

VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
FULL BOARD MEETING
9:30 A.M., FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2024
The Hilton Norfolk Main Hotel
100 E. Main Street; Norfolk VA 23510
(No Public Comment Period Scheduled)
DRAFT AGENDA

Rector Valerie K. Brown, Presiding

Call to OrderDr. Valerie K. Brown, Rector

Roll CallMr. Kishore Thota, Secretary

Invocation

Rector’s Remarks

Approval of Agenda

Minutes from Previous Meetings:

- September 13, 2024, Full Board Minutes

President’s ReportDr. Makola M. Abdullah

Closed Session: Personnel Matters

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Academic & Student Affairs Committee
 - **Approval Item(s):** None
 - **Information Item(s):**
 - Summary of Updates
 - Reports from the Faculty and Student Representatives to the Board
 - Tracy L. Jackson, Esq., Faculty Senate Chair
 - Mr. Yousif Omer, Student Government Association President
- Facilities & Finance Committee
 - **Approval Item(s):** Resolution to Authorize the Acquisition of Properties
 - **Information Item(s):** Summary of Updates

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- Institutional Advancement Committee
 - **Approval Item(s):** Resolution to Approve Revision of Naming Policy
 - **Information Item(s):**
 - Summary of Updates

- Audit & Compliance Committee
 - **Approval Item(s):** None
 - **Information Item(s):**
 - Summary of Updates

Report of Affiliated Foundation(s)

Legal Counsel Update (*if any*)

Board Self-Assessment of its Performance

Announcements

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
DRAFT FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 14, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

Rector Valerie Brown called the meeting of the Virginia State University (VSU) Board of Visitors (Board) to order at approximately 9:30 a.m. in the Hilton Norfolk Main Hotel. The Rector read statement that the Full Board meeting is available to the general public via livestream in compliance with the Commonwealth of Virginia open meeting laws. The public may access the Full Board meeting on the VSU website homepage (www.vsu.edu) at the link, *VSU Live Events*. There will not be an opportunity for (general) public comment at the meeting. Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, VSU will provide sign language interpreter (s) during the livestream ([IT Accessibility Laws and Policies | Section508.gov](#)). If viewers experience technical interruption, they may contact the VSU Helpdesk at (804) 524-5210. If there is an interruption in the livestream, we will stop the meeting until the interruption is cleared up.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was present.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dr. Valerie Brown
Mr. Victor Branch
Dr. Joseph A. F. Chase, Jr.
Mr. Thomas Cosgrove
Dr. Robert Denton, Jr. (*Electronic Participation*)
Ms. Daphne Meeks
Mr. Peter McPherson
Mr. Jon Moore
Ms. Verndell Robinson
Mr. Kishore Thota
Mr. Robert Thompson
Mr. Dennis L. Via
Dr. Leonard Haynes, III (*absent*)
Dr. Harold Green, Jr. (*absent*)
Mr. Edward Owens (*absent*)

Dr. Denton participated virtually from Blacksburg, VA due to medical reasons.

BOARD APPOINTEES:

Professor Tracy Jackson, Faculty Representative
Mr. Yousif Omer, Student Representative

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ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President

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

Mr. Kevin Davenport, Senior Vice President for Finance & Administration/CFO

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

Ms. Tonya Hall, Vice President for Advancement and External Engagement

Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walter, Vice President for Student Affairs/Enrollment Management

Dr. Annie C. Redd, Chief of Staff/Director, Board Operations and Relations

LEGAL COUNSEL PRESENT:

Nathan Moberly, Assistant Attorney General

INVOCATION

Rector Brown invited Dr. Joseph A. F. Chase, Jr. to offer the invocation.

RECTOR'S OPENING REMARKS

Rector Brown welcomed everyone

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Rector called for the agenda to be approved. The motion was received, properly seconded, and approved by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Rector called for approval of the September 12, 2024, Full Board Meeting Minutes. The motion was received, properly seconded, and approved by voice vote.

BOARD APPROVALS

The Board approved the following action items by roll call vote.

- Resolution To Revise The Naming Policy Of Campus Buildings.
- Resolution For Approval of Reporting Relationship And Supervisory Structure For Dr. Ahkinyala Cobb-Abdullah
- Resolution Of The Virginia State University Board Of Visitors Authorizing Property Acquisitions
- Awarding of Honorary Doctorates to Jacqueline McWilliams, Commissioner of the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA), and to the Late Peggy L. Davis, Associate Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics at VSU, who passed in October 2024.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Abdullah thanked the board members for their time and commitment to the University. He gave a brief overview of developments at the University that occurred since the last board meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

The Board went into closed session for the discussion or consideration of legal matters pursuant 2.2-3711 (A)(1), specifically, "...Discussion, consideration, or interview of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body; and evaluation of the performance of departments or schools of public institutions of higher education where such evaluation will necessarily involve discussion of the performance of specific individuals; namely specific items concerning dual employment of immediate family members by public institutions of higher education under Virginia Code § 2.22-3106. Dr. Annie C. Redd and Legal Counsel Nathan Moberly attended.

Upon returning to the open session, the Board certified by roll call vote that during its closed meeting, the Board discussed only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information. Act, and only those public business matters identified in the motion convening the Board in closed session.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee Chairs summarized the actions and information items discussed during their meetings. Professor Tracy Jackson, Faculty Senate Chair, gave remarks on behalf of the Faculty Senate. Yousif Omer, the Student Government Association President, gave remarks on behalf of the Student Government. There were no updates from the Staff Senate.

REPORT OF AFFILIATED FOUNDATION(S) -No Report

LEGAL COUNSEL UPDATE (IF ANY) –

The Rector asked for a motion to enter into closed session for the Discussion or consideration of legal matters pursuant to 2.2-3711(7), Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body; namely, legal update and advice regarding Robertson v. Virginia State University and Cunningham v. Davis, et al. The motion was approved and approved by voice vote. Dr. Annie C. Redd and Legal Counsel Nathan Moberly attended.

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Upon returning to open session, the Committee certified that during its closed meeting, the committee discussed only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and only those public business matters identified in the motion convening the board in closed session. The motion was made, properly seconded, and approved by roll call vote.

BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT OF IT'S PERFORMANCE

Board members expressed their views on the November 14-15th board meetings and expressed appreciation to the University staff for their diligence in the preparation of meeting materials.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Rector Brown called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was received and properly seconded, and the Committee voted by voice vote. The Chair adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:45 p.m.

Valerie K. Brown, Rector

Kishore Thota, Secretary

Date

Date

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
RESOLUTION TO
REVISE THE NAMING POLICY OF CAMPUS BUILDINGS**

November 15, 2024

WHEREAS, Virginia Code §§ 23.1-1301, 23.1-1304.1, and 23.1-2700, authorize the Board of Visitors to “make regulations and policies concerning the institution,” more particularly in this instance, concerning the “terms and conditions associated with donations, gifts, and other philanthropic support;” and

WHEREAS, as an application of the powers authorized by the aforementioned statutes, the Bylaws of the Board of Visitors of Virginia State University Article IV, paragraph 13 state that the Board will review and approve “. . . all naming opportunities, including buildings and other University property, endowments, scholarships, professorships, and endowed chairs”; and

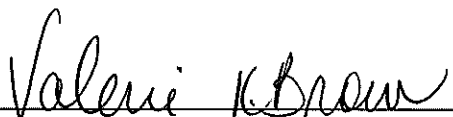
WHEREAS, on April 21, 2017, the Board of Visitors executed University Policy 4010, entitled “Policy Governing the Accepting, Recording, and Naming of Gifts” (“Policy 4010”) and continues to maintain said policy; and

WHEREAS, policy statements pertaining to the naming of gifts portion of Policy 4010 have evolved to reflect a tiered structure that requires a separate policy; and

WHEREAS, while the new policy is under development, the tiered structures will be applied to the naming of gifts process;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Visitors authorizes the development of a new naming of gifts policy; and

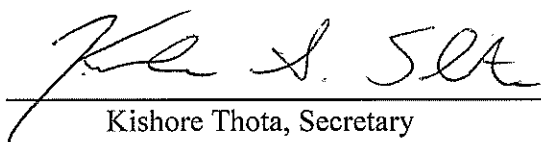
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Board of Visitors hereby delegates the authority to the University President to implement the tiered structure of the future naming policy with the expectation that the new naming policy will be presented to the full board during the Spring 2025 meeting.



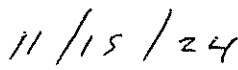
Valerie K. Brown, Rector



Date



Kishore Thota, Secretary



Date

**RESOLUTION OF THE
VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
AUTHORIZING PROPERTY ACQUISITION**

November 15, 2024

WHEREAS, Virginia Code § 2.2-1149 authorizes departments, agencies, and institutions of the Commonwealth to acquire real property by following the guidelines of the Department of General Services and obtaining the Governor's approval; and

WHEREAS, Virginia State University ("University") seeks to acquire Infill and Perimeter Parcels (the "Properties") located contiguous to the University's campus in Chesterfield County, Virginia from the Virginia State University Foundation ("Foundation"); and

WHEREAS, ownership of the Properties will benefit the University by promoting opportunities for campus security and providing additional land for future development consistent with the University's Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, a Memorandum of Agreement (the "MOA") dated November 14, 2022, between the University and the Foundation, entrusted the Foundation with diligently pursuing the acquisition of the Properties for the University's benefit; and

WHEREAS, the MOA anticipates the University's reimbursement of the Foundation's costs to purchase and carry the Properties until they are transferred to the University; and

WHEREAS, the acquisition of the Properties aligns with the University's current Master Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Visitors of Virginia State University approves the acquisition of the Properties as listed on Exhibit A – "Acquisition Parcels Map" to this resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Board of Visitors of Virginia State University authorizes the University President and/or the Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer to execute, approve, and deliver on behalf of the University, any documents - legal or otherwise - necessary to complete the acquisition of the Properties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Board of Visitors of Virginia State University authorize the University President or the Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer to take any other actions necessary or appropriate to properly comply with this resolution.

Valerie K. Brown

Valerie K. Brown, Rector

11/15/24

Date

Kishore S. Thota

Kishore S. Thota, Secretary

11/15/24

Date

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL OF
REPORTING RELATIONSHIP AND SUPERVISORY STRUCTURE
FOR DR. AHKINYALA COBB-ABDULLAH**

November 15, 2024


WHEREAS, the Virginia State Conflict of Interests Act (Virginia Code § 2.2-3100 *et seq.*) permits the dual employment of immediate family members by public institutions of higher education under certain terms and conditions pursuant to §2.2-3106 (C)(2) of the *Code of Virginia*; and

WHEREAS, the College of Natural and Health Sciences has recommended that Dr. Ahkinyala Cobb-Abdullah (“Dr. Cobb-Abdullah”), the spouse of President Makola M. Abdullah (“President Abdullah”), be employed as a member of the faculty; and

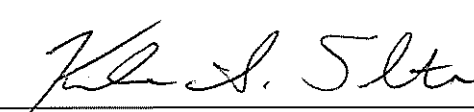
WHEREAS, President Makola M. Abdullah is an officer of Virginia State University (“University”) and would accrue a personal interest in Ahkinyala Cobb-Abdullah’s employment contract as her spouse;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Visitors finds it in the best interests of Virginia State University and the Commonwealth to employ Dr. Ahkinyala Cobb-Abdullah as a member of the faculty; and

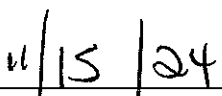
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the reporting relationship and supervisory structure for Dr. Ahkinyala Cobb-Abdullah shall be as follows: (a) All personnel matters concerning Dr. Cobb-Abdullah while employed as a member of the faculty will be handled in accordance with customary practices and policies of the Colleges of the University with the faculty member reporting to the department chair, and where further University approval may be required, the dean shall make appropriate recommendations regarding Dr. Cobb-Abdullah’s salary, faculty rank, performance evaluations and other personnel matters to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; (b) The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs shall act in the stead of President Abdullah for all matters that may require the President’s action concerning Dr. Cobb-Abdullah and will present to the Board of Visitors those matters which require its action.



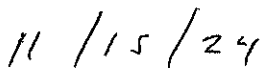
Valerie K. Brown, Rector



Kishore S. Thota, Secretary



Date



Date