



# BOARD OF VISITORS

201 SMITH HALL, LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA 24450-0304

## VMI Board of Visitors Special Meeting Minutes April 16, 2025

A special meeting of the Virginia Military Institute Board of Visitors was held Wednesday, April 16, 2025, at 2 p.m. for the purposes of discussing the May 2025 board meeting agenda and electing a board president to serve the unexpired term of the previous president. The meeting was conducted virtually using video conferencing technology. Notice was posted on vmi.edu and the Commonwealth Calendar pursuant to state law. A recording of the meeting is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h098kitkaSM&t>.

### Members Present

Ernie Edgar '87  
Hugh Fain '80  
Conrad Garcia  
Teddy Gottwald '83  
Jonathan Hartsock '00  
Jamie Inman '86  
Bill Janis '84  
Terry McKnight '78  
Meaghan Mobbs  
Nancy Phillips  
Stephen Reardon '84  
Jose Suarez '82  
Kate Todd  
Damon Williams '90  
Maj. Gen. James Ring '88

### Members not present

Jim Joustra '76

### Others present

Maj. Gen. Cedric Wins '85  
Patrick O'Leary '90  
Col. Bill Wyatt

In the absence of a board president (due to resignation), Damon Williams, called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. Attendance was taken by roll call.

A motion was made by Conrad Garcia, seconded by Terry McKnight for Damon Williams, a board vice president, to preside over the meeting in accordance with the Board of Visitors bylaws. The motion passed unanimously.

Williams recognized and welcomed the board's newest member, Jose Saurez '82.

Maj. Gen. Wins informed the board of an employee's death, SFC Dylan Cate '10, that occurred in barracks during the early morning hours. The cause of death was not known, but foul play is not suspected.



Williams called for any additions or changes to the May 1 – 3, 2025, board agenda. There were none.

Williams then called for nominations for board president. Terry McKnight nominated Damon Williams. Bill Janis nominated Teddy Gottwald. A discussion about whether the board should move into closed session to discuss the nominations. The board stayed in open session.

Maj. Gen. Wins discussed the qualities he believed a board president should embody including character, courage, and commitment.

Maj. Gen. Ring asked each nominee to say a few words and the nominees discussed their interest and plans for serving as board president. Williams highlighted his tenure on the board and said he would bring stability during this time of transition. Gottwald said there's a lot of work to do between now and June and the board should work on a list of priorities for the new superintendent. Gottwald also mentioned, if elected, he would not serve beyond June 30.

A roll call vote on the election of president was taken. The vote was as follows:

Voting for Teddy Gottwald: Edgar, Garcia, Gottwald, Harsock, Inman, Janis, Mobbs, Phillips, Reardon, Suarez, Todd.

Voting for Damon Williams: Fain, McKnight, Williams.

Having obtained the votes of a majority of the members present, Teddy Gottwald was elected serve the unexpired term of the previous board president which ends on June 30, 2025.

Conrad Garcia suggested the Executive Committee should meet to fill the vacant vice president. It was pointed out, however, the bylaws state Executive Committee vacancies can only be filled at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Prior to adjournment, Kate Todd suggested having the superintendent search firm speak to the full board at the scheduled board lunch on May 2, 2025.

The board adjourned at 2:43 p.m.