

Sarasota Military Academy

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEETING MINUTES (VIRTUAL)

10 NOVEMBER, 2020

Board of Director Members' Attendance

Present:

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

Howard G. Crowell, Jr., LTG USA (Ret), Chairman, SMA Foundation Inc.
Frederick M. Derr, CAPT USN (Ret), Treasurer, 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, Chief Executive Officer
LTC Ben Weiss, Commandant of Cadets
SMA-COL Frederick Fout, Head of School, 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
SMA-MAJ Leslies Smith, Athletic Director, Middle School Campus
SMA-MAJ Steve Kok, Director of Finance
SMA-MAJ Dr. Todd Brown, Director of Community Outreach

Guests in Attendance: Ms. Juanita Cedillo, High School PTCC President

Location: Virtual

The chairman called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm.

Motion to Approve the 13 October, 2020 Minutes:

Mr. Pete Skokos motioned to approve the 13 October, 2020 minutes; Ms. Tessa Suplee seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

SMA-COL Christina Bowman and Mr. F. Steven Herb explained the need to adopt a new policy to continue with virtual board meetings according to the Sunshine State laws that would not conflict with our current bylaws.

Mr. Herb motioned to approve a policy that will continue board meetings to meet virtually; COL Ben Knisely seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Executive Director of Schools Report: SMA-COL Christina Bowman provided a read-ahead report. She discussed current enrollment along with the breakdown of remote and brick and mortar learners.

SMA-COL Bowman explained the need to adopt a teaching out of field policy for teachers who are in the process of obtaining additional certificates.

Dr. Thomas McElheny motioned to approve adopting the new teaching out of field policy; Ms. Suplee seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Ms. Linda Long motioned to approve the out of field teachers; Ms. Suplee seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

SMA-COL Bowman discussed the need for board approval for the 2020-21 School Improvement Plan that was previously reviewed and approved by the district. Ms. Long inquired as to the school year discrepancies in which SMA-COL Fred Fout explained that testing was not complete or recorded for last school year so previous year was used. Dr. McElheny inquired as to understanding the variables that will improve the school grade of the high school in which SMA-COL Fout replied the positive benchmark testing thus far will help but may have a decrease in graduation rate due to COVID-19. SMA-COL Fout further discussed the need for additional resources obtained through grants that he is working on with Mr. Rafael Robles of the SMA Foundation to improve areas of English and math.

Dr. McElheny motioned to approve the 2020-21 School Improvement Plan; Mr. Warren Hudson seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

SMA-COL Bowman presented data on the districted schools for our cadets and pointed out the high number of Manatee County cadets on both campuses. She stated that FTE transportation funds can now be collected from districts outside of Sarasota County and this will allow another bus added to the Manatee County route with no fees to families. SMA-COL Bowman mentioned Wreaths Across America campaign commencing as well as Toys for Tots and commended Mr. Robles on a great job hosting the virtual National Philanthropy Day event. She shared a letter she received from a JROTC instructor who stated how proud they were of our cadet volunteers during the monthly food drive distribution and how the cadets showed compassion with the recipients.

Community Outreach Director Report: SMA-MAJ Dr. Todd Brown provided a read-ahead report. He discussed upcoming press events in both print and television. Dr. Brown stated that SCOUT is at 70% participation for both campuses and currently working on a simultaneous simulation of Operation Outbreak to run at the high school with the prep. He explained moving forward with three options in regards with testing of COVID-19 and our academy.

Technology Report: MAJ Becky Morris provided a read-ahead report. She explained the data provided to the board in understanding technology needs to create a three to five year plan. LTG Howard Crowell inquired as to how our academy compares to the technology provided to students county wide in which MAJ Morris replied that she will research and report back.

SMA Prep Head of School Report: SMA-COL Tom Vara provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the success of ceremonies and virtual information meetings. SMA-COL Vara stated the need to find an advisor for the interact club and drill team. He commended MAJ Morris for implementing the iPad program to all seventh graders receiving an iPad to use either on or off campus.

SMA Prep Athletics Report: SMA-MAJ Leslie Smith provided a read-ahead report. She discussed the golf season has finished with a sixth grader in the spotlight for shooting one over par which resulted in runner-up. SMA-MAJ Smith stated that soccer has started and mentioned the upcoming golf scramble with prep graduates held at The Groves Country Club.

Instructional Design & Curriculum: SMA-LTC Lisa Currie provided a read-ahead report. She discussed the components of skill building and communication skills as well as technology that will assist in improving school grade.

SMA HS Head of School Report: SMA-COL Fred Fout provided a read-ahead report. He mentioned a special live formation for Veteran's Day as well as a prepared video created by the Regimental Staff. SMA-COL Fout discussed that data compiled from past virtual enrollment meetings has allowed for new strategies on the admissions process. Chairman Herb Jones inquired as to the total grant moneys awarded in which SMA-COL Fout replied that the department chairs are compiling and will report back at next meeting.

SMA HS Athletics Report: SMA-COL Fout stated the boys cross country team advanced to Regionals, which was the farthest any cross country team has gone. SMA-COL Bowman stated to the board to participate in The Flanzer Match Program to support the wrestling team.

IB Report: SMA-MAJ Hellen Harvey provided a read-ahead report. She mentioned the loss of an IB teacher and how the position was filled quickly. SMA-MAJ Harvey stated the IB Banquet is scheduled for May 1st at Palm Aire Country Club.

SAI/Commandant's Report: LTC Ben Weiss provided a read-ahead report. He discussed working with both SMA-COL Fout and SMA-COL Vara on creating a consistent high school presence at the Prep to assist the continuation of building synergy on both campuses. LTC Weiss stated that he will resume with programs once COVID-19 has lessened.

Staff Representatives: SMA-MAJ Smith stated that teachers are overwhelmed and stressed managing both virtual and brick and mortar learners and that they are trying to find their balance. SMA-MAJ Harvey stated how the teachers are exhausted with headaches and that incorporating more mask breaks for both teachers and cadets have helped. She explained the current FSA ELA and EOC testing dates that does not allow the three week delay in start of school has placed additional stress on specific teachers. SMA-MAJ Harvey stated that a letter devised by the board to state officials may help understand the need to also push back the testing dates to allow more instructional time with cadets.

Media Report: SMA-MAJ Harvey provided a read-ahead report. She stated that despite COVID protocols that does not allow to peruse library shelves, there has been an increase in library book check outs and that the Administrative Team has been very supportive.

Treasurer's Report: SMA-MAJ Steve Kok provided a read-ahead report and balance sheets per campus. He discussed the current financials thru September 30th with an YTD Profit and Loss per campus. SMA-MAJ Kok stated that the PPP loan forgiveness application should be able to submit in the near future.

PTCC Report: The prep PTCC provided a read-ahead report. Ms. Juanita Cedillo of the high school PTCC provided a report of increased spirit wear sales as well as a catered lunch to staff veterans for Veteran's Day.

Committee Reports: Mr. Warren Hudson discussed the status of the Strategic Planning Committee in finalizing the new mission and vision statements for SMA. He also discussed forming three sub-committees as preparing students for college in which Ms. Linda Long will chair; developing leaders and building character in which Dr. McElheny will chair; and obtaining resources to support the new vision and mission statements in which he himself will chair.

Foundation: Mr. Rafael Robles provided a read-ahead report. He discussed upcoming end of year campaigns such as Giving Tuesday on December 1st, the annual year-end appeal and Wreaths Across America. Mr. Robles mentioned the success of hosting the 2020 National Philanthropy Day virtual event where SMA was a silver sponsor and honored Ms. Phyllis Siskel as a Regional Philanthropic Angel. He stated working with SMA-COL Bowman on a greatest needs list for SMA that will assist in providing to potential donors.

Marketing and Communications Report: Mr. Robles discussed current releases thus far. Chairman Crowell invited the board to attend the upcoming Foundation board meeting on November 19th at 2:30pm.

Chairman: Chairman Jones stated how the board appreciates all efforts from administration, staff and cadets through these trying times.

Old Business: N/A

New Business: Chairman Jones confirmed the next virtual board meeting will be on December 8th at 2:30pm.

Public Comments: N/A

The chairman adjourned the meeting at 4:02 pm.



Mr. Herb Jones, Chairman

1/20/2021

Date



COL Ben Knisely, Secretary

1/30/2021

Date