

**Sarasota Military Academy**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEETING MINUTES (VIRTUAL)

11 August, 2020

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**Board of Director Members' Attendance**

**Present:**

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

Howard G. Crowell, Jr., LTG USA (Ret), Chairman, SMA Foundation Inc.  
Frederick M. Derr, CAPT USN (Ret), Treasurer, SMA Foundation Inc.  
Mr. Anthony Baade, SMA Foundation Inc.  
Mr. Rafael Robles, Executive Director, SMA Foundation Inc.

**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-MAJ Steve Kok, Director of Finance  
SMA-COL Tom Vara, Head of School, Middle School Campus  
MAJ Becky Morris, Assistant Head of School, Middle School Campus  
SMA-MAJ Dr. Todd Brown, Director of Outreach

**Guest in Attendance:** Mr. Peter Skokos

Location: Virtual

The chairman called the meeting to order at 2:31 pm.

Chair Herb Jones requested a slight change in the order of the agenda to allow the nominating committee to present a report as the first order of business.

Mr. F. Steven Herb provided a report regarding the process of meetings with Mr. Peter Skokos, a prospective board member and referred the board of directors to the bio that was provided in the read-ahead report. Mr. Herb motioned to accept

nomination of Mr. Skokos; Vice Chair Dr. Tom McElheny seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

**Motion to Approve the 11 June, 2020 Minutes:**

Vice Chair Dr. Tom McElheny motioned to approve the 11 June, 2020 minutes; COL Ben Knisely seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

**Motion to Approve the 5 March, 2020 Minutes:**

Vice Chairman Herb motioned to approve the 5 March, 2020 minutes; COL Knisely seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

**Executive Director of Schools Report:** SMA-COL Christina Bowman provided a read-ahead report. She commended the Academy Administrative Teams and facilities staff for their outstanding work planning and preparing for the return of staff and cadets. She reported that 75% of families for each campus had completed the survey regarding their cadets returning to campus or remote learning. Both campuses reflected the same choices of 60% brick and mortar and 40% remote learning. The survey will stay open additional days and reminders to parents will be sent again. She also identified continuous review of staffing as it relates to enrollment.

The 2020-2021 SMA Employee Handbook was provided in the read ahead and SMA-COL Bowman asked for board approval with revisions. Mr. F. Steven Herb motioned to approve the 2020-2021 SMA Employee Handbook; Chair Herb Jones seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Ms. Linda Long inquired about attendance requirements, assessments and grading remote learners as well as plans to address learning gaps. SMA-COL Bowman stated that she would like each Head of School to address those questions as it looks a little different for each plan.

SMA-COL Bowman provided the 2020-2021 SMA Board of Directors Meeting Schedule in the read ahead and asked for board approval. Ms. Linda Long motioned to approve the schedule; Mr. Warren Hudson seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

**Community Outreach Director Report:** Dr. Todd Brown provided a read-ahead report. He highlighted several grants he is working on, to include NIH and Sarasota Memorial Hospital that would provide rapid testing on campus. He also briefly discussed the SCOUT program for contact tracing purposes.

**Technology Report:** MAJ Becky Morris provided a read-ahead report.

**SMA Prep Head of School Report:** SMA-COL Tom Vara provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the use of ZOOM meetings with staff and families in order to provide communication effectively. Orientation meetings will also be established closer to opening of school as to be better prepared and up to date information is available.

SMA-COL Vara reviewed attendance expectations for remote learners, schedules for all learners, professional development needs, and the in-depth collaboration that has taken place in preparation for the 2020-2021 school year.

Mr. Warren Hudson inquired about the wait list and SMA-COL Vara replied there is not a wait list at this time for 6<sup>th</sup> grade but 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade waiting lists were extensive. He reported they are continuing to fill seats as they become open.

Chair Jones inquired as to the availability of the SCOUT program when campuses open and Dr. Todd Brown responded that the platform should be available the first week of school.

**SMA Prep Athletics Report:** SMA-COL Vara provided a verbal report. SMA Prep is following the State, District and FHSAA guidelines at this time and there are some considerations of moving some of the season dates.

**MYP Report:** SMA-LTC Lisa Currie provided a read-ahead report.

**SMA Head of School Report:** SMA-COL Fred Fout provided a read-ahead report. He highlighted two new community partnerships; one with All Faith's Food Bank Food Distribution on the Third Thursday of the month and SCF Entrepreneurship Club.

SMA-COL Fout reviewed the academic structures of learning for both on campus learners and remote learners. Ms. Linda Long inquired as to why the "flipped classroom" structure was chosen and the response was that it is more like that of the college system and it will better support remote learning should the whole campus become remote learners. He also discussed pre-assessments such as USA Test Prep and Khan Academy to determine learning gaps.

SMA-COL Bowman commended SMA-COL Fout and, in particular, SMA-LTC Abby Williams for her perseverance and planning the 2020 Commencement Ceremony.

**SMA HS Athletics Report:** SMA-COL Fout reported the high school will continue to follow State, County and FHSAA guidance.

**IB Report:** SMA-COL Fout will provide an update at the next scheduled meeting as a few of the assessment grades were still not available.

**SAI/Commandant's Report:** LTC Ben Weiss provided a read-ahead report. He highlighted the immense amount of uniforms and supplies provided by Fort Benning and they are working through and organizing the items.

LTC Weiss outlined the curriculum for distance learning provided by Cadet Command and its accessibility to all cadets as well as Cadet Command's directive that no state competitions will take place until further notice.

**Staff Representatives:** N/A

**Treasurer's Report:** Mr. Kimball Bobbitt provided a read-ahead report and balance sheets per campus. He discussed the current financials thru 30<sup>th</sup> June,

2020 with a YTD Profit and Loss per campus as well as the PPP funds. Mr. F. Steven Herb asked if the PPP funds are fully "booked" and Mr. Bobbitt replied yes.

Mr. Warren Hudson inquired as to the timeline for the presentation of the 2020-2021 budget. Mr. Bobbitt stated the budget will be presented at the next scheduled board meeting for approval.

**PTCC Report:** N/A

**SMA Foundation, Inc. Report:** SMA-LTC Rafael Robles provided a read-ahead report. He provided an update about shifting to more face-to-face meetings rather than remote but there is still some trepidation. He reported seeing a trend that donors are focusing more on COVID-19 supports. A financial report was provided as well as an update on Alumni Communications. He reported completing a job description for an assistant but would not like to post the position at this time due to the pandemic. He also provided a brief overview of marketing and communication with and admissions campaign through the use of webinars and mailers.

**Marketing Report:** N/A

**Committee Reports:** Mr. Warren Hudson, Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, provided an overview of the team's meetings and minutes were provided in the read-ahead. He presented "Who We Are" as well as the revised mission statement. He stated a task force will be formed for specific areas of the mission statement and will be comprised of directors, administrators, staff, cadets and parents. The areas are: 1) Prepare students for College, Careers, and Citizenship in a changing world; 2) Develop Character based upon the steadfast values of Honor, Integrity, and Respect; Encourage an Innovative Spirit; Cultivate Leaders for tomorrow; 3) Foster a Welcoming Culture in which all cadets know they are valued members of the SMA Community and 4) Resources/Financial. The task force will not be formed until December, 2020 or later.

**Chairman:** Chair Herb Jones commended the Strategic Planning Committee for their excellent work. The committee members are Mr. Warren Hudson, Ms. Linda Long and Dr. Tom McElheny.

**Old Business:** N/A

**New Business:** SMA-COL Bowman provided the salary increase proposal in the read-ahead report. SMA-MAJ Steve Kok reviewed the proposal. SMA-COL Bowman asked for board approval on the proposal. Mr. Warren Hudson motioned to approve the salary increase proposal; COL Knisely seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

**Public Comments:** A faculty member submitted a question ahead of time regarding requesting a leave of absence. SMA-COL Bowman stated she already scheduled a meeting with the faculty meeting for the following day.

The chairman adjourned the meeting at 4:11 pm.

*Herb Jones*

Mr. Herb Jones, Chairman

*9/21/2020*

Date

*Ben Knisely*

COL Ben Knisely, Secretary

*10/14/2020*

Date