

Sarasota Military Academy

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEETING MINUTES

7 FEBRUARY 2023

Board of Director Members' Attendance

Present:

Thomas J. McElheny, EdD, Capt, USMC (Former Marine), Chair

Scott Lempe, Lt Col, USAF (Ret), Vice Chair/Treasurer

Ben Knisely, COL, USA (Ret), Secretary

Brian Crupi, LTC, USAR

Erica Gregory, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)

Linda Long

Peter Skokos

Richard Swoope, COL, USA (Ret)

Jim Tollerton

Cynthia West, RN Lt, USA (Ret)

Herb Jones, Vice Chair, SMA Foundation Inc.

J. Allison Archbold, Trustee, SMA Foundation Inc. (virtual)

Rafael Robles, Executive Director, SMA Foundation Inc.

Absent: Heather Koester; MAJ Clarence Arrington, Senior Army Instructor; MSG Teddy Grace, (Ret) Athletic Director, High School; MAJ Becky Morris, Assistant Head of Middle School; SMA-MAJ Leslie Smith, Athletic Director, Middle School; Jeanine Signorelli, PTCC President

SMA Administrative Staff in Attendance:

SMA-COL Christina Bowman, Chief Executive Officer/Interim Head of High School

SMA-LTC Caitlin West, Assistant Head of High School

SMA-LTC Abby Williams, Assistant Head of High School

SMA-LTC Steve Kok, Director of Finance

SMA-COL Tom Vara, Head of Middle School

SMA-MAJ Lisa Currie, Assistant Head of Middle School (virtual)

Guests in Attendance: SMA-CPT George Barbaresi, HS Faculty Representative; SMA-MAJ Michael Finley, Music Department Chair; Bianca Harris, Education Foundation

Location: SMA High School

The chair called the meeting to order at 2:34 pm.

Chair Thomas McElheny started the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion to Approve the 17 January 2023 Minutes:

Mr. Jim Tollerton moved to approve the 17 January 2023 minutes with noted corrections; COL Ben Knisely seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Chief Executive Officer/Head of High School Report: SMA-COL Christina Bowman provided a read-ahead report. She presented enrollment numbers for mid-year as well as next school year for both campuses.

SMA-COL Bowman requested board approval for the policy regarding parent concerns with charter schools.

Mr. Tollerton moved to approve the safety magistrate of parent concerns with charter schools according to the state of Florida's Parent Bill of Rights; Mr. Pete Skokos seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

SMA-COL Bowman introduced Dr. Bianca Harris of the Education Foundation in regards to data on the Student Success Center. Dr. Harris discussed the total number of cadet visits since August and the total number of cadets coaches are working with. She mentioned the coaches are speaking with juniors in the classrooms and working diligently with seniors. Dr. Harris stated the goal is to increase the number of cadets and visits to center with focus on post-secondary plans to include trades as well as college.

SMA-COL Bowman mentioned a successful first board outreach to the community inviting Marines to our special formation and to join the circus on 16 February, as she will be the honorary ringmaster for SMA night.

High School Athletics Report: A read-ahead report was provided.

Head of Middle School Report: SMA-COL Tom Vara provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the enrollment for next school year as well as what is needed for staffing and scheduling. COL Knisely inquired as to the increase of ESE students in which SMA-COL Vara replied there is an increase in all grades. Chair Thomas McElheny inquired as to the ability to utilize temporary facilities for an increase in enrollment in which SMA-COL Vara replied that other issues arise such as cafeteria space for meals. Dr. Brian Crupi recommended maximizing outreach to new developments out east for admissions.

Middle School Athletics Report: A read-ahead report was provided.

SAI Report: MAJ Clarence Arrington provided a read-ahead report. SMA-COL Bowman stated that MAJ Arrington arranged a JROTC representative at every board meeting starting in March.

Treasurer's Report: SMA-LTC Steve Kok provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the year-to-date profit and loss per campus and the change in FTE numbers for the second semester.

Staff Representatives: A read-ahead report provided stating no concerns on either campus at this time.

PTCC Report: A read-ahead report was provided.

Foundation: Mr. Rafael Robles provided a read-ahead report. He explained his financial dashboard to include unrestricted and restricted funds that were allocated to various programs. Mr. Robles stated a robust quarter with upcoming gala. He mentioned the Flanzer Match Program is strong and can be utilized during the auction portion of the gala to match donations in paddle

raise. Chair McElheny read a letter presented to the board from the volunteer co-chairs of the gala.

Committee: N/A

Chair Report: Chair McElheny announced that LTG Howard Crowell has resigned from the SMA Foundation chair position and recognized LTG Crowell as a driving force with the other founders of the academy. He stated that LTG Crowell will remain chair through the end of the month and will remain as an advisor. Chair McElheny stated that the vice chair of the SMA Foundation will assume the chair position and that it will be approved at the next board meeting. Mr. Jones stated that he is looking for additional members to join.

Chair McElheny discussed the drafted new organizational chart to conceptually include the strategic vision of military culture, and character and leadership development. He further explained the necessary need to separate JROTC from academics and would like to hire qualified educator veterans. Chair McElheny stated the selection committee for the superintendent search would consist of Mr. Herb Jones, Mr. Jim Tollerton, and himself, and the selection committee for the commandant position to include LTG Crowell, COL Richard Swoope, COL Ben Knisely, and Vice Chair Scott Lempe. He stated the importance of faculty understanding that the improvement of FTE will directly allow additional support to them. Chair McElheny mentioned the SMA Foundation will fund the commandant position and one donor has donated 20% of the superintendent's salary thus far.

COL Swoope stated that JROTC should drive higher standards at both schools which will result in everything else falls into place. He further stated that metrics would increase with JROTC as the focus. Ms. Skokos inquired as to only two new positions as the commandant and superintendent with the academic officer already on staff to which Vice Chair Lempe stated that both the commandant and superintendent positions already existed last year. Ms. Erica Gregory inquired as to a request for cost share for the commandant position to which SMA-COL Bowman replied that the request was already approved to cost share that position.

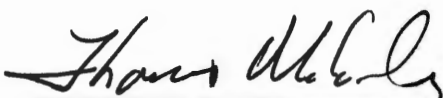
Old Business: Chair McElheny stated the assignment to provide input as to who we want to be will be deferred to next month.

New Business: N/A

Public Comments: N/A

The next board meeting will be on 7 March 2023 at 4:30 pm at the Middle School campus.

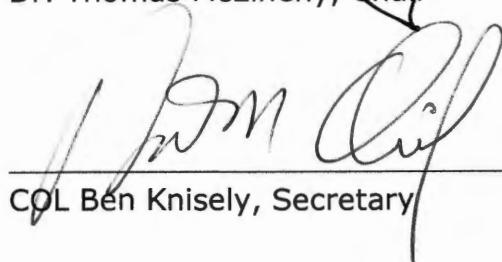
The chair adjourned the meeting at 3:57 pm.



Dr. Thomas McElheny, Chair

3/7/23

Date



COL Ben Knisely, Secretary

3/7/23

Date