

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
Lexington, Virginia
Minutes
BOARD OF VISITORS MEETING:
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
20 March 2023

A meeting of the VMI Board of Visitors Executive Committee was held in Lexington, Virginia 20 March 2023 pursuant to notice.

Present: Mr. Thomas R. Watjen '76, President
Mrs. Lara T. Chambers '03
Lt. Gen. Charles E. Dominy, USA (Ret)
Mr. Hugh M. Fain III '80
Mr. Eugene Scott, Jr. '80

1. Mr. Watjen called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Additional board members participating included: Mr. Thomas (Teddy) Gottwald '83, Mrs. Gussie Lord '01, Mr. Scot Marsh '81, and Mr. David Miller '70. Also present was Maj. Gen. Cedric T. Wins '85, VMI Superintendent, and Mr. Patrick O'Leary '90, VMI Legal Counsel, Office of the Attorney General. Attending board members, except for Mr. Fain and Mrs. Lord, participated via electronic means in accordance with Board of Visitor By-Law stipulations.
2. Mr. Watjen provided a welcome, introductory remarks, and a meeting agenda overview. The recently issued *Higher Education Comparative Report – Fiscal Year 2020*, prepared by the Commonwealth's Auditor of Public Accounts was noted. It was confirmed that the Auditor of Public Accounts directly distributes such reports to the board and that the board is expected to receive a related brief on this report during the 27 – 29 April 2023 board meeting.
3. Col. Lee Rakes, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, briefed members on the board's self-evaluation process as codified within the VMI Board of Visitor By-Laws, requesting feedback on the latest self-evaluation draft and specifying the expected timing of its next issuance (in advance of and for discussion during the 27 – 29 April 2023 board meeting).
4. Maj. Gen. Wins briefed and led discussions amongst members on the strategic planning process (board approval likely sought during the September 2023 board meeting) including: enhanced new board member Summer 2023 onboarding to incorporate strategic plan exposure ensuring member voting comfortability, residual academic excellence prioritization, VMI Stakeholder Survey feedback (and the request to share with the board), new strategic

plan naming importance and orientation to the Institute's bicentennial, and the anticipated degree to which Inclusive Excellence will be incorporated.

5. Additional briefings and discussions, which continued to be facilitated by Maj. Gen. Wins, encompassed a legislative and government relations update; an initial admissions and financial aid offices summary review (additional details to be relayed during the afternoon's Academic Affairs Committee meeting); recent Superintendent travel, intentionally arranged specific to VMI alumni engagement and enrollment recruiting efforts; VMI Call to Duty scholarship demand, effectiveness, and targeted longevity; merit scholarship applicant retention; potential value of admissions collaboration and possible synergies with targeted Virginia public universities; Inclusive Excellence areas of focus and office update (including an invitation to Mr. Martin Brown, Virginia Chief Diversity Officer to visit post and provide VMI employee training); a Class of 2026 Breakout after action report (timing, preparation, Corps leader input, and execution); board level VMI General Orders, policies and procedures (member preference being to review draft language, with discussion, at one meeting, followed by potential board action at a subsequent meeting); and the 23 February 2023 Virtual VMI Alumni Town Hall led by the Superintendent and Board President.
6. Mr. Watjen facilitated additional dialogue regarding a recent request to consider relocation of a Moses Ezekiel, VMI Class of 1866 created monument (not currently in VMI's possession or located on VMI post/property) to the Virginia Museum of Civil War, located in New Market, VA; the underway Institute review in terms of possible courses of action; and an anticipated update of the initial internal assessment during the 27 – 29 April 2023 board meeting. The Board President concluded his remarks by mentioning that, with three board members who serve as committee chairs scheduled to complete their final four-year board terms, work is underway to ensure a smooth transition of these committee chair roles.
7. There being no further official business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

LTC Kevin Ryan, Secretary
VMI Board of Visitors