

**LONGWOOD UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF VISITORS**

December 6, 2024

Minutes

Call to Order

The Longwood University Board of Visitors met on Friday, December 6 at Stallard Board Room in Farmville. The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m. by Rector Ron White.

Members present:

Ron White

Jeff Nottingham

Vellie Dietrich-Hall

Kathleen Early

Charles Fagan

Nadine Marsh-Carter

Kathryn Roberts

David Rose

Brian Schmalzbach

Shawn Smith

Also present:

President W. Taylor Reveley IV

Tim Hall, Director of Athletics

Courtney Hodges, Vice President for Institutional Advancement

Lara Smith, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Matt McGregor, Vice President for Administration and Finance

Jennifer Green, Vice President for Strategic Operations

Cameron Patterson, Vice President for Student Affairs

Justin Pope, Vice President and Chief of Staff

Cameron O’Brion, University Counsel

Matthew McWilliams, University Spokesperson and Deputy to the President

Tammy Bird Jones, President Longwood University Foundation

Chris Tunstall, President Longwood Alumni Association

Lisa Kinzer, Faculty Representative

Neil Miller, President SGA

Rector's and President's Welcome

Rector White welcomed Board members, recounting a time when he eschewed prepared remarks for an impromptu speech from the heart, saying that was at times a more meaningful approach to oratory. He spoke about a period during his military service when he oversaw building pallets to air-drop needed supplies into Bosnia and saw one of his employees working long into the night to build, simply because it was the right thing to do. This story reminded him of the Board and Longwood employees because they share that same commitment to the University and preparing students to be citizen leaders. He thanked members for all they do.

President Reveley welcomed Board members, saying it was nice to be on the cusp of the holidays. He noted there are many points of momentum at the University to be grateful for, among them: Homecoming and Alumni Weekend, an endowment that is over \$100 million, a promising admissions cycle, a strong Fall fundraising season, a campus community that engaged with the recent national election on a variety of fronts, upcoming re-affirmation of accreditation by SACS-COC, a new music building that will break ground in the coming months, success on athletics fields and courts, a statue of Barbara Johns that will be unveiled in Capitol Hill's Statuary Hall and reside alongside a statue of George Washington, and the process continuing for Moton Museum's World Heritage Site designation. He also congratulated Linda Locke, who is retiring after 35 years of work in the Office of Institutional Advancement.

Consent Agenda and Approval of the Minutes

The Rector requested a vote to approve the Consent Agenda and Minutes of the previous meeting. The Board approved unanimously.

Reports of the Vice Presidents

Larissa Smith noted that the Board meeting coincided with the last day of classes of the semester, and students are preparing for final exams and finishing papers and projects as year-end traditions happen each week. Smith and Associate Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs David Shoenthal were preparing to join President Reveley at the annual SACS-COC conference. She noted a variety of steps taken over the last ten years to infuse preparation for the re-accreditation process into daily practice at Longwood. Smith said that Shoenthal has worked tirelessly alongside Pam Tracy and Sarai Blincoe, who led the Quality Enhancement Plan, called the Post-Graduate Success Initiative, using life design principles to prepare students for career success after they graduate. She announced that Longwood has been awarded more than \$300,000 in SCHEV grants to help develop micro-internship programs, fostering paid internships, and supporting the expansion of work-based learning opportunities for students.

The work of accreditation continues, as Academic Affairs seeks to hire a new director of assessment and upcoming accreditations for different colleges. She said we have an eye on the needs of the Commonwealth, and thanked the Board for approving a four-year program in special education, an area of critical need, highlighting a successful Education Immersion Day that was attended by more than 400 prospective students interested in becoming teachers. She mentioned an initiative by the Admissions office to bring local middle school students to campus

to introduce them to the prospect of collegiate opportunities early in their K-12 careers. She also highlighted continuing work in environmental education both at the New College in Martinsville and at the Baliles Center, where new housing facilities were unveiled and dedicated in September. A Brock Experience course that studies the Chesapeake Bay has been added to courses from the National Collegiate Honors Council and organizers are actively recruiting honors students from across the country to participate in the summer course.

In response to a question from Vellie Dietrich-Hall about the history of Hull Springs Farm, Smith noted that the farm on Virginia's Northern Neck was bequeathed to Longwood in the early 1990s by an alumna and invited Board members to the annual Oaks and Oysters fundraiser in March. Dietrich-Hall also inquired about funding requirements for internship initiatives. Smith said that grants and pilot programs will give us a better idea of what the cost will be, but that to date grants related to these programs total more than \$300,000. She noted the pilot programs are just a small part of campus-wide initiatives related to internships.

Matt McGregor thanked the Board for approving room and board rates for the upcoming academic year, noting that every effort was made to keep rate increases as low as possible. Another goal was to reduce the number of housing price points so that students and families would have a better idea of their costs for the upcoming year. Aramark worked with Administration & Finance to keep cost increases low, and also responded to requests for more flexible plans, especially with Bonus Dollars.

He updated the board on the progress of a centralized procurement operation, responding to the governor's encouragement across Virginia in more efficient use of funding sources. He said that Longwood exceeded the Commonwealth's SWAM purchasing goal for 2024 by a wide margin and is on pace to meet that goal again in the current fiscal year.

He also gave an update on several capital projects. Charter Hall is finishing swiftly, and the Office of Capital Planning will move into the new building this month, followed by the rest of the facilities team beginning in January. The new music building will break ground in the Spring semester. The SEED Innovation Hub will have a soft opening this January. A refresh of Dorrill Dining Hall will take place over the summer. McGregor updated the Board on the campus master planning process, announcing that the University had again hired the firm Cooper Robertson to work on the plan.

McGregor recognized David Pletcher, the retiring director of capital planning, who began at Longwood in 1997.

Dietrich-Hall requested clarification and expressed concern related to the salary savings and local funds lines in the distributed Board materials. McGregor clarified that the formatting of the salary savings line reflects projected savings on budgeted salary expense lines, quantifying budgeted but unexpended funds that accumulate to some degree every year. He stated he believed the current projections for this year are solid and in line with expectations. He said that similarly the local line item is expenses that have been spent thus far this year out of the budgeted line-item. Dietrich-Hall also asked about who oversees the University's annual audit,

and it was clarified that unlike for private institutions, the Governor and General Assembly oversee the Commonwealth's Auditor of Public Accounts.

Tim Hall said that Homecoming was sold out for the second year in a row and that he was honored to join President Reveley and Chris Tunstall in unveiling new banners in the Joan Perry Brock Center. He noted several successes within athletics, including golfer Justin LaRue's back-to-back-to-back tournament wins to end the season, both soccer teams making the conference playoffs, and cross country's best-ever finish. He said that John Feinstein has joined our broadcast team, and noted his nationally acclaimed resume alongside Sam Hovan is as good a one-two broadcasting team as anywhere in the country. He said that the coming donor-funded Iler Hall weight room improvements will be transformational for athletic teams.

Nottingham said that the success of Homecoming is an amazing step forward, and asked about growing the event next year. Hall said that the date has already been selected for next year. Roberts said that she was impressed that the University honored the academic success of students at halftime at the previous night's game. Hall said that the work that all of us do to collectively raise the students up is better at Longwood than at any other institution where he has worked, and celebrated the work of professors, deans, and administrators.

Dietrich-Hall asked where the University stands on renovating buses. Hall said that we have one bus already renovated and is in use, which will save the University approximately \$100,000 in travel expenses. Dietrich-Hall congratulated Hall on ticket sales for the basketball season. Reveley said that one virtue of the Big South Conference is that it is geographically contiguous, unlike many other conferences where students are missing much more class.

Cam Patterson shared that Oktoberfest was an exciting time, culminating in a spirit week where 80+ organizations set up booths on Stubbs Mall ahead of the traditional concert. He reported on new organizations that started this semester, among them women's flag football, and highlighted Homecoming from the student involvement perspective. Patterson shared that twice monthly he and President Reveley have lunch discussions with student groups that often result in actions like the dedication of a transfer student lounge space in Cox Hall. He also spotlighted Lancers Vote, an organization dedicated to engaging students in the voting process. Longwood has been designated a Voter Friendly Campus by NASPA and this election season held several events on campus designed to engage the community. Patterson then highlighted the work of Counseling and Psychological Services, which has engaged with nearly 400 students during the Fall semester and which has implemented a popular single-session therapy model for students.

Fagan asked for more information about "communication deficiencies" identified by a Winter Storm Tabletop Exercise, and Patterson said that the challenges identified as part of routine table tops are typically minor and quickly resolved.

Schmalzbach asked for information about existing policies that would prevent students from receiving accommodations for testing under a variety of circumstances. Patterson said there is no policy that prevents accommodations from being made and that Dean of Students Jen Fraley works individually with students to meet their needs.

President Reveley asked Smith to update the Board on the constructive dialogue initiative. Smith said that Academic Affairs has been working with the Constructive Dialogue Institute to infuse principles of constructive dialogue into speaking-infused Citizen 110 courses, and that Gov. Youngkin and SCHEV helped facilitate the growing and successful partnership.

Hodges reported that the Fall fundraising season has been excellent as the Office of Institutional Advancement looks forward to Love Your Longwood Day in February. She detailed a mini-campaign that is underway called Family of Scholarships 2.0, which offers matching opportunities to endow scholarships. Currently there are 30 matching opportunities to endow unrestricted or nursing scholarships and they are filling up quickly.

Hodges also paused to note that in January she will celebrate her 20th anniversary at Longwood and told the Board she was honored and grateful to have worked with them and at a place that she has come to love deeply. Roberts asked about the entry point for endowed scholarships. Hodges explained that a gift of \$25,000 endows a scholarship, but with this campaign, each commitment of \$15,000 will be matched by a donor to endow the scholarship at \$30,000. That \$15,000 can be made in installments or as a one-time gift.

Dietrich-Hall congratulated Hodges for a great Fall. She then led a discussion around donor confidence during Love Your Longwood Day and asked how donors can be assured that their money will be put to its intended use. Hodges said that gifts are always allocated to the purpose donors earmark and detailed the processes her office uses for record-keeping and ensuring money is used for its intended purpose. Dietrich-Hall said that she hopes Longwood has not lost credibility ahead of Love Your Longwood Day, and Hodges said that she would be happy to provide further information and explanation in response to any further concerns. Early asked if donors can still earmark funds for specific donations during Love Your Longwood Day, and Hodges confirmed that is still the case. White highlighted the choices on Love Your Longwood Day and said it is a great part of the day that there are numerous choices for donors. He expressed confidence in the processes of the Advancement office. He congratulated Hodges on 20 years of working in advancement. Marsh-Carter said that Love Your Longwood Day often introduces donors to the myriad ways you can make an impact and opens insight on ways you can do it.

Jennifer Green distributed new Admissions stickers that read “Virginia is for Lancers,” the result of a partnership with Virginia Tourism. She then gave an update on admissions numbers for the Fall, saying that they are promising and the quality of applications is high. Prospective students should receive early decision letters by Dec. 15 and we are on track to offer more acceptances this year than last. An emerging nationwide trend is that students wait until they are accepted until they visit campuses, so it is an encouraging sign that our visit numbers are at record highs this fall. There is an admitted student day in mid-January that will welcome hundreds of prospective students to campus, and Dean of Admissions Jason Ferguson is reflecting the personal attention that students have in Longwood classrooms with handwritten notes and greeting families outside Radcliff Hall at almost every visit. She recounted a story where Ferguson was standing outside Radcliff where he overheard a mother and daughter debating whether the Dean of Admissions texted the daughter personally the night before. Ferguson called

the daughter's phone, and the mother couldn't believe that the dean of admissions was giving out his personal cell phone and calling people, and that personal touch made all the difference.

Green gave an update on FAFSA, saying that the application was opened a week early nationally and that we are on track to make financial aid packages on time this cycle. She also noted there was a participant satisfaction rating jump when alumni were surveyed after Homecoming, and that satisfaction rated 4.71/5. The alumni office is working to expand tailgating opportunities in February. She also noted that Longwood's retention rate has increased to 80%, with the subset of students receiving Pell grants posting a 79% retention rate. She thanked new student success coordinators for their important work on this front.

Roberts asked how artificial intelligence affects admissions applications. Green said the office uses a holistic review of applications, which includes teacher and counselor recommendations as a barometer, and that our essay is a personal statement rather than a generic response and that limits A.I. usage.

Smith added that Academic Affairs has convened a task force to focus on AI in the classroom, chaired by Dean of Greenwood Library and Assistant Provost Brent Roberts. There have been several professional development sessions for faculty members on how to adapt to changes around A.I. and how to prepare students to use it in the work place, and a search launched for a professional writing faculty member in the English department who has a specialty in A.I.

Reveley said that the admissions enrollment environment around the country is quite challenging, noting that Longwood is the beneficiary of a lot of hard work to have a strong class matriculate this fall, but nationally the freshmen enrollment at 4-year institutions declined by 8% while we were up 4%. Likewise not every place is enjoying a robust number of applications right now, which is encouraging in a complicated environment. He also described the admissions process for the winter and spring, with a focus on visits from admitted students, who have a strong yield rate.

Fagan asked if Virginia is reflective of the nation in terms of applications and demographics. Reveley said that Virginia is lucky comparatively, but not without challenges. In Virginia the number of college-ready students will begin to decline in the coming years but not in the sharp way it will in other parts of the country.

Dietrich-Hall asked if the cost of tuition is affecting college applications and enrollment. Reveley said that there is no question that college cost is a generational challenge. He said Longwood has worked exceptionally hard over the last decade to hold cost increases as low as possible, and detailed nuances around published price versus net cost, and how philanthropy can defray college costs.

Tammy Bird-Jones reported that the Foundation Board met Oct. 24-25, and said that Longwood's endowment is estimated at \$101.3 million. Notifications have been sent to scholarship recipients, who received a total of \$3.5 million in funding this academic year. During Homecoming, the Foundation Board held a reception with current Ambassadors and alumni who served in the program, and there is interest in endowing a scholarship fund for Ambassadors.

She noted that there are 1,018 endowed scholarships that are providing a partial scholarship to a student, and it's not rare that a student will receive several different scholarships, and that there are also a number of scholarships that are at a level where they are providing substantial support to students.

Chris Tunstall updated the Board on the Alumni Board's current initiatives. The Board hosted two tailgates at Homecoming, and have held two Welcome To The City events in Richmond and Virginia Beach. Alumni were strong participants in Career Week in October, serving more than 700 registered students, and found the students prepared and impressive. They are also working with Athletics regarding Longwood's Hall of Fame based on the success of the annual Alumni Awards program. The Alumni Board is also piloting a series of lunches in Richmond for alumni 55 and older. The annual Alumni Awards will be announced in the next few months and a reception in their honor will be held June 6, 2025.

Dietrich-Hall asked how the Alumni Board is working with the internship program. Tunstall said that the Board has a Career Success Committee that works with the Office of Career Success. Dietrich-Hall asked about the success rate for internships and Tunstall said that anecdotally in the past they have had great success with work-shadow programs and they are starting to collect data on new initiatives. Smith said that while micro-internships and work-shadow programs are new initiatives, Longwood has had decades-long internship and career success programs that have seen success. Dietrich-Hall noted that alumni-student connections have a domino effect and stressed their importance.

Lisa Kinzer said she was impressed with the number of alumni getting involved with students at the freshman level, especially in Citizen 110 courses. Psychology is creating a database of alumni videos that faculty can use and access for their course preparation. Associate Professor of Criminology Virginia Beard has been connecting with alumni as well. Kinzer said she hopes that faculty will start to see what faculty in other departments are doing to build on success. She asked if the Board would like to hear from faculty about A.I. and the work that is progressing on that front. Roberts said she would like to hear how faculty are both using A.I. and navigating its challenges.

Dietrich-Hall asked if there were a way that the community could know about events at Longwood by advertising. Kizer said they have been exploring ways to publish calendars and spread the word more effectively about great music events on campus.

Miller highlighted the work of the Graduate Student Association, and its advocacy for graduate student needs. He also spotlighted the annual club and organization dinner, saying it was a "wonderful opportunity to showcase the organizations of our campus." He said that new clubs and organization have been established, including a Baking Club and K-Pop Club. He urged all to remember that cost increases are often difficult for students to navigate and to keep students in mind regarding cost increases, especially students who work while studying.

The meeting adjourned for carols in the Rotunda and lunch in the Mayo Gallery.

Following lunch, the Board visited R.R. Moton Museum for a tour and update from Patterson, Smith, and Moton Museum Executive Director Cainan Townsend regarding the process for UNESCO World Heritage site status.