SARASOTA MILITARY ACADEMY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

13 OCTOBER 2026

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
Jerry Neff, BG, USA (Ret)
Charles Shugg, Brig Gen, USAF (Ret)
Ron Skipper, Former Capt, USAF
Richard Swoope, COL, USA (Ret) (virtual)
Michael Tollerton, Former CPT, USA
W. Scott Wallace, GEN, USA (Ret)

Absent: Ben Knisely, COL, USA (Ret), Secretary; SMA-CPT Jared Lauther, MS Athletic Director; SMA-CPT Mick Fallis, HS 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 Bryan Burns, Assistant Head of Middle School (virtual)
SMA-LTC Caitlin West, Assistant Head of High School (virtual)
SMA-LTC Abby Williams, Assistant Head of High School (virtual)
MAJ (Ret) Russ Osterfeld, SAI
SMA-MAJ Savannah Kalka, Director of Finance

Guests in Attendance: SMA-CPT Stephanie Sifrit, HS Faculty Representative; SMA-MAJ Marsha Reinig-Umana, MS Faculty Representative; CSM Jack Phinney, JROTC Instructor; SMA-CPT Maya Peric, HS Faculty; SMA-CPT Kathy Simon, MS Office Manager (virtual); SMA-CPT Tina Hodges, MS Registrar (virtual); SMA-SFC Valeria Hernandez Cruz, MS Front Desk (virtual)

Location: SMA High School

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

Chair Thomas McElheny started the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion to Approve the 22 September 2026 Minutes:
Mr. Ron Skipper moved to approve the 22 September 2026 minutes; Mr. David Black seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Head of Middle School: Dr. Cheryl Korwin provided a read-ahead report. She discussed implementing strategies for cadets to learn how to take a test and that the first leadership day was very successful. Dr. Korwin recognized SMA-MAJ Mark Fulghum on being selected from the Daughters of Revolution (DAR) as the history teacher for the county, along with congratulating his nomination as the Teacher of the Year.

MS Faculty Representative: SMA-MAJ Marsha Reinig-Umana provided a read-ahead report.

MS Athletics Report: SMA-CPT Jared Lauther provided a read-ahead report.

CEO/Head of High School Report: SMA-COL Christina Bowman provided a read-ahead report. She addressed the concerns mentioned from the board last meeting with analyzing data of each student and implementing strategies shared at the professional development day on how to increase points to the next level. SMA-COL Bowman shared the recent accolades from SMA's Debate team of eight students attending a competition of 150 debaters, where Leah Trotter placed first in the Congressional Debate and Liberty Schlabach placing third in the Ronald Reagan Debate.

BG Jerry Neff moved to approve the Out-of-Field Instructors for both campuses; Mr. Black seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

HS Athletics Report: SMA-CPT Mick Fallis provided a read-ahead report.

HS Faculty Representative: SMA-CPT Stephanie Sifrit provided a read-ahead report. She discussed some concerns from faculty regarding discipline and attendance standards, to which SMA-COL Bowman stated she will address the faculty with those concerns and the process set by the district at the next ILT meeting on Monday.

SAI Report: MAJ Osterfeld provided a read-ahead report. He discussed the upcoming Color Guard and Raiders events, such as presenting colors at the SWFL Honor Flight welcome home and the Raiders participating Nationals in Fort Knox, KY. MAJ Osterfeld stated this year's leadership in the regimental staff is very strong and comfortable in making a difference with the regiment this year. MAJ Osterfeld mentioned the annual Flag Retirement Ceremony on 10 November and the Veterans Day Parade the following day. CSM Jack Phinney mentioned twelve SMA representatives, including cadets, staff and board members, will serve as guardians to the SWFL Honor Flight out of Sarasota Airport for the third year, leaving on 20 October.

Treasurer's Report: SMA-MAJ Savannah Kalka provided a read-ahead report. She discussed the hypotheticals provided on the three FTE count versions as well as upcoming payments due in 2027. Mr. Black identified the need to discuss the financial timeline with the current loan obligations and what is upcoming for the rebuild of new campus.

Mr. Black moved to approve the FY 2026 IRS Form 990; Mr. Skipper seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Strategic Planning Report: Vice Chair Erica Gregory presented an update as to areas of focus for the committee, with analyzing data for the right-size FTE count, to initiate a long-term marketing plan, and to incorporate financial commitments and deadlines into overall project management timeline. Chair McElheny stated there are two topics on the table such as the financial plan over the next few years; and identifying the makeup of the student body. He recommended the next board meeting to address two areas, creating a financial plan by working with SMA-MAJ Kalka and SMA-COL Bowman; and a strategic approach as to the student body makeup.

Bylaws Committee: Chair McElheny discussed Mr. Pete Skokos reviewed the amended bylaws to include virtual representation of board members can be counted as quorum and may be allowed to vote.

Mr. Black moved to approve the draft of the first amendment of the revised bylaws; Ms. Michael Tollerton seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Leadership & Ethics Committee: Ms. Tollerton presented a flyer of the conference to introduce the guest speaker, Brig Gen Charles Shugg, for the 2027 conference, as well as handed out book recommendations. She stated currently finalizing panelists, sponsorships and notifying schools of the upcoming event with focus on cybersecurity and ethics in AI. Ms. Tollerton asked if any board members has a connection that aligns with this year's focus, to pass along contact information and she will approach for potential sponsorships.

Commandant Search Committee: N/A

Facilities Report: N/A

Chair Report: N/A

PTCC Report: 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 17 November 2026 at 4:30pm at the Middle School campus.

The chair adjourned the meeting at 3:53pm.

Dr. Thomas McElheny, Chair — Date: 11/17/26

COL Ben Knisely, Secretary — Date: 11/17/26