

# **Sarasota Military Academy**

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

**10 MAY 2022**

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#### **Board of Director Members' Attendance**

##### **Present:**

Thomas J. McElheny, EdD, CAPT, USMC (Ret), Chair  
Mr. Scott Lempe, Lt Col, USAF (Ret), Vice Chair / Treasurer  
Ben Knisely, COL USA (Ret), Secretary  
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) (Virtual)  
Mr. Jim Tollerton  
Ms. Cynthia West, RN Lt, USA (Ret)

##### **Absent:**

SMA-LTC Abby Williams, Assistant Head of School, High School; MAJ Clarence Arrington, Senior Army Instructor; SMA-LTC Ryan Lee, Assistant Head of School, Middle School; Mr. Rafael Robles, Executive Director, SMA Foundation Inc.

##### **SMA Administrative Staff in Attendance:**

SMA-COL Christina Bowman, Chief Executive Officer  
SMA-LTC Steve Kok, Director of Finance  
SMA-COL Frederick Fout, Head of School, High School  
SMA-LTC Caitlin West, Assistant Head of School, High School (virtual)  
SMA-MAJ Charlie Carver, Athletic Director, High School (virtual)  
SMA-COL Tom Vara, Head of School, Middle School  
SMA-LTC Lisa Currie, Assistant Head of School, Middle School  
MAJ Becky Morris, Assistant Head of School, Middle School  
SMA-MAJ Leslie Smith, Athletic Director, Middle School

**Guests in Attendance:** Ms. Jeanine Signorelli, PTCC President; SMA-CPT Jeanette Marks, Marine Science, High School (virtual); SMA-MAJ Ashley Wyka, Math Department Chair, High School (virtual)

Location: SMA Middle School

The chair called the meeting to order at 4:31 pm. Everyone in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Thomas McElheny mentioned he was very impressed with the brand story

in SRQ magazine and stated the agenda for the meeting is as follows: year term goals; fiscal health; increase one grade in FTE; reverse FTE trend by increasing enrollment; and long-term planning committee.

**Motion to Approve the 12 April 2022 Minutes:**

COL Ben Knisely moved to approve the 12 April 2022 minutes; Mr. Jim Tollerton seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

**Executive Director of Schools Report:** SMA-COL Christina Bowman provided a read-ahead report. She stated an email was sent to both boards on upcoming graduation dates for both schools and the end of year luncheon. SMA-COL Bowman discussed the strategic goals to start the new school year of retaining quality staff as well as retaining seats at the high school. She explained enrollment for both campuses and how to balance the waiting lists at both schools to not exceed maximum class size.

Mr. Scott Lempe inquired as to the high number of students with IEPs within the incoming sixth grade class in which SMA-COL Fred Fout replied that our small school size and structure take part in the reputation of ESE students excelling at SMA. Ms. Linda Long inquired as to the services mostly in demand in which both heads of school replied extended time and small group testing are most in demand.

**SMA Head of School Report, Middle School:** SMA-COL Tom Vara provided a read-ahead report. He discussed a successful school play of Alice in Wonderland and the welcoming of all new families during a two-night event that provided a lot of energy and PTCC support with the selling of merchandise and meeting families. Chair McElheny inquired as to how new staff are made aware of the expectations and military culture at SMA in which SMA-COL Vara replied that it starts during the interview process along with multiple individual meetings after hire.

**SMA Middle School Athletics Report:** SMA-MAJ Leslie Smith provided a read-ahead report. She discussed a successful year for sports with golf tying for third place and lacrosse carrying twenty-three students. SMA-MAJ Smith stated coach positions for girls basketball and girls soccer coaches need to be filled.

**Technology and Data Impact Report:** N/A

**Instructional Design & Curriculum:** N/A

**SMA Head of School Report, High School:** SMA-COL Fout provided a read-ahead report. He commended both middle and high school chorus director, Dr. Henry Orazi, for taking both classes to a competition in Orlando and placed first in their category. SMA-COL Fout also commended Senior Advisors, SMA-CPTs Geimer and Scott for a packed year of senior activities ending with the upcoming prom on a yacht. He mentioned the fourth annual SMA Film Festival being held on Thursday at Burns Court Cinema. Chair McElheny inquired as to the new video and if it will be ready for graduation in which SMA-COL Bowman replied that the first review of the video is Wednesday and is scheduled to be ready for graduation.

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

**SAI/Commandant's Report:** MAJ Clarence Arrington provided a read-ahead report. Chair McElheny inquired as to any graduates with plans to the service academies in which SMA-COL Fout replied that one is awaiting admittance into the Naval Academy but is currently committed to Embry Riddle Aeronautical University thus far.

**Staff Representatives:** N/A

**Media Report:** N/A

**Treasurer's Report:** SMA-LTC Steve Kok provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the financials for both campuses. SMA-LTC Kok explained the gas hike has doubled the transportation costs and suggested a nominal fee to transport students. He mentioned the city will be providing the transportation expense this week and will present at the next meeting.

SMS-LTC Kok asked the board to extend the June board meeting by 1-2 weeks in order to present real numbers that would not be available at the scheduled 14 June meeting.

**Mr. Tollerton moved to approve extending the scheduled 14 June board meeting by one week to 21 June at the high school; COL Knisely seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.**

SMA-LTC Kok recommended for the board to approve the IRS tax form 990 for Sarasota Military Academy. Mr. Tollerton inquired as to this board having permission to approve the SMA Foundation IRS tax form 990 in which SMA-COL Bowman replied that the SMA Foundation could schedule an emergency meeting as long as a quorum is present.

**Ms. Cynthia West moved to approve the IRS tax form 990 for Sarasota Military Academy; Mr. Tollerton seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.**

Vice Chair Scott Lempe explained how the fund reserve is tied to board policy on measuring financial stability within the CEO evaluation. He further explained that currently the goal is set for 5% or 700K, which is very different to the goal of 100K stated in the strategic plan. Ms. Erica Gregory stated that it is appropriate to set goals to increase reserve funds within the CEO evaluation.

**Ms. West moved to approve the goal of 100K in the reserve fund; Mr. Pete Skokos seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.**

**PTCC Report:** Ms. Jeanine Signorelli provided a read-ahead report. She discussed a successful weekend-long book fair at the Barnes & Noble at University Town Center to support the media centers and English departments on both campuses. Ms. Signorelli stated the PTCC has approved many grants including one for 3D printers and will be focusing on fundraising next year to supplement teacher/classroom grants.

**Foundation:** Mr. Rafael Robles provided a read-ahead report. SMA-COL Bowman discussed the results of the Giving Challenge. Chair McElheny commended Mr. Robles for his efforts over the past two years.

**Marketing and Communications Report:** N/A

**Nominating Committee Report:** Mr. Tollerton discussed the outreach for potential board members and introduced COL Richard Swoope, Jr. with his resume as a new board member. He stated COL Swoope attended the high school formation and spoke to our cadets with energy and wisdom as well as walking around to speak with staff.

**Mr. Tollerton moved to approve the nomination of COL Richard Swoope, Jr. to the operating board as a director; Ms. West seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.**

Chair McElheny stated to ensure COL Swoope is invited to the 21 June board meeting. He announced to the board the resignation of board director, Ms. Tessa Suplee, as of 30 June. Chair McElheny stated that an analysis of skills on the board would be conducted to ensure scouting of potential board members compliment the current board.

**Long-Range Planning Committee Reports:** Mr. Tollerton announced the new members of the Long-Range Planning Committee as Ms. Gregory, Mr. Skokos, Vice Chair Lempe, and Ms. Long. He stated the goal is to plan for five to ten years of the academy and will provide the date of the first meeting.

**Chair:** N/A

**Old Business:** Chair McElheny discussed the CEO evaluation compiled by Vice Chair Lempe, Ms. Gregory and SMA-COL Bowman that reflects fair and balanced goals and expectations, to include the change in the fund reserve amount.

**Mr. Tollerton moved to approve the CEO evaluation starting 1 July; Ms. Skokos seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.**

Chair McElheny stated that an informal evaluation will be conducted at six-months and the formal evaluation completed at one year.

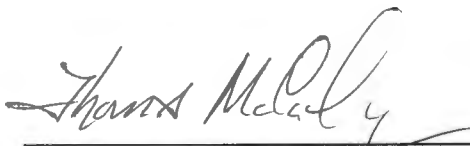
Mr. Tollerton inquired as to board terms for members in which Chair McElheny replied that he will review the bylaws and can start at the new fiscal year. SMA-COL Bowman asked the board as to their attendance for the Memorial Day Parade.

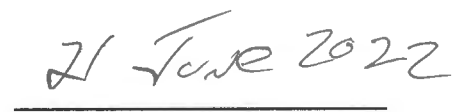
**New Business:** N/A

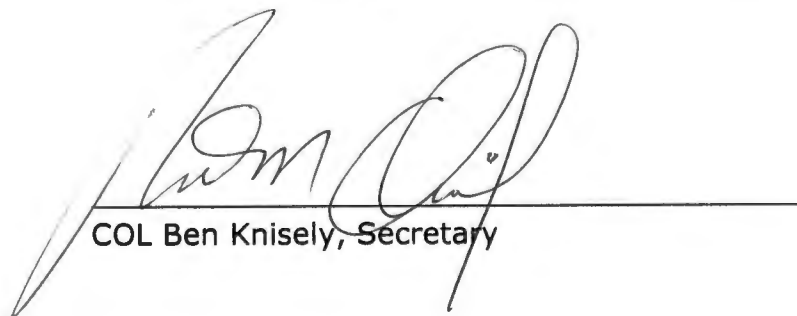
**Public Comments:** N/A

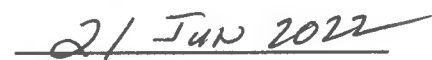
The next board meeting will be on 21 June 2022 at 2:30pm at the High School campus.

The chair adjourned the meeting at 5:52 pm.

  
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Dr. Thomas McElheny, Chair

  
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Date

  
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COL Ben Knisely, Secretary

  
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Date