palm provided an update on the University Strategic Plan "Preeminence with Purpose". The Strategic Plan was launched in the fall of 2020. Many initiatives were put in place to ensure a successful launch of the plan. This includes alignment of VSU's Strategic Plan Priorities with the Institutions Six-Year Plan. VSU submitted the Six-Year Plan during the summer of 2019. Significant progress since the launch includes: \$6.6M in funding for Strategic Plan Initiatives in alignment with the Six-Year Plan, Two new on-line programs, Five new programs (Education and MSW), Submission of 2 Master's Programs (MBA and Data Analytics), Specialized Re-Accreditation in programs within 4 of our Colleges, Faculty Development Initiatives which include an Outstanding Faculty Award, Diversified Financial Resources from Private, State and Federal Sources, and Enhanced operational effectiveness with E-Transcript Online Ordering.

Dr. Palm provided an update on the SCHEV Academic Performance Measures. VSU's remediation plan to improve deficiencies in several educational performance measures was submitted and accepted by SCHEV in December 2020. Leveraging student data analytics, VSU will continue to work directly with the SCHEV Institutional Research team to refine and establish accurate projections for Education Performance Measures. In addition, VSU has implemented a number of strategic initiatives as part of our

**FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**FEBRUARY 5, 2021**  
**PAGE 6**

five-year Strategic Plan (2020-2025), “Preeminence with Purpose”. These initiatives are focused on enrollment, retention, graduation, and overall sustained excellence. Through the implementation of these strategic initiatives the institution will address the Education Performance Measures.

Remarks from Faculty and Student Representatives to the Board

The Board received reports from Dr. Ceslav Ciobanu, Chair, Faculty Senate, and Kameron K. Gray, the Student Government Association President.

The Rector also invited the Staff Senate to bring greetings. Ms. Sylvia Jones, Secretary of the Staff Senate, offered an update on activities in the absence of Ms. Monica Brown, Chair.

Institutional Advancement Committee

Vice Chair Gordon called upon Ms. Hall to present one action item for approval by the full Board--the Resolution for approval of un-naming Byrd Hall, Eggleston Hall, Trinkle Hall, and Vawter Hall. Ms. Gordon presented a summary of the reports received from Sponsored Programs, Government Relations, Office of Communications, and the Office of Institutional Advancement. Sponsored Programs provided a summary of grant submissions and grant-related financial activity for fiscal year 2021. Grants within the Sponsored Programs portfolio and indirect costs identify and apply for grants that align VSU’s Preeminence with Purpose Strategic Plan. Government Relations discussed activity on federal levels; most importantly, VSU was allocated \$10.7 million under Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) II, with the requirement that we expend the same dollar amount (not percentage) on emergency student aid as we were required to award to students under the original CARES Act HEERF. However, HEERF II permits broader uses of those funds for both students and the institution. It is also important to note that this allocation is a separate pot of funds from the \$1.7 billion pot for HBCUs (individual allocations for each institution are still forthcoming).

On the state level, the 2021 regular session of the General Assembly kicked off on January 13<sup>th</sup>. The primary focus remains to be health related services and how to support Virginia’s economy during the pandemic. Leading into session, Governor Northam proposed his budget amendments for FY 2022 which for VSU restored \$6.2 million for multiple programs that were previously restored only in FY 2021 during the 2020 Special Session I. These programs include the Virginia College Affordability Network, expansion of an intrusive advising early warning system, supplemental instruction, a summer bridge program, and the UTeach teacher preparation program for science, technology, engineering, and math majors. It also included the restoration of funding for the VSU Cooperative Extension’s state match in the amount of \$1.5 million. Fourteen (14) projects across the Commonwealth were included in Governor Northam’s budget for systems upgrades, facility repairs, and life/safety projects, the largest of which is \$34 million for VSU to improve HVAC campus-wide for infectious aerosol control.

The Communications Office shared successful strategies used to accomplish positive media and communication interactions through local and national media coverage of the university. Institutional Advancement provided a snap shot on the ingenuity and collective power the MacKenzie Scott investment



**FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**FEBRUARY 5, 2021**  
**PAGE 7**

in VSU can have now and well into the future. An update on end of the year giving, fundraising dashboard for FY20 and FY21, and an overview of the new donor giving platform was also provided. The Advancement Office will execute the presented strategies to seek and secure philanthropic support from all constituents for major and annual fund dollars by submitting proposals to corporate and foundation funders, mailed annual fund appeals, electronic appeals, and the annual class reunion giving program.

Personnel and Compensation Committee

On behalf of the Committee, Glenn Sessoms, Chair, presented updates on two initiatives of the Board: 1) development of a Board Matrix that will chart the skills and attributes of current members and to determine the desired skills and attributes for new gubernatorial appointees, and 2) implementation of a Board self-assessment process. Mr. Sessoms presented a motion to the full Board for approval to move forward in developing a Board Matrix. This Committee agreed to make its recommendation for the Board self-assessment process to the Executive Committee as it is responsible for board development. In addition, the Committee reviewed the timeline and tool which will be used to conduct the annual President's Performance Evaluation for the period February 1, 2020 – January 31, 2021.

**REPORT OF AFFILIATED FOUNDATIONS**

Ms. Beverly Stith-Finch, Chair, VSU Foundation Board shared information on the Foundation's investment portfolio highlights, clean audit findings for fiscal years ending 2019 and 2020, and strategic plan.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business, the Rector adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:30 p.m.



Huron F. Winstead



Thursa D. Crittenden

4.23.21

Date

4.23.21

Date