

Sarasota Military Academy

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEETING MINUTES

14 DECEMBER, 2021

Board of Director Members' Attendance

Present:

Thomas J. McElheny, EdD, CAPT, USMC (Ret), Chair
Mr. Warren P. Hudson, CAPT, USN (Ret), Vice Chair (by phone)
Ben Knisely, COL USA (Ret), Secretary
Mr. Scott Lempe, LTC, USAF (Ret), Treasurer
Dr. Brian Crupi, LTC, USAR
Ms. Erica Gregory, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)
Ms. Linda Long
Mr. Pete Skokos
Ms. Tessa Suplee, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)
Mr. Jim Tollerton

Howard G. Crowell, Jr., LTG USA (Ret), Chair, SMA Foundation Inc.

Mr. Rafael Robles, Executive Director, SMA Foundation Inc.

Absent: Ms. Cynthia West, RN Lt, USA (Ret); SMA-LTC Abby Williams, Assistant Head of School, High School; SMA-LTC Caitlin West, Assistant Head of School, High School; SMA-MAJ Charlie Carver, Athletic Director, High School; SMA-LTC Lisa Currie, Assistant Head of School, Middle School; SMA-LTC Ryan Lee, Assistant Head of School, Middle School; SMA-MAJ Leslie Smith, Athletic Director, Middle School

SMA Administrative Staff in Attendance:

SMA-COL Christina Bowman, Chief Executive Officer
LTC Ben Weiss, Commandant of Cadets
SMA-LTC Steve Kok, Director of Finance
SMA-COL Frederick Fout, Head of School, High School
SMA-COL Tom Vara, Head of School, Middle School
MAJ Becky Morris, Assistant Head of School, Middle School

Guests in Attendance: Ms. Susan Hartman, PTCC President; Ms. Jeanine Signorelli, PTCC Secretary; Ms. Brenda Canales, PTCC Vice President of High School

Location: SMA High School

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

Motion to Approve the 09 November, 2021 Minutes:

Mr. Jim Tollerton motioned to approve the 09 November, 2021 minutes with stated corrections; Mr. Scott Lempe seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Executive Director of Schools Report: SMA-COL Christina Bowman provided a read-ahead report. She mentioned a successful Veterans Day Parade with cadets from both schools as well as Philanthropy Day with Mr. Herb Jones as one of the honorees. SMA-COL Bowman stated the cadets provided a great presentation to Sarasota Superintendent, Dr. Asplen, in which Chair Tom McElheny agreed and stated that Dr. Asplen was impressed with our cadets.

SMA-COL Bowman discussed a successful meeting with Ms. Jennifer Vigne with the Education Foundation to provide our cadets with support services for after high school. She mentioned a productive meeting with New College of Florida on different opportunities to collaborate and stated a Memorandum of Understanding has been established and currently being reviewed in result of that meeting. Chair McElheny agreed that the presentation given by SMA-COL Bowman represented SMA well to include detailed areas of collaboration.

SMA-COL Bowman played a video on the recent partnership with Newtown Connection. She discussed a survey on areas of concern was created and presented to high school staff that resulted in constructive input which will be addressed with the Head of School. Ms. Linda Long recommended providing more details during staff meetings for full transparency on concerns raised. Chair McElheny stated much effort and time has been placed on balancing the budget as well as ways of improving school grade and will be prepared to discuss at the next board meeting. SMA-COL Bowman stated the budget and school grade briefing will be on Friday, 14 January at 9am on the High School campus.

SMA Head of School Report, Middle School: SMA-COL Tom Vara provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the current enrollment numbers highlighting an increase in sixth graders compared to last year. SMA-COL Vara stated the administrative team continuing to handle discipline issues with concerns from staff of less cadets to rank up due to extensive discipline issues. He stated the shortage of bus drivers has produced new challenges with some drivers running double routes and was recommended to obtain pricing for charter buses. Mr. Lempe inquired to STEM classes in which SMA-COL Vara stated that computer classes will be added for credit as well as before and after school clubs geared to computer science.

SMA Middle School Athletics Report: N/A

Technology and Data Impact Report: N/A

Instructional Design & Curriculum: N/A

SMA Head of School Report, High School: SMA-COL Fred Fout provided a read-ahead report. He thanked Dr. Brian Crupi for discussing his experiences as an orthodontist to cadets in the Careers in Medicine class. SMA-COL Fout also showed gratitude to our PTCC for their continued volunteering and support as well as Chair McElheny's regular assistance with the lunch line. He mentioned the Winter Concert showcasing SMA's drumline, chorus, band, acting and artwork will be that evening at 6pm. COL Ben Knisely stated that the SMA chorus will be caroling at 6pm on December 21st.

SMA HS Athletics Report: N/A

SAI/Commandant's Report: LTC Ben Weiss provided a read-ahead report. He commended the Raiders team for their success in the Best Raider Event in Myakka with two ninth grade sisters taking

third place and the male team taking first place. LTC Weiss also commended the Rifle team in their winter match with Kendall Goebel being scouted for colleges as well as Olympics. He discussed the honor of pledging three senior cadets in front of formation and their families. LTC Weiss thanked Mr. Jim Tollerton for assisting in negotiations with a discount on beverages for the Military Ball.

Staff Representatives: N/A

Media Report: N/A

Treasurer's Report: Mr. Scott Lempe and SMA-LTC Steve Kok provided a read-ahead report and balance sheets per campus. Chair McElheny stated a revised budget process and approval will be complete to share at next meeting.

PTCC Report: Ms. Susan Hartman provided a read-ahead report. She introduced High School Vice President, Ms. Brenda Canales and Secretary, Jeanine Signorelli, to the board. Ms. Hartman stated the merge of both PTCCs to one for the academy has been decided and will present the academy wide organizational chart to the board at the next meeting. She mentioned the grants that have been awarded to various clubs and campaigns. Ms. Hartman stated that a PTCC lunch will be provided to both campuses on December 21st and 22nd. She discussed concerns parents have raised with the PTCC on funding and high school building updates. Mr. Rafael Robles thanked the PTCC for their great support to attending events as well as inviting SMA Foundation to events for additional SMA exposure.

Foundation: Mr. Rafael Robles provided a read-ahead report. He stated an increase in unrestricted funds received. Mr. Lempe inquired as to the Education Foundation's understanding of our current Foundation status concerning funding for a Student Success Center in which Mr. Robles replied that he does not believe the financial status is understood. Mr. Robles discussed the upcoming campaigns for end of year.

Marketing and Communications Report: N/A

Committee Reports: N/A

Board Members: Dr. Crupi discussed the important components to our school such as budget, school grade, and finding what SMA is best to offer. He shared concerns with a downtown location as well as updated facilities and recommended the school look to move east as part of a long-term goal. Ms. Linda Long recommended a new appraisal of the building with the increase in real estate in Sarasota. Chair McElheny stated this discussion is a powerful and strategic dialogue that needed to begin and should be discussed at another meeting.

Chair: Chair McElheny stated the focus is on the budget, school grade, FTE and enhancements. He commended Vice Chair Warren Hudson for his efforts in the completion of the strategic plan as well as Mr. Lempe for his attention to evaluations. Chair McElheny stated that the board will do a public evaluation of the CEO for full transparency.

Old Business: N/A

New Business: N/A

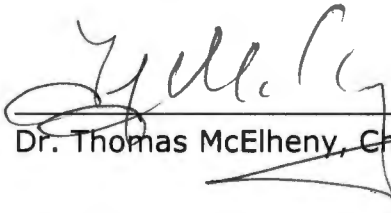
Public Comments: Ms. Signorelli of the PTCC stated that the school is not leveraging an amazing resource in the parents and recommends the board needs to be on campus more as well as a survey to the parents to identify priorities. She also stated that the staff is stressed and overworked. SMA-COL Bowman mentioned she will get together with Ms. Signorelli and PTCC to compile survey questions

to the parents. Mr. Tollerton recommended they meet with Mr. Robles of the SMA Foundation. MAJ Morris recommended the climate survey go out to the whole Academy. SMA-COL Bowman responded that the survey was an informal survey given at the high school at the direction of SMA-COL Fout and created by SMA-CPT John Geimer. SMA-COL Bowman stated the survey used last year utilized the district survey but will go back to our own for this year.

The work session will be on 14 January, 2022 from 9am to 11am at the High School campus.

The next board meeting will be on 18 January, 2022 at 4:30pm at the Middle School campus.


The chair adjourned the meeting at 4:31 pm.



Dr. Thomas McElheny, Chair

1/19/22

Date



COL Ben Knisely, Secretary

1/19/22

Date