

Sarasota Military Academy

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

12 December, 2019

Board of Director Members' Attendance

Present:

Mr. Herb Jones, Chairman
F. Steven Herb, Esquire, Vice Chairman
Ben Knisely, COL USA (Ret), Secretary
Mr. Kimball Bobbitt, Treasurer
Ms. Linda Long
Dr. Thomas J. McElheny

Howard G. Crowell, Jr., LTG USA (Ret), Chairman, SMA Foundation Inc.
Frederick M. Derr, CAPT USN (Ret), Treasurer, SMA Foundation Inc.

Absent: Ms. Carter Donovan; SMA-LTC Pamela Donehew, Director of Literacy and IB; SMA-MAJ Dr. Todd Brown, Director of Outreach; SMA-LTC Ryan Lee, Assistant Head of School, Middle School Campus; SMA-MAJ Leslie Smith, Athletic Director, Middle School Campus; SMA-CPT Bryan Burns, Prep Faculty Rep; Ms. Michele Collins, HS PTCC President

SMA Administrative Staff in Attendance

SMA-COL Christina Bowman, Executive Director of Schools
SMA-COL Frederick Fout, Head of School, High School Campus
LTC Ben Weiss, Commandant of Cadets – Senior Army Instructor
SMA-LTC Abby Williams, Assistant Head of School, High School Campus
SMA-LTC Dr. Catherine Rodriguez, Assistant Head of School, High School Campus
SMA-MAJ Steve Kok, Director of Finance
SMA-MAJ Amy Mazner, Athletic Director, High School Campus
SMA-COL Tom Vara, Head of School, Middle School Campus
SMA-LTC Lisa Currie, Assistant Head of School, Middle School Campus
MAJ Becky Morris, Assistant Head of School, Middle School Campus

Guests: Members of the SMA faculty, staff and PTCC representatives.

SMA-CPT Jennifer Vanston, High School Faculty Rep; SMA-MAJ Sylvia Gillotte, English Department Chair, High School campus; SMA-CPT Hellen Harvey, Film Studies teacher, High School campus; SMA-MAJ Charlie Carver, Science Department Chair, High School campus; SMA-CPT Gabriella Elmir, Science teacher, High School campus; SMA-CPT Jeanette Marks, Science teacher, High School campus; SMA-CPT Katherine Weaver, English teacher, High School campus; Ms. Hope White; SMA-MAJ Marissa Dobbert, Math Department Chair, Middle School campus

Location: SMA High School campus.

The chairman called the meeting to order at 2:34 pm.

SMA-COL Tom Vara introduced SMA-MAJ Marissa Dobbert as the Sarasota County's middle school Teacher of the Year. He discussed how a special formation was performed on 11 December for Sarasota County to present the award before the school and SMA-MAJ Dobbert's family and friends. SMA-MAJ Dobbert explained how her teaching position at SMA was her first out of school and how she has molded her teaching style to SMA beliefs. She discussed how she teaches to more than a test and thanks SMA for this opportunity.

Motion to Approve the Minutes from the 14 November, 2019 meeting:

Vice Chairman F. Steven Herb moved to approve the 14 November, 2019 minutes with noted corrections; COL Ben Knisely seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Motion to Approve the Foundation Minutes from 21 November, 2019 meeting:

Chairman Howard Crowell moved to approve the 21 November, 2019 minutes; Vice Chairman Herb Jones seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Executive Director of School Report: SMA-COL Bowman provided a read-ahead report. She discussed the enrollment numbers for both schools for the second semester. SMA-COL Bowman mentioned the changes to the Best and Brightest program this year in the distribution of funds to the highly effective and effective teachers.

Vice Chairman Herb moved to approve the pro-rated amount to distribute to teachers by end of year; COL Knisely seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

SMA-COL Christina Bowman discussed the additional \$350 to all instructors from the Education Foundation but has inquired through email if this distribution will include charter schools. She mentioned the generous donation by Ms. Phyllis to match 25K raised by end of year resulting in 50K to SMA.

SMA-COL Bowman commended the faculty and staff on conserving expenses with a decrease in office supplies expense. Chairman Jones inquired to Wreaths Across America in which SMA-COL Bowman replied that the ceremony is this coming Saturday with the goal of every site covered being met and already starting for next year.

Community Outreach Director Report: N/A

Technology Report: SMA-MAJ Becky Morris provided a read ahead report. She discussed the future technology plan for maintaining the needs of the infrastructure along with growth to computer science programs.

SMA Prep Head of School Report: SMA-COL Vara provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the enrollment numbers for second semester at full capacity. SMA-COL Vara discussed how both high and middle schools are working together as in a combined professional development as well as LTC Ben Weiss speaking at the middle school. He stated that the Education Foundation has awarded grants totaling four thousand dollars to teachers for their classrooms.

SMA Prep Athletics Report: SMA-CPT Smith provided a read-ahead report.

MYP: SMA-LTC Lisa Currie provided a read-ahead report. She discussed education as the priority that is emphasized throughout the new website. SMA-COL Bowman commends SMA-LTC Currie on capturing enrollment data and Dr. Tom McElheny thanked SMA-LTC Currie on her report showing great information on who we are and who we think we are.

SMA Head of School Report: SMA-COL Fred Fout provided a read-ahead report. He mentioned the Wreaths Across America ceremony on 14 December and commended SMA-MAJ Michael Finley, Dr. Henry Orazi, SMA-CPT Kevin Wiegand and SMA-CPT Dorinda Davis of the music department for thriving and out into the community more. SMA-COL Fout recognized the ECO team and discussed a presentation given by three cadets on their plan to reduce plastic and to stage refillable filtered water stations. He commended SMA-CPT Jeanette Marks for spearheading the initiative.

SMA HS Athletics Report: SMA-MAJ Amy Mazner provided a read-ahead report. She stated her athletes are academic champions with a 3.0 GPA or higher in every sport. SMA-MAJ Mazner discussed the need for a budget to assist her phenomenal coaching staff with funding and resources. She explained her efforts in raising awareness of Eagle Pride and mentioned the Golf Challenge in April as well as other opportunities to donate to the Athletic Program. SMA-COL Bowman stated that donations from the Giving Challenge this year will go directly to Athletics and extra-curriculars. LTG Crowell stated that it would be great for the Foundation to cover pay-to-play in the future and make a sport mandatory to enroll at SMA.

IB Report: SMA-LTC Pamela Donehew provided a read-ahead report.

SAI/Commandant's Report: LTC Ben Weiss provided a read-ahead report. He mentioned programs and activities that need funding such as the new Robotics Program and state activities that the Army will not cover. LTC Weiss discussed working with SMA-COL Vara on synergy between both schools on culture and rules. He explained the implementation of the Commandant's Challenge where he attends every class once a week, calls cadets to attention and gives them one minute to prepare for inspection where he will issue five pushups for each discrepancy with and will perform pushups himself if class has nothing wrong.

LTC Weiss mentioned that the Department Commander, the second person in charge, of JROTC nationally is fully aware of our school and the Rifle Program. He stated that CSM Charles Thomas won the Teacher of the Year award as the regional

winner and will move on to the state level and that a prep cadet has won the Patriots Pin Essay.

Staff Representatives: SMA-CPT Jennifer Vanston provided a read-ahead report. She stated that finding resolutions are in progress as concerns were submitted to the Head of School and Administrative Team. Ms. Linda Long inquired as to the nature of the concerns in which SMA-CPT Vanston replied that concerns were internal issues such as finances.

Treasurer's Report: Mr. Kimball Bobbitt and SMA-MAJ Steve Kok provided a read-ahead report. Mr. Bobbitt discussed the current financials including profit and loss by campus. SMA-MAJ Steve Kok stated that expenses for the first three months of fiscal year are more than latter nine months due to one-time expenses for taxes and IB.

PTCC Report: N/A

Foundation, Inc.: Chairman Crowell discussed the new hire for Chief Development Officer and how donations have been made to cover the salary as well as a budget for the new hire. He explained how fundraisers in the past were not very successful due to not able to support it financially. Chairman Crowell introduced Mr. Anthony Baade as a new board member, a past Air Force Officer who lives on Longboat Key that travels to Memphis as a FedEx driver. He commended friends who donated that believed in SMA and to the staff who produced a school they all believe in.

Committee Reports: N/A

Chairman: Chairman Jones requested to approve CAPT Warren Hudson, Navy (ret) as a new board member effective January 2020.

Dr. McElheny moved to approve CAPT Warren Hudson, Navy (ret) as a new board member effective January 2020; Vice Chairman Herb seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Chairman Jones stated he asked SMA-COL Bowman and SMA-COL Fout to do research on the IB program, its history and expenses since inception. SMA-COL Bowman discussed the expenses by salary by class and stipends along with the income from assessments cadets have passed and income from diploma candidates. She discussed that IB course takers along with cadets in the IB diploma program has held at 4% of total population with only 25% pass rate in the program.

Dr. McElheny discussed his trip to Massachusetts to visit a wall-to-wall IB school and how he became a supporter of IB but need to make a decision on what's best for SMA. He explained that we need to be a military school first and not willing to take a risk in keeping IB as it is a very large expense. Mr. Bobbitt agreed that on a financial standpoint, not a great rate of return. LTG Crowell stated that students do not come to SMA for the IB program but for character building. Dr. McElheny agreed that we can incorporate IB teachings within the current curriculum without the expense.

SMA-COL Bowman stated that IB is for all but not all will be successful and suggested IB concepts be provided through good teaching and professional development. Dr. McElheny suggested to designate teachers as key resources to our school and to allow freedom in the classroom where education takes place between student and teacher. Vice Chairman Herb stated that juniors will still need to complete the program.

SMA-MAJ Sylvia Gillotte stated that the IB program has failed due to not promoting IB and being difficult with the new 4x4 block schedule. Her concerns is how SMA will look like they have failed. SMA-MAJ Charlie Carver stated that as the new IB Coordinator next year that he will be financially responsible by having checks and balances as well as find ways to save money. He discussed the IB specific grants he can submit and would like the opportunity to try and fix the current situation. Dr. McElheny stated that it is his fiduciary responsibility to not take the risk.

Dr. Catherine Rodriguez stated that she believes in SMA and should stay positive. She stated that SMA has great teachers that will do amazing things with their students. SMA-COL Fout agreed that he too is committed to SMA with or without IB and is ready to step up for any challenge. SMA-COL Bowman stated that character building and JROTC is the foundation of who we are and need to put forth quality academics and character education. She stated that any decision made for the IB program is only at the high school level and will not affect the middle school.

SMA-LTC Currie requested to not vote at this time and to ensure a positive outcome of striving for academic excellence and 21st century learning. She suggested to delay voting due to having solutions in its place prior to vote. SMA-CPT Vanston stated that as a parent, the need for stellar education is paramount. She explained the opinions of non-IB teachers on the IB program and that money should be used at its best.

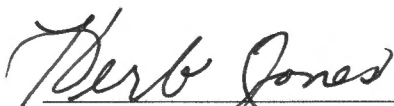
SMA-COL Bowman stated that a Strategic Planning work session to determine options going forward with the IB program at SMA will be held on 6 January at 9:00am at the High School campus.

Old Business: N/A

New Business: N/A

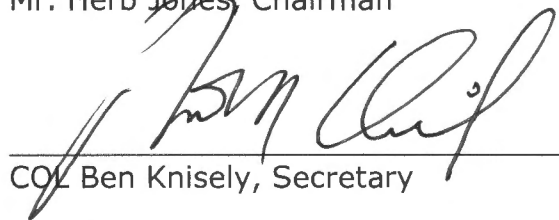
Public Comments: N/A

The chairman adjourned the meeting at 5:40 pm.



Mr. Herb Jones, Chairman

1/9/2020
Date



COL Ben Knisely, Secretary

1/9/2020
Date