

Sarasota Military Academy

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEETING MINUTES (VIRTUAL)

17 April, 2020

Board of Director Members' Attendance

Present:

Mr. Herb Jones, Chairman
F. Steven Herb, Esquire, Vice Chairman
Ben Knisely, COL USA (Ret), Secretary
Mr. Warren P. Hudson
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.
Ms. Alexandra Quarles, SMA Foundation Inc.
Mr. Rafael Robles, Executive Director, SMA Foundation Inc.

Absent: Mr. Kimball Bobbitt, Treasurer

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 Dr. Catherine Rodriguez, Assistant Head of School, High School Campus
SMA-LTC Abby Williams, 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
SMA-LTC Ryan Lee, Assistant Head of School, Middle School Campus
MAJ Becky Morris, Assistant Head of School, Middle School Campus
SMA-MAJ Dr. Todd Brown, Director of Outreach
SMA-MAJ Leslie Smith, Athletic Director, Middle School Campus

Location: Virtual

The chairman called the meeting to order at 2:35 pm.

Executive Director of School Report: SMA-COL Christina Bowman commended the administrative team and the staff on both campuses for the transition to distance learning.

Community Outreach Director Report: Dr. Todd Brown discussed Project Earth Day on 22 April at 10am with his presentation and live Q&A panels working with Ms. Kate Brooks and nine other speakers on wildlife trade and markets. He stated the summit this summer may have to be postponed or cancelled. Dr. Brown stated the largest media in Switzerland has contacted him for an interview on Operation Outbreak and how the platform is receiving worldwide recognition.

Technology Report: N/A

SMA Prep and HS Head of School Report: SMA-COL Tom Vara discussed the transition to distance learning with no participation of a few students online. He further discussed the challenge of keeping the students engaged and excited about distance learning as well as looking at ideas on performing an online promotion ceremony. Chairman Herb Jones mentioned the challenges with absenteeism across the country and inquired as to how the SMA compares in which SMA-COL Vara replied that most students are absent to a class or two but not the whole distance learning experience. SMA-COL Fred Fout replied only five students have no engagement with most missing participation in one class only. He also mentioned the SWST team has identified students in need of extra immediate services and partnered with First Step and the Lean On Me Partnership program to provide immediate resources.

COL Ben Knisely stated the possibility of continuing remotely in the fall and suggested compiling what works and what doesn't from faculty to be prepared over the summer. SMA-COL Fout stated that the teachers are coming up with great ways and tools to be engaging as Flipgrid and Google Meet and becoming more comfortable with videos. He stated a survey was sent out electronically to all senior cadets and parents to choose which style of graduation they would prefer.

Ms. Linda Long inquired as to how the fall would be handled academically if distance learning continues with mandatory attendance and the need for creating baselines. SMA-COL Bowman replied should distance learning continue in the fall that more structure would be needed grades six through twelve and will purchase seventy new chromebooks through Title IV funds and a matched grant.

SMA Prep Athletics Report: N/A

SMA Head of School Report: N/A

SMA HS Athletics Report: N/A

IB Report: N/A

SAI/Commandant's Report: N/A

Staff Representatives:

Treasurer's Report: SMA-MAJ Steve Kok discussed the current financial status for both campuses and stated the increased savings with the lowering of overhead expenses of utilities, busses and substitute teachers used for testing during the fourth quarter. Vice Chairman F. Steven Herb inquired as to the decrease of FTE due to the COVID-19 pandemic in which SMA-MAJ Kok replied that only a few cadets shy with no anticipation of any withdrawals. Chairman Jones inquired as to accessibility of loans or grants through the stimulus package in which SMA-MAJ Kok replied that he is currently researching a three month deferment of principal payments to benefit cash flow savings.

PTCC Report: N/A

Foundation, Inc.: Chairman Howard Crowell introduced Mr. Rafael Robles as the Executive Director for the Foundation. Mr. Robles discussed the immediate challenge he attacked on his first day of implementing a campaign for The Giving Challenge. Chairman Crowell stated his approach to The Giving Challenge is very organized and encouraged all board members to participate. Mr. Robles requested the board to submit an individual 30-second video on "Why SMA" to participate in The Giving Challenge. COL Ben Knisely suggested creating a Facebook frame for people to add to their profile page. Chairman Crowell stated to not cut corners as the SMA reputation is at hand.

Marketing Report: N/A

Committee Reports: N/A

Chairman: N/A

Old Business: N/A

New Business: N/A

Public Comments: N/A

The chairman adjourned the meeting at 3:55 pm.

Mr. Herb Jones, Chairman

Date

COL Ben Knisely, Secretary

Date

Chairman Howard Crowell stated his approach to the Giving Challenge is to organize and encourage all board members to participate. Mr. Robles requested the board to submit an individual 30-second video on "Why SMA" to participate in The Giving Challenge. COL Ben Knisely suggested creating a Facebook frame for people to add to their profile page. Chairman Crowell stated to not cut corners as the SMA reputation is at hand.

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Committee Reports: N/A

Chairman: N/A

Old Business: N/A

New Business: N/A

Public Comments: N/A

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Mr. Herb Jones, Chairman

Date 5-21-20

COL Ben Knisely, Secretary

Date

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

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