

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
APPROVED ELECTRONIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Friday, June 12, 2020
10:00 am – 1:00 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Huron F. Winstead, Rector, called the meeting of the Virginia State University (VSU) Board of Visitors (Board) to order at approximately 10:00 a.m. The meeting was held by means of electronic communication and livestreamed for public access.

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. Daryl C. Dance (*called in at 10:55 a.m.*)
Mr. Michael Flemming (*absent*)
Mr. Raul Herrera
Ms. Jennifer Hunter (*departed at 12:15 p.m.*)
Mr. Xavier Richardson
Mr. Glenn Sessoms
Mr. James J.L. Stegmaier
Mr. Wayne Turnage
Mr. Gregory Whirley
Dr. Zoe Spencer, Faculty Representative to the Board
Mr. Kameron Gray, Student Representative to the Board

Administration Present:

Dr. Makola Abdullah, President
Dr. Donald Palm, Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Hubert Harris, Chief of Staff
Charmica Epps Harris, Interim Associate Vice President for Institutional Advancement
Dr. G. Dale Wesson, Vice President for Research and Economic Development
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, Communications
Eldon Burton, Director of Government Relations
Tanya Simmons, Director, Human Resources
Dr. Annie C. Redd, Special Assistant to the President/Board Liaison

Legal Counsel Present:

Ramona Taylor, University Legal Counsel

ELECTRONIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Friday, June 12, 2020

Page 2

Other Attendees:

Christy Johnson-Oliver, Chief Health Officer/Registered Nurse, Student Health Center

Travis Edmonds, Information Technology

Yourdonus James, Office of Conference Services

Perry Evans, Office of Conference Services

Paula McCapes, Chair, Staff Senate

Adrian Petway, Budget Office

Benjamin Houck, Finance

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

In response to a motion for approval of the minutes, a Visitor reemphasized his understanding that the budget was approved based on the understanding that the Finance Committee would meet monthly through January 2021 so that the budget can be continually reviewed. The Visitor also requested that a clarification be added to the prior meeting's minutes under the Internal Audit section, stating the dollar amount of possible risks as stated by the internal auditor with respect to accounts receivable and NIFA. The Visitor further requested that all transcripts and audio recordings be maintained even after approval of the minutes. The minutes were approved with modifications in the Internal Audit and Finance sections.

RECTOR'S REMARKS

Rector Winstead thanked the Board members for attending the emergency meeting. He stated that the purpose of this meeting is to receive an update on the upcoming fall semester from the president and senior leadership team. The Rector also acknowledged the May 25th murder of an African American citizen, Mr. George Harry Floyd, Jr. by a uniformed police officer. He stated that this event had ignited a fire that is transforming race relations, the nation's landscape, and the world. The Rector stated that this Board stands in support of President Abdullah and his leadership and statements through this transformation. Mr. Winstead stated that he and his business colleagues are in dialogue and discussion with clients and stakeholders as they navigate through this new reality. He encouraged Board members to do the same in their respective stations and to initiate the conversations, if necessary. He also asked for a moment of silence for Mr. George Harry Floyd, Jr. and Miss Brianna Taylor.

The Rector mentioned the appointment of new Board members that would join the Board as of July 1, 2020; the Board of Visitors has received this information by email. The new Board members are Dr. Christine Darden, a VSU alumnus and retired Researcher and Senior Staff at NASA; Ms. Shavonne Gordon, Vice President of Diversity Recruiting and Talent Acquisition at Capital One; and Mr. William (Bill) Murray, Senior Vice President, Corporate Affairs at Dominion Energy. The Rector also acknowledged Ms. Pamela Currey and Mr. James Stegmaier who returned for a second term. He thanked Dr. Daryl Dance and Ms. Jennifer Hunter for their service as their second terms would June 30, 2020.

ELECTRONIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Friday, June 12, 2020

Page 3

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Dr. Abdullah echoed the Rector's sentiments and comments regarding the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. He stated that he is proud of students and faculty that are actively engaged in trying to create a better world. He also welcomed new Board members. Dr. Abdullah explained the hope for school operations to be back to normal in the spring semester. Meanwhile the objective is to open for the fall in a way that mitigates risk and liability, with the understanding that there will always be risks present. He emphasized that the plan to reopen is a working document and will need to meet the conditions for reopening outlined by the Governor and State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV).

Nurse Johnson-Oliver presented additional items that will be needed with respect to health and safety including new policies and procedures, treatment protocols, daily clinic workflows, and plans to care for and educate our students. She stated that she is awaiting guidance on how to define an outbreak in order to change to remote learning and guidance relating to liability relating to students who test positive. Dr. Spencer asked follow up questions about the number of students on which the reopening plan is based, contact tracing protocols, and further clarification of health related budgetary items.

Jane Harris discussed facilities related measures aimed at campus health and safety for the fall including social distancing protocols, the purchase of campus wide signage, hand sanitizer, traffic control, increased custodial usage, personal protective equipment (PPE) for students and all employees, and continuous cleaning of high touch areas. She stated that these efforts will result in additional estimated annual cost of \$2 million. She explained the objective to mitigate some of these costs by continuing to reduce the number of employees on campus to only those that require physical presence.

Visitors asked for clarification on the additional \$2 million cost, if it reflects potential loss related to not being able to house as many students on campus. Ms. Harris clarified that the \$2 million only relates to the expense side and that the revenue side will be discussed in a later presentation.

Visitors asked if temperature monitoring will take place for students entering the classroom or for staff entering meetings. Nurse Johnson-Oliver explained that students will be advised to do self-checks. She explained various considerations relating to patient privacy that drove that rationale for this decision, stating the plan is for infrared temperature devices to be used in the Student Health Center as opposed to the classroom. Visitors asked further follow up questions about PPE and social distancing. Dr. Abdullah added that university leadership is especially sensitive with how social distancing is used, adding that police will not be used to enforce social distancing or mask wearing.

Ms. Harris explained that the current estimate for fall on-campus occupancy is 1740, touching on several issues such as bathroom and cleaning schedules, quarantine space, and an additional \$140,000 dedicated to educating students about health and safety. Visitors and Dr. Spencer asked further follow-up questions about quarantine space, room assignments, and the constitution of the on-campus/online split population.

ELECTRONIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Friday, June 12, 2020

Page 4

Dr. Palm presented recommendations of the Task Force with respect to the fall opening including the reduction of occupancy, the hybrid instruction model, and a discussion of the challenges related to remote learning, including faculty training.

Visitors asked further questions about social distancing and temperature screening, engaging both Ms. Harris and Nurse Johnson-Oliver. Ms. Harris confirmed that the shipment of PPE has been delivered. Visitors emphasized the need to build a complete understanding of the legal implications surrounding utilizing or not utilizing temperature screening or spot checks. Visitors also emphasized the importance of SCHEV guidance on this matter.

Dr. Palm replied to Visitors requests for comparison of the 1740 target for on-campus students to the normal amount housed on-campus, how the determination is made with respect to which students are selected to have the opportunity to live on campus, how students and guests coming from off-campus will be monitored, and how these factors impact the classes that will be offered.

Visitors asked questions regarding how the online component of the hybrid instruction model would impact professor load. Dr. Palm discussed training priorities and the plan to leverage our own faculty so that they can operate at the highest capacity with online remote learning.

Dr. Spencer asked follow up questions regarding the additional \$2.2 million in annual costs, specifically asked how much of this amount the faculty can depend on and how much will be allocated for faculty training. She also stressed the need to increase bandwidth and improve infrastructure to accommodate the hybrid structure. Dr. Palm responded that he generally expects about \$500,000 to be allocated to online training for faculty and staff and the rest will go to teaching overload for faculty and to adjuncts. Dr. Spencer further inquired whether training would be conducted by in-house providers or vendors. Dr. Palm replied that both would be utilized and detailed the plan to use instructional designers to help develop faculty online, with the objective to assist them in optimally delivering the content of their courses online without taking away from their academic freedom in how they present the content. Dr. Palm replied to Visitors' question about the buy in from the academic units for this plan stating that it took into account a survey of all of the academic units.

Visitors asked if a target date has been established for the selections of which students will be able to live on-campus. Dr. Palm replied that over the next two weeks his area will be evaluating the inventory of class offerings and the impact on the population that would be best served being on campus. He discussed the block schedule, impacts on financial aid, upper level class scheduling, and impact on breaks.

In providing an update on technology, Mr. Hubert D. Harris stated that he is looking at end user cloud solutions. He is evaluating the possibility of using Amazon Web Services to virtualize desktops for every discipline and also provide internet solutions to students living in remote areas. Visitors asked follow up questions about virtualization and lead times for implementing these technologies. Mr. Harris stated that his department will need to leverage contingent services to put this new services in place. Visitors asked questions about the costs related to the laptop program being considered.

ELECTRONIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Friday, June 12, 2020

Page 5

Mr. Kameron Gray asked what the university will do to assist students financially who might not have a high enough GPA to qualify for merit based financial aid. Dr. Abdullah answered that university leadership is in a constant conversation to upgrade the Pell grant. He acknowledged that this is a very difficult time for students and that need will be exacerbated. Families' financial conditions are not updated on the FAFSA. He stated his objective to put his thumb on the scale and find additional financial aid so that a generation of students is not lost.

Dr. Spencer summarized that close to \$9 million in new expenditures are being considered, but that the Faculty Senate's larger concern is that VSU is able to survive COVID19 and that doing so does not impact the faculty and staff on the front lines. She stressed the importance of being forward looking and also considering the long-term impact of any cuts or furloughs with respect to the university's ability to survive post-COVID.

Mr. Harris presented additional information on the plan and need for a one-time \$346,000 upgrade to the website.

Mr. Davenport stated that he would now present the impact that the changes discussed in the prior presentations would have on the budget. He explained the revenue impacts of having fewer students on campus, discussing the revenue and expenditures impacts on both the Auxiliary and Educational & General (E&G) sides. In total, he projected a total budget impact of \$26 million consisting of a \$14 million impact on E&G and a \$12 million impact on Auxiliaries. He cited several key areas where he has been able to arrange reductions so far, including a major adjustment to food services and a reduction of the comprehensive fee. He explained that Residence Life will not be able to take considerable cuts and still house 1700 students on campus.

Visitors asked if university leadership has considered approaching the State requesting a collective restructuring of debt for public universities to provide relief during this environment. Dr. Abdullah added that this was an idea discussed at the Council of Presidents that is currently being explored.

Mr. Davenport replied to Visitors' questions about the projected \$5 million dollar impact on Residence Life. Dr. Abdullah added that the category estimates add a hypothetical breakdown that is useful for creating targets for reductions.

Mr. Davenport addressed Visitors' questions about reserves. Citing an Auxiliary reserve balance of \$21 million, he stressed the president's priority to hold reserve and stimulus funds as much as possible. He further stated that he is expecting a need for a portion of stimulus funds to fill the current gap. He cited additional cost saving measures and controls that are being considered such as evaluating executive pay, placing a hiring freeze into effect, achieving grounds and facilities related savings, and loading only half of the budget.

Dr. Spencer asked how costs are justified to students that are forced to take classes online. Dr. Abdullah stated that he is trying to reduce the net cost by raising financial aid. He acknowledged that some students may feel that they are not getting the true VSU experience studying online. He emphasized the high value as well as affordability that VSU provides.

ELECTRONIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Friday, June 12, 2020

Page 6

Dr. Spencer followed up expressing additional concern about out-of-state students' willingness to pay to continue to take online classes in lieu of finding options to attend locally in their respective home states. Dr. Abdullah concurred that there is not easy answer to this challenge, but he did mention that lower projected occupancy will enable the university to provide great financial aid elsewhere. He explained that current enrollment numbers are actually showing an increase in freshman enrollment over last year. However, a 10% reduction will still be budgeted because numbers in this era are unreliable.

Dr. Spencer asked about the furlough or reductions that were mentioned, citing concerns raised by the Board and Faculty Senate in the past about the number of faculty transitioning out and not being replaced. She cited faculty and staff shortages across several departments, and emphasized how further shortages will impact the university's ability to survive post-COVID. Mr. Davenport emphasized the reality of needing to meet the \$26 million gap – stating that although the objective to mitigate impact to faculty and instruction as much as possible will remain, the gap cannot be filled without having some impact on faculty.

Dr. Spencer stated that the Faculty Senate has created some alternative scenarios outlining where costs can be cut. Dr. Palm stated that he will discuss these scenarios with Dr. Spencer.

Mr. Davenport replied to Visitors' questions about the \$26 million gap, providing some further clarification regarding revenue/expense impact and funding source. Dr. Abdullah added that the team has identified \$8 million in savings that can be implemented soon. Mr. Davenport summarized some major reserve and stimulus sources available.

A Visitor mentioned that other institutions have not thus far announced tuition price differentiation between students that are served on-campus versus online.

A Visitor emphasized concerns regarding the financial situation that existed before COVID, stating that COVID has only further added to these concerns and the urgency for tough decisions to be made. The Visitor also stressed the need to obtain feedback from key stakeholders and consider the various points of view that they bring to the table.

Dr. Spencer cited concerns how reducing term faculty could impact the quality of instruction. Dr. Abdullah replied that the university will stay well within the requirements of SACSCOC and will take measures to ensure quality.

A Visitor expressed the urgency of seeing more specifics, noting that certain possible liabilities, risks, and possible due costs discussed in the prior meeting were not discussed today and emphasized the importance of knowing the exact amounts of those costs.

A Visitor offered the context of the importance of the work being done at this pivotal time and urged the Board, faculty, and staff to also reflect on all the positive impact that can be made on students' lives even with challenges ahead.

The Rector asked Dr. Abdullah to bring the meeting to a close. Dr. Abdullah thanked the Board for their patience during these times, emphasizing that the decisions faced during this time are not easy ones. He

ELECTRONIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Friday, June 12, 2020

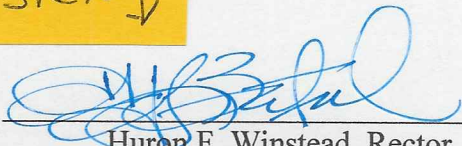
Page 7

outlined critical next steps that will begin to be implemented next week including expenditure reductions and considering Faculty Senate proposals. He expressed his priority to keep the Board fully abreast of major budgetary changes or information regarding enrollment. He stated that the plan for prioritizing residence halls will be finalized early next week. He offered the closing thought that a lot in front of us is unknown, but that he is constantly reminded of the tremendous value that Virginia State University provides in solving a lot of the problems faced by our country.

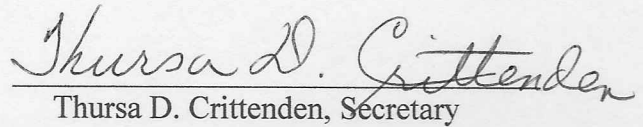
ADJOURNMENT

The Rector adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:55 p.m.

STGN ↓



Huron F. Winstead, Rector



Thursa D. Crittenden, Secretary

8.6.20

Date

8.6.20

Date

**Virginia State University
Board of Visitors' Meeting**

VOICE VOTE

DISCUSSION ITEM: Minutes June 12, 2020 BOV

Meeting

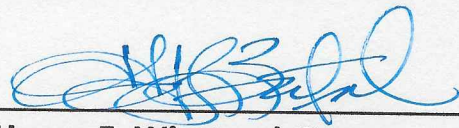
MOTION BY: Pam Currey

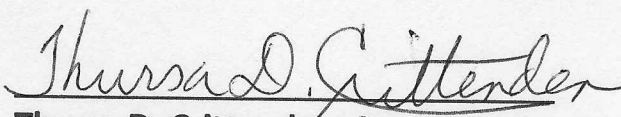
SECONDED BY: N/A

DATE OF ACTION: 8.6.20

Board Member	Present	Absent	Comments
Mr. Huron F. Winstead, Rector	X		
Dr. Valerie K. Brown	X		
Ms. Thursa D. Crittenden		—	
Ms. Pam Currey	X		
Ms. Christine M. Darden	X		
Mr. Michael Flemming	X		
Ms. Shavonne Gordon	X		
Mr. Raul Herrera	X		
MR. Charlie Hill			
Mr. William Murray	X		
Mr. Xavier Richardson		—	
Mr. Glenn Sessoms	X		
Mr. Jay Stegmaier	X		
Mr. Wayne Turnage	X		
Mr. Gregory Whirley	X		

SIGN
↓


Huron F. Winstead, Rector


Thursa D. Crittenden, Secretary