

## **Sarasota Military Academy**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEETING MINUTES

5 March, 2020

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### **Board of Director Members' Attendance**

#### **Present:**

Mr. Herb Jones, Chairman  
Ben Knisely, COL USA (Ret), Secretary  
Ms. Carter Donovan  
Mr. Warren P. Hudson  
Ms. Linda Long  
Dr. Thomas J. McElheny (by phone)

Howard G. Crowell, Jr., LTG USA (Ret), Chairman, SMA Foundation Inc.

**Absent:** F. Steven Herb, Esquire, Vice Chairman; Mr. Kimball Bobbitt, Treasurer; Frederick M. Derr, CAPT USN (Ret), Treasurer, SMA Foundation Inc.; Ms. Alexandra Quarles, SMA Foundation Inc.; SMA-LTC Dr. Catherine Rodriguez, Assistant Head of School, High School Campus; MAJ Becky Morris, Assistant Head of School, Middle School Campus; SMA-LTC Ryan Lee, Assistant Head of School, Middle School Campus; SMA-MAJ Amy Mazner, Athletic Director, High School Campus; SMA-MAJ Leslie Smith, Athletic Director, Middle School Campus

#### **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-MAJ Steve Kok, Director of Finance  
SMA-COL Tom Vara, Head of School, Middle School Campus  
SMA-LTC Lisa Currie, Assistant Head of School, Middle School Campus  
SMA-MAJ Dr. Todd Brown, Director of Outreach

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

Michele Collins, HS PTCC President; SMA-CPT Jennifer Vanston, High School Faculty Rep; SMA-CPT Bryan Burns, Prep Faculty Rep; SMA-MAJ Brandon Sikkenga, World Languages Department Chair, HS Campus  
Location: SMA High School campus.

The chairman called the meeting to order at 2:29 pm.

**Motion to Approve the Minutes from the 13 February, 2020 meeting:**

Mr. Warren Hudson moved to approve the 13 February, 2020 minutes; COL Ben Knisely seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

SMA-COL Christina Bowman introduced the cadet/Regimental Commander Juliana Rendle to discuss the meeting with Vice President Mike Pence at Dolphin Aviation with fifty other cadets. She presented to the board the details of the visit and mentioned exchanging coins by giving VP Pence the SMA coin and receiving the challenge coin from the Vice President.

**Executive Director of School Report:** SMA-COL Bowman provided a read-ahead report. She provided handouts of the enrollment for both campuses for the upcoming school year. She discussed numbers for the eighth grade acceptance confirmed to the high school with personal phone calls made by the administrative team to the undecided eighth graders. Chairman Herb Jones inquired as to the availability of placing portables on the prep campus in which SMA-MAJ Steve Kok replied that he is currently researching costs for leasing or purchasing and staff to execute.

SMA-COL Bowman commended the staff and administration for maintaining composure during the initial COVID-19 scare at the high school. She stated that assistance came only from the Florida Department of Education and was not contacted by the District.

**Community Outreach Director Report:** Dr. Todd Brown provided a read-ahead report.

**Technology Report:** N/A

**SMA Prep Head of School Report:** SMA-COL Tom Vara provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the collaboration with SMA-COL Fred Fout on curriculum and him speaking with current eighth graders regarding the new Academic Pathways at the high school. SMA-COL Vara stated LTC Ben Weiss also on campus addressing formation and the cadets. He mentioned the continuation of tightening security of vulnerable areas during the necessary security drills.

SMA-COL Vara mentioned negative language being used on gender and race on campus and stated community circles in a roundtable have been put in place weekly.

**SMA Prep Athletics Report:** SMA-CPT Smith provided a read-ahead report. SMA-COL Vara discussed the girls soccer team had a winning season and entered the playoffs as the number one seed. He mentioned the lacrosse season has started with its first year and performing well considering the mixed levels of talent.

**MYP:** SMA-LTC Lisa Currie had nothing to report but mentioned presenting next board meeting on curriculum grades six through twelve.

**SMA Head of School Report:** SMA-COL Fout provided a read-ahead report. He discussed five wrestlers exceling to states in Kissimmee as well as three cadets earning a spot at the National Championships of the JROTC Marksmanship in Ohio. SMA-COL Fout stated the Spring Concert is scheduled for 10 March and the testing season is fast approaching once returned from Spring Break.

**SMA HS Athletics Report:** SMA-MAJ Amy Mazner provided a read-ahead report. She discussed the need for golfers for The Golfers Challenge in April as Ms. Linda Long presented her with a check for four golfers.

**IB Report:** N/A

**SAI/Commandant's Report:** LTC Ben Weiss provided a read-ahead report. He discussed how the synergy with the prep is off the charts with image and climate. LTC Weiss mentioned the first JROTC Newsletter has been created with the goal to be produced quarterly and delivered to the highest levels. He stated one packet was given to The Vice President as well as one for The President during the visit with SMA at Dolphin Aviation.

LTC Weiss further discussed his inquiry for a sit down in The White House with a good possibility that both the VP and President would sit for a twenty minute presentation. He added that formations are getting stronger and tighter and that uniforms are looking better. Ms. Long commended LTC Weiss on the newsletter and stated how helpful it is for someone not in the military. LTC Weiss stated his goal is to deliver the newsletter to all the nation's leaders.

**Staff Representatives:** SMA-CPT Jennifer Vanston provided a read-ahead report. She mentioned discussing with SMA-COL Fout on creating a way to highlight special lessons that occur in the classrooms in which Chairman Jones agreed on the great idea. SMA-CPT Bryan Burns had nothing to report.

**Treasurer's Report:** SMA-MAJ Steve Kok provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the current financials and his meeting with Wells Fargo and SMA-COL Bowman. Mr. Hudson stated the possibility of pay raises next school year is in direct correlation to the increase of FTE. Chairman Jones stated that the academy's revenue only derives from FTE and donations in which SMA-COL Bowman stated that the number one goal next year is to provide raises to faculty.

**PTCC Report:** Ms. Michele Collins provided a read-ahead report and mentioned awarding 11K in grants this year thus far.

**Foundation, Inc.:** Chairman Howard Crowell stated a successful interview this week on the new position with the SMA Foundation. SMA-COL Bowman stated he appeared to be a good fit for SMA with a pleasant demeanor and felt he would perform well with current donors as well as donor retention.

**Marketing Report:** Dr. Thomas McElheny discussed the goals for the marketing is to increase incremental enrollment at the high school and to increase awareness through brand marketing. He further discussed the various mediums available highlighting digital marketing with GEO marketing specifically. Dr. McElheny stated how GEO marketing works through GEO Fencing with location and GPS. He discussed his meeting with Channel 7 marketing team and the costs involved to incorporate this type of marketing.

Dr. McElheny offered a donation to cover costs incurred for the creation of the videos and asked if the SMA Foundation can cover the monthly cost for a five-month trial run. He explained the low opportunity costs for increased enrollment. Chairman Jones agreed to move forward in which Mr. Hudson stated his initial gift is unrestricted and may be used to cover half of the total cost to implement.

**Committee Reports:** N/A

**Chairman:** Chairman Jones stated that Ms. Carter Donovan has resigned effective 31 March. He stated she has been on the board for seven years and will be missed. SMA-COL Bowman presented Ms. Donovan with flowers and an SMA coin.

**Old Business:** N/A

**New Business:** N/A

**Public Comments:**

The chairman adjourned the meeting at 3:55 pm.

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Mr. Herb Jones, Chairman

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Date

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COL Ben Knisely, Secretary

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COL Ben Knisely, Secretary

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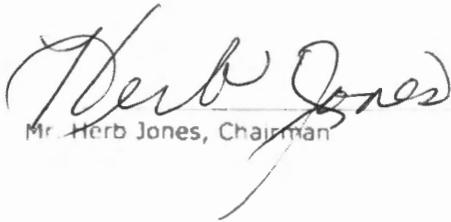
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Mr. Herb Jones, Chairman

5-21-20

Date

COL Ben Knisely, Secretary

Date