

**Sarasota Military Academy Foundation, Inc.**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

10 September, 2020

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**Board of Director Members' Attendance**

**Present:**

Howard G. Crowell, Jr., LTG USA (Ret), Chairman  
Mr. Herb Jones, Vice Chairman  
Frederick M. Derr, CAPT USN (Ret), Treasurer  
Mr. Anthony Baade  
Thomas J. McElheny, EdD  
Ms. Alexandra Quarles

Mr. Rafael Robles, Executive Director

**SMA Operating Board Members' Attendance:** Mr. Warren P. Hudson; Ben Knisely, COL USA (Ret), Secretary; Ms. Linda Long; Tessa Suplee, Lt Col, AF (Ret);

**SMA Administrative Staff in Attendance**

SMA-COL Christina Bowman, Executive Director of Schools  
SMA-MAJ Steve Kok, Director of Finance

Location: Virtual

The chairman called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

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

Dr. Thomas McElheny motioned to approve the 11 June, 2020 minutes; Mr. Anthony Baade seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

**Executive Director's Report:** Mr. Rafael Robles provided a read-ahead report. He also discussed the obstacles in meeting with existing and new donors as well as raising funds in these challenging times but remains ready and responsive to SMA's constituents. Mr. Robles detailed his role within his first hundred days with the emphasis on listening to staff and administration on both campuses to understand the business and how he can establish his efforts to enhance SMA. He discussed the redefining of his responsibilities as well as for the Foundation in its ability to assist SMA with its mission and vision.

Mr. Robles stated that the Foundation is at the start of something amazing with renewed hope to make an impact on SMA and its mission and he thanked the board for their trust and support in his ability to lead SMA Foundation and to help SMA become the premier military academy in the nation.

**Metrics:** Mr. Robles discussed the breakdown of current donations to types of donations and donors. He further explained total numbers of active, retained and new donors as well as lapsed donors that gave this year. Mr. Robles stated that the goal of the Foundation is to work on increasing donor retention rate by reactivating lapsed donors and Foundation giving.

Vice Chairman Herb Jones inquired about the cause of the retention rate drop in which Mr. Robles replied that it has been low for a while due to lack of stewardship and leadership within the Foundation not being consistent. Ms. Alexandra Quarles commended Mr. Robles on a great report and suggested an online survey or mail survey to past donors to gain information and help build the donor base.

**Board Commitment:** Mr. Robles discussed the strategic goal of the Foundation is to build a culture of philanthropy with SMA and the board. He stated that the board has a unique and important role and responsibility to SMA and the community and their network of influence spans across industry specific groups and community circles that can be beneficial to SMA. Mr. Robles presented a customized philanthropy form for each board member to fill out and return to the Chair on how they would like to engage over the next year. He encouraged the board to foster relationship building through locally, nationally and internationally. Chairman Howard Crowell suggested the philanthropy form be presented to the Operating Board as well in which Mr. Robles agreed to do it at the next board meeting.

**Motion to approve the Strategic Plan for SMA Foundation, Inc.**

**Ms. Quarles motioned to approve the Strategic Plan for SMA Foundation, Inc.; Mr. Frederick Derr seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.**

**Case for Support:** Mr. Robles stated that a mission and vision statement for Sarasota Military Academy needs to be finalized to present to donors. Mr. Warren Hudson stated that the mission and vision statement are complete and needs to be finalized with the board. He also stated that once it is finalized then can move forward with the Strategic Plan for SMA.

**Gift Acceptance Policy:** Mr. Robles presented to the board guidelines on what the policy dictates for donations through cash, securities, bequests and property. He explained how it is important to have the policy finalized and in writing to present to donors. SMA-COL Christina Bowman stated that one has been drafted with the assistance from Ms. Quarles in which she will share with Mr. Robles to review again with Ms. Quarles for final approval with the board.

**Performance Dashboard:** Mr. Robles provided a quick overview of goals and fulfillment.

**Marketing and Communications:** Mr. Robles stated that he will hire an outside contractor to write press releases. He explained the importance of building brand awareness and to change the narrative and the need for a marketing and communications team.

**Upcoming Campaigns:** Mr. Robles discussed a year-end annual appeal in November as well as Giving Tuesday on 1st of December. He stated that spring campaigns will be presented at the next board meeting.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mr. Derr presented a read-ahead report. He discussed meeting with Mr. Robles on the importance of clarifying the Foundation's financials and both agreed that a meeting with SMA-MAJ Steve Kok is necessary in finalizing numbers.

**Technology:** Chairman Crowell inquired as to computer needs of our cadets on both campuses in which SMA-COL Bowman replied that 150 more chromebooks have been ordered and are currently backlogged but due in December. She further explained that the end goal is to have a chromebook in every student's hands. Mr. Robles stated that the total amount of 350K is what's needed to fulfill this goal and has put together other needs packages to present to donors. Ms. Quarles stated that a needs list is important but also critical to receive unrestricted funds as well.

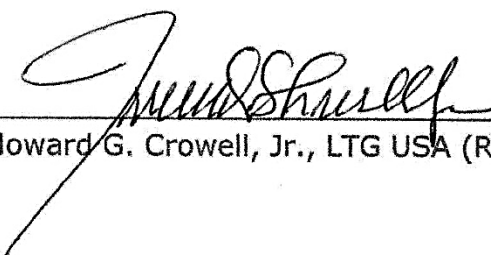
**Chairman:** Chairman Crowell explained the important role of the Foundation is to enhance Sarasota Military Academy and the challenges it faces to do so through these times of COVID-19. He discussed with the board to move monthly meetings to the third Thursday every other month.

**Old Business:** N/A

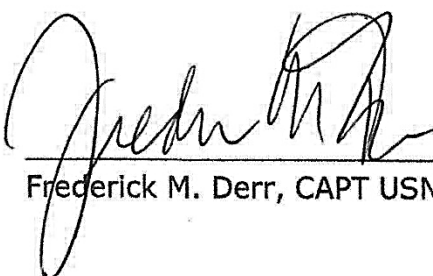
**New Business:** N/A

**Public Comments:** N/A

The chairman adjourned the meeting at 5:00 pm.

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

9/10/2020  
Date

  
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Frederick M. Derr, CAPT USN (Ret), Treasurer

9/10/20  
Date