

**Sarasota Military Academy**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEETING MINUTES (VIRTUAL)

8 SEPTEMBER, 2020

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**Board of Director Members' Attendance**

**Present:**

Mr. Herb Jones, Chairman  
Thomas J. McElheny, EdD, Vice Chairman  
Mr. Kimball Bobbitt, Treasurer  
Ben Knisely, COL USA (Ret), Secretary  
F. Steven Herb, Esquire  
Mr. Warren P. Hudson  
Ms. Linda Long  
Mr. Pete Skokos  
Ms. Tessa Suplee, LTC, AF (Ret)

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.  
Ms. Alexandra Quarles, 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  
SMA-COL Tom Vara, Head of School, Middle School Campus  
LTC Ben Weiss, Commandant of Cadets  
SMA-MAJ Steve Kok, Director of Finance  
SMA-MAJ Dr. Todd Brown, Director of Community Outreach

**Guests in Attendance:** Mr. Tom Pellegrino and Mr. Vincent Tortora of Pellegrino & McFarland, PA; Ms. Jocelyn Jordan of Kerkering, Barberio & Co.

Location: Virtual

The chairman called the meeting to order at 2:33 pm.

**Motion to Amend the Agenda:**

COL Ben Knisely motioned to approve the amended agenda; Ms. Linda Long seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

**Motion to Approve the 8 September, 2020 Minutes:**

Ms. Long motioned to approve the 11 August, 2020 minutes; COL Knisely seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Chairman Herb Jones introduced LTC Tessa Suplee as a potential new board member. Mr. Steven Herb detailed Ms. Suplee's experience and accomplishments as a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Air Force and highly recommends her as a new board member.

**Motion to Approve New Board Member:**

Mr. Warren Hudson motioned to approve LTC Tessa Suplee as a new board member; COL Knisely seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

SMA-MAJ Steve Kok introduced Mr. Tom Pellegrino and Mr. Vincent Tortora of Pellegrino & McFarland and Ms. Jocelyn Jordan of Kerkering, Barbario & Co. to explain the audit report. Mr. Tortora explained the audit report in detail with attention to the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funds. Mr. Pellegrino stated that the audit will be sent to the state once it is approved.

**Mr. Hudson motioned to approve the audit report; COL Knisely seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.**

Mr. Hudson suggested a short workshop to explain the current finances in which Chairman Jones agreed and will set it up as a virtual meeting within few weeks.

**Executive Director of Schools Report:** SMA-COL Christina Bowman provided a read-ahead report. She discussed enrollment numbers academy wide and how the numbers are fluid with constant change. SMA-COL Bowman expressed her gratitude to the staff and teams on both campuses in the organization of students during the first week. She discussed the changes in support staff with a few positions dissolved in which Ms. Long inquired as to what those positions were and how it will effect productivity.

**Community Outreach Director Report:** SMA-MAJ Dr. Todd Brown provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the launch of SCOUT, the COVID Contact Tracing program, and how test results are obtained. Dr. Brown stated that the story will run in the top five science journals and will be featured in National Geographic in the fall. Dr. Tom McElheny inquired as to interest in the SCOUT program from the district in which Dr. Brown replied that there has not been any interest at all in the program.

**Technology Report:** N/A

**SMA Prep Head of School Report:** SMA-COL Tom Vara provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the enrollment numbers for this year are remaining steady. SMA-COL Vara commended his staff for a successful first week of school with

teachers adapting to both remote learners as well as in class. He expressed the hard work and efforts over the summer with his team in preparing for the start of the school year has shown with organization during the first week. SMA-COL Vara stated that a few withdrawals prior to start of school was due to families not wanting their students to ride the bus.

**SMA Prep Athletics Report:** SMA-COL Vara stated that most sports have pushed back to January with Golf in season now and Cross Country starting in October.

**SMA Head of School Report:** SMA-COL Fred Fout provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the current enrollment numbers with remote and on campus. SMA-COL Fout shared concern for the faculty in their stress in teaching in two modalities and mentioned the extra three days helped tremendously. He commended the staff and his team for a very successful first week. SMA-COL Fout stated how pleased he was in the quality of new hires. He mentioned a special 9/11 Memorial formation will go live and continuing to plan Veterans Day activities.

Dr. McElheny complimented staff and faculty on both campuses for their efforts in a very successful start of the school year.

**SMA HS Athletics Report:** N/A

**IB Report:** SMA-COL Fout stated that he will provide the numbers next month on the IB Diploma completion from the 2020 graduating class. He stated that there are currently ten students in this year's IB program.

**SAI/Commandant's Report:** LTC Ben Weiss provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the success of his instructors in providing instruction through both classroom and Google meets. LTC Weiss stated that the Rifle Program received 15K with 5K towards a special compression target and the Robotics Team received 5K to purchase drones.

**Staff Representatives:** SMA-COL Fout stated that a faculty representative has not been chosen and will have represented at the next board meeting. Chairman Jones expressed the need to define what the responsibilities are of a faculty representative.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mr. Kimball Bobbitt provided a read-ahead report and balance sheets per campus. He discussed the current financials thru 31 July with a YTD Profit and Loss per campus. Mr. Bobbitt explained the PPP loan and the guidelines in which it can be forgiven but emphasized that it has not been forgiven as of yet. He shared his concerns with the budget and the financial situation.

**Mr. Hudson motioned to approve the budget for this school year; Dr. McElheny seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.**

**PTCC Report:** The Prep PTCC provided a read-ahead report.

**Marketing Report:** N/A

**Committee Reports:** N/A

**Foundation:** Mr. Rafael Robles provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the continuation of meeting with donors and constituents as they do want to make a difference at SMA including one donor who has provided new water bottle filling stations on both campuses. Mr. Robles explained a breakdown of funds received thus far and the challenges with acquiring grants through the local foundations with their misconception of how much charter schools receive from district and private donors. Dr. McElheny expressed the need to send a letter to the editor detailing these challenges in which Chairman Jones agreed that he can compile such letter.

**Chairman:** Chairman Jones stated the need to reactivate the Audit Committee with Dr. McElheny to chair.

**Old Business:** N/A

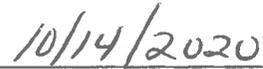
**New Business:** Chairman Jones confirmed the next virtual board meeting will be on 13 October.

**Public Comments:** N/A

The chairman adjourned the meeting at 4:07 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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Date