

SARASOTA MILITARY ACADEMY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

16 DECEMBER 2025

Board of Director Members' Attendance

Present:

Dr. Thomas J. McElheny, Former Capt, USMC, Chair
Erica Gregory, Lt Col, USAF (Ret), Vice Chair
Pete Skokos, Treasurer (virtual)
David Black
Carlos Moreira, Sgt Maj, USMCR
Jerry Neff, BG, USA (Ret)
Charles Shugg, Brig Gen, USAF (Ret)
Ron Skipper, Former Capt, USAF
Michael Tollerton, Former CPT, USA (virtual)
W. Scott Wallace, GEN, USA (Ret) (virtual)

Absent: Ben Knisely, COL, USA (Ret), Secretary; Richard Swoope, COL, USA (Ret); Scott Lempe, Lt Col, USAF (Ret); SMA-CPT Jared Lauther, MS Athletic Director

SMA Administrative Staff in Attendance:

SMA-COL Christina Bowman, CEO/Head of High School
Dr. Cheryl Korwin, Head of Middle School
SMA-LTC Caitlin West, Assistant Head of High School (virtual)
SMA-LTC Abby Williams, Assistant Head of High School (virtual)
SMA-LTC Bryan Burns, Assistant Head of Middle School (virtual)
MAJ (Ret) Russ Osterfeld, SAI
SMA-LTC Steve Kok, Director of Finance
SMA-MAJ Savannah Kalka, Assistant Director of Finance

Guests in Attendance: CSM Jack Phinney, HS Army Instructor; SMA-CPT Mick Fallis, HS Athletic Director; SMA-CPT Esther Jaffee, HS Faculty Representative (virtual); SMA-CPT Marsha Reinig-Umana, MS Faculty Representative; Mr. Herb Jones, Chair Emeritus (virtual); Cadet Samuel Bonser; Cadet Sage Rogovin

Location: SMA High School

The chair called the meeting to order at 2:32 pm.

Chair Thomas McElheny started the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair McElheny stated the nominating committee report will be moved to the top of the agenda.

Brig Gen Charles Shugg moved to approve Mr. David Black's appointment as a director on the board; Mr. Ron Skipper seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Motion to Approve the 18 November 2025 Minutes:

Vice Chair Erica Gregory moved to approve the 18 November 2025 minutes; Mr. Pete Skokos seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Head of Middle School Report: Dr. Cheryl Korwin provided a read-ahead report. She mentioned 144 cadets with a GPA of 3.875 and higher were recognized for high achieving. Dr. Korwin discussed the progress with the Leader in Me Lighthouse team and honoring SMA-CPT Ellie De Murias at the Teacher of the year district night. She stated the success of athletics with a 6th place out of over one hundred male students in cross country and the boys basketball having their best season yet with a 3-4 record.

MS Faculty Representative: SMA-MAJ Marsha Reinig-Umana provided a read-ahead report. She discussed successful events like sixty 6th grade cadets promoting, the art display at the Art Island Art Gallery, and the Winter concert that evening. Chair McElheny inquired as to how worldwide assignments are introduced to cadets, in which Dr. Korwin replied through real-life experiences and video.

CEO/Head of High School: SMA-COL Christina Bowman provided a read-ahead report. She explained past graduation rates increasing with the latest set for 99% and how last year's rate will go towards this year's school grade. SMA-COL Bowman congratulated SMA-LTC Steve Kok for his retirement at the end of the calendar year and thanked him for all his efforts and time to SMA and wished him all the best. She discussed SMA now a Purple Star School with training of one staff member from each campus, as well as the scheduling of the Medal of Honor training in the next few months. SMA-COL Bowman mentioned an event at the high school celebrating the 100th birthday of veteran and long-time supporter of the music department, Mr. Bernard Friedland, with a private musical performance and lunch. She played the clip of the event broadcasted on Fox 13 News with Kimberly Kuizon.

HS Faculty Representative: SMA-CPT Esther Jaffee provided a read-ahead report.

Athletics Report: SMA-CPT Mick Fallis provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the upcoming Spring sports and provided an update for the current Winter sports. SMA-CPT Fallis mentioned athletics represented during the Veterans and the SRQ Holiday parades, with his goal to continue his athletes' outreach into the community.

SAI Report: MAJ Russ Osterfeld provided a read-ahead report. He thanked the board for attending the military ball and discussed the upcoming events for Color Guard and Raiders.

Treasurer's Report: SMA-MAJ Savannah Kalka provided a read-ahead report. She discussed balance sheets for both campuses and FTE based on enrollment for both campuses. Chair McElheny thanked SMA-LTC Kok for his dedication and hard work he has given SMA over the years and wishes him all the best.

Facilities Committee Report: N/A

Leadership and Ethics Conference Committee: N/A

PTCC Report: N/A

Chair Report: Chair McElheny discussed the board priorities, characterizing as tier one critical priorities of first, fiscal health; second, measurable student achievement and academy grade of an “A”; third, quality branded character development program (Medal of Honor) resulting in positive differentiation from other schools; fourth, creating safe and functional facilities for both campuses; fifth, competitive teacher compensation package; and sixth, align academy and community support by reestablishing trust within our communities. He stated he will seek support in making sure anything decided fits a crucial priority.

Chair McElheny stated that there are many opportunities to touch lives and identifying the right size of our academy to move towards a new and better SMA. He offered his resignation as chair to the board, but will remain as director, to provide an opportunity for other leaders with a wide array of experiences to lead the efforts of the new SMA.

Brig Gen Shugg recommended to add measurables for each board priority, and to add a priority of athletics that can tie into the presidential fitness test and intramurals for overall physical health, rather than concentrating on only competitive sports. Chair McElheny agreed and stated for SMA-COL Bowman to work on adding the priority of athletics/fitness.

Alumni Recognition: N/A

Old Business: N/A

New Business: N/A

Public Comments: N/A

Board Comments: N/A

The next board meeting will be on 20 January 2026 at 2:30pm at the High School campus.

The chair adjourned the meeting at 3:24pm.

Dr. Thomas McElheny, Chair

Date

COL Ben Knisely, Secretary

Date