



# BOARD OF VISITORS

201 SMITH HALL, LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA 24450-0304

## Meeting Minutes April 27 – 29, 2026

Several public meetings of the Virginia Military Institute Board of Visitors were held in Lexington, Virginia on April 27 – 29, 2026, pursuant to public notice. All meeting materials referenced are publicly available at <https://www.vmi.edu/bovmaterials>.

### Monday, April 27, 2026

#### New Member Orientation

Board of Visitors Members Present:

Thomas Williamson '72

Ernie Edgar '87

Others Present:

LtGen David Furness '87, Superintendent

Brig. Gen. Robert Moreschi, Dean of the Faculty

Brig. Gen. Dallas Clark '99, Deputy Superintendent for Finance and Support

Col. Travis Homiak '95, Chief of Staff

Col. Ley Havird '90, Commandant

Col. Shannon Eskam, Assistant Superintendent for Strategic Enrollment Management

Jamaal Walton '07, Director of Athletics

Col. Bill Wyatt, Board of Visitors Secretary

Nathan Moberley, Higher Education Section Chief, Office of Attorney General

The new member orientation began at 9 a.m. in the boardroom of Smith Hall on post at Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Va.

LtGen Furness welcomed Mr. Williamson. Introductions were made. Board members received informational briefings in the areas of academics, finance and support, strategic enrollment management, cadet and military affairs, athletics, VMI organization, and the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. Briefing materials are publicly available at <https://www.vmi.edu/bovmaterials>.

The orientation concluded at 11:40 a.m.



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*The Appeals and Advancement Committees held public meetings beginning at 1 p.m. The Athletics and Operations and Personnel Affairs Committees held public meetings beginning at 2:30 p.m.*

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Executive Committee

Board of Visitors members present:

Ernie Edgar '87

Damon Williams '90

Kate Todd

Others present:

LtGen David Furness '87, Superintendent

Col. Travis Homiak '95, Chief of Staff

Col. Bill Wyatt, Board of Visitors Secretary

Nathan Moberley, Higher Education Section Chief, Office of Attorney General

The meeting of the VMI Board of Visitors Executive Committee convened at 4:03 p.m. Ernie Edgar suggested to those convened they would dispense with the planned agenda and, instead, discuss procedures for the special board meeting to follow. There were no objections.

A discussion ensued about who will preside over the special meeting. Edgar volunteered. Damon Williams, the board's other remaining vice president, agreed that Edgar will preside over the special meeting. The committee discussed the process of bringing forward nominations for the vacant offices of president and vice president. There seemed to be consensus on the procedures and the Executive Committee adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

Full Board Special Meeting

Board of Visitors members present:

Col. Michael Dick '77

Col. Anthony Meador '95

Ernie Edgar '87

Gov. Ralph Northam '81

Don Hall

Nancy Phillips

Col. Jamie Inman '86

Maj. Gen. James Ring '88

Del. Bill Janis '84

Kate Todd

Lester Johnson '95

Damon Williams '90

Lt. Col. Jim Joustra '76

Thomas Williamson '72

Rear Adm. Terry McKnight '78



Board members participating virtually:

Dr. Meaghan Mobbs (from Ukraine, temporary medical condition)

Others present:

LtGen David Furness '87, Superintendent

Col. Bill Wyatt, Board of Visitors Secretary

Nathan Moberley, Higher Education Section Chief, Office of Attorney General

The special meeting of the full board convened at 4:30 p.m. The special meeting was called by a majority of board members to fill the vacancies of board officers. Ernie Edgar, a board vice-president, presided over the meeting in accordance with the VMI Board of Visitors bylaws.

Mr. Edgar welcomed new members Buddy Meador and Tom Williamson. He also acknowledged Dr. Mobbs participating virtually.

At 4:33 p.m., the board moved into closed session to discuss:

1. Matters related to the employment, assignment, appointment, or performance of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of the public body, and evaluation of performance of departments or schools of public institutions of higher education pursuant to Va. Code section 2.2-3711(A)(1) relating to the appointment of board officers and the performance of Institute employees; and
2. Consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel pursuant to Va. Code section 2.2-3711(A)(8).

The board returned to open session at 5:28 p.m.

***A motion was made by Bill Janis and seconded by Kate Todd to certify the closed session. A roll call vote of the members present was taken. All members present voted to certify the closed session.***

Mrs. Todd told the board she was resigning effectively immediately from her role as the non-alumna at large member of the Executive Committee but will remain a member of the board.

***Ernie Edgar, as chair of the Advancement Committee, made a motion, seconded by Kate Todd, to accept the nominations of the following individuals to serve the remainder of the unexpired terms for the vacant officer positions of president, vice-president, and non-alumni at large member of the Executive Committee:***

- Col. Michael Dick '77, president
- Lester Johnson '95, vice president



- Don Hall, non-alumni at large member of the Executive Committee

By a show of hands, the motion passed by a majority of members and Dick, Johnson, and Hall assumed their positions immediately.

Having no other business to conduct during the special meeting, the board adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

**Tuesday, April 28, 2026**

*Superintendent's Agenda Items (Full Board)*

Board of Visitors members present:

Col. Michael Dick '77

Ernie Edgar '87

Don Hall

Col. Jamie Inman '86

Del. Bill Janis '84

Lester Johnson '95

Lt. Col. Jim Joustra '76

Rear Adm. Terry McKnight '78

Col. Anthony Meador '95

Gov. Ralph Northam '81

Nancy Phillips

Maj. Gen. James Ring '88

Kate Todd

Damon Williams '90

Thomas Williamson '72

Board of Visitors members non present:

Dr. Meaghan Mobbs (excused)

Others present:

LtGen David Furness '87, Superintendent

Col. Bill Wyatt, Board of Visitors Secretary

Nathan Moberley, Higher Education Section Chief, Office of Attorney General

The full Board of Visitors convened on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at 8 a.m. Col. Dick called the meeting to order and turned the meeting over to LtGen David Furness '87, VMI's superintendent, for presentation of his agenda items. The meeting was streamed live in accordance with SCHEV guidelines and the recording is publicly available at <https://www.youtube.com/live/XuV4-QK3nb8>. Presentations used during this meeting are also publicly available at <https://www.vmi.edu/bovmaterials>.

LtGen Furness briefed the board on key performance indicators for his revisions to the VMI strategic plan, Forging 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders. He told the board there are 65 KPIs for the



strategic plan and briefly highlighted a few in each objective. KPIs are broken into personnel costs and non-personnel costs. His goal is for personnel costs to be revenue neutral.

Col. Shannon Eskam gave the board an update on strategic enrollment matters. She discussed changes to federal financial aid from the One Big Beautiful Bill including caps to Parent Plus loans and loan proration. She also discussed implementation of cadet retention software that will allow the institute to track and provide services to cadets who may be in danger of outprocessing.

Lt. Col. Joe Hagy briefed the board about the current admissions report. He said the Institute has received 478 deposits as of April 27, 2027, which is higher than the past three years at this time. He said he was monitoring and taking actions to mitigate “melt.” He said the average GPA of those who have paid their deposits is 3.59 which is on par with previous classes. He also gave an update on yield activities that include regional events, cadet call centers, and Parents Council outreach.

Brig. Gen. Robert Moreschi gave the board an accreditation update. He said the Institute’s initial report was submitted to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in February. The Institute should receive initial feedback in May. The dean also told the board the institute received a SACSCOC Torch award for outstanding post-college success – the only level 2 school (undergraduate only) to be recognized. Finally, Brig. Gen. Moreschi shared the latest rankings which led to a discussion of how VMI marketed those rankings which led to questions about VMI hiring a marketing firm. The superintendent reported the procurement process for hiring a firm was well underway.

Brig. Gen. Dallas Clark ’99 introduced Scott Booker from the Auditor of Public Accounts. Booker briefed the board on findings of the 2025 financial statement audit that is just wrapping up. Overall, the APA will opine the statements are materially accurate. The audit will show five discrepancies which Clark says are already being addressed.

Clark then gave a brief update on the results of the legislative session. He told the board the General Assembly adjourned without agreeing to a budget. The Institute tracked over 150 bills including two that would have had an impact on the board’s composition and one which would have created a task force to study VMI’s actions since the Barnes and Thornburg report. One of the composition bills specific to VMI did not pass the legislature. The other is on the governor’s desk for her signature or veto. LtGen Furness noted the actions of cadets and the immense support of VMI alumni during the legislative session were of great assistance.

Clark reviewed the revenue and expenditure projections and assumptions for the coming FY27. The Institute is budgeting for 480 cadets which will increase the size of the corps by 105 cadets. He said the Institute has used the most conservative proposals in terms of state revenues since



the budget has not been enacted yet. He briefed a proposal for a 3% tuition and fee increase and compared the increase to the Consumer Price Index and the Higher Education Price Index. Anticipated costs driving the tuition and fee increase include increases to faculty and staff salaries, employee health insurance premiums, utilities, and contractual services. The increase also provides for implementation of the strategic plan.

Col. Ley Havird '90 told the board he believes the culture of the Corps is starting to change. He highlighted a trend toward decreasing demerits. The number of cadets exceeding 75 demerits or 100 demerits each semester is down significantly. He said cadets were told they were “going back to basics” where teaching and learning were the priority. This semester, however, the Corps was told they would stand on their own merits and they must apply what they’ve learned.

Havird said the Class of 2027 leaders are learning from their predecessors and are preparing to take over those responsibilities. He also discussed the Corps fitness initiative. He said the incoming rats are submitting scores where nearly 60% are meeting the standards. This is 16% higher than the Class of 2029. The commandant is also focusing on cadet retention and implementing a mentorship program.

Jamaal Walton '07, director of intercollegiate athletics, gave a winter and spring sport update. Baseball and lacrosse are having very good seasons with the lacrosse program making the Northeast Conference playoffs, one of only four schools to qualify. Swimming set 31 team records and 66 all-time personal bests. Ryan Vigil '26 won the 165 lb. Southern Conference wrestling title and qualified for the NCAA tournament. Deonte Harris '29 won the Southern Conference triple jump. Xander Pohlman '28 became the first shooter in VMI rifle history to earn an invite to the NCAA championships.

Walton shared the board a chart showing average demerits for each athletic team. The spring semester average for athletic teams is 18 demerits which includes a high of 32 demerits (baseball) to a low of 8 (women’s swimming and water polo).

The board adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

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*The Academic Affairs Committee convened for a meeting at 10:45 a.m.*

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### Working Lunch

The board convened at 12:40 p.m. to hear a presentation from Col. Valentina Dimitrova-Grajzl, Col. Sarah Whipple, and Lt. Col. Kim Connolly about the Civil Discourse Initiative at VMI. The



meeting was streamed live in accordance with SCHEV guidelines and the recording is publicly available at [https://www.youtube.com/live/0vbHBG\\_d5GI](https://www.youtube.com/live/0vbHBG_d5GI). Their presentation is publicly available at <https://www.vmi.edu/bovmaterials>.

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*The Audit, Finance, and Planning Committee and Corps and Military Affairs Committee convened for their respective meetings at 1:30 p.m.*

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### Board Diversity Training

The Board of Visitors reconvened at 3:15 p.m. to conduct diversity training. The meeting was streamed live in accordance with SCHEV guidelines and the recording is publicly available at <https://www.youtube.com/live/ojVZcxqj7Xg>. The training presentation is publicly available at <https://www.vmi.edu/bovmaterials>.

LtGen Furness introduced Briana Williams, the Institute's chief diversity officer. He talked about the importance of VMI's Inclusive Excellence training. He said the training is a form of leadership training that prepares cadets to work with others who look different or may have different viewpoints.

Williams talked about setting a common language related to dimensions of diversity. These include organization, internal, and external dimensions. She said diversity is not a characteristic that some people have and others don't. Diversity exists in everyone and, as such, her work should not exclude anyone. She dispelled the notion that equity lowers standards or gives individuals something they do not deserve or have not earned. That is not what VMI stands for. Rather equity refers to giving everyone the tools they need to meet the standard.

Williams talked about the role of trust. She said, "The trust that holds a unit together in combat was built before anyone comes under fire." Trust is built in barracks, the mess hall, formation, and the classroom. People are watching and evaluating each other based on your daily interactions with and the respect you give to others. The is building leaders through a diverse VMI experience.

The CDO gave the board an overview of the cadet Inclusive Excellence training program and talked about the events and special programming available to supplement that training.

A discussion ensued about the Institute's efforts in the area of diversity training. Ernie Edgar complimented Williams on her ability to listened to the needs of the community over the years and tailor the program to those needs. LtGen Furness talked about the importance of the Inclusive Excellence program to develop a sense of belonging for everyone on post. Such



belonging in important not just during a cadet's time on post, but also when they join the ranks of alumni.

The board adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

### **Wednesday, April 29, 2026**

#### Full Board Meeting

Board of Visitors members present:

Col. Michael Dick '77

Ernie Edgar '87

Don Hall

Col. Jamie Inman '86

Del. Bill Janis '84

Lester Johnson '95

Lt. Col. Jim Joustra '76

Rear Adm. Terry McKnight '78

Col. Anthony Meador '95

Gov. Ralph Northam '81

Nancy Phillips

Kate Todd

Damon Williams '90

Thomas Williamson '72

Board of Visitors members non present:

Dr. Meaghan Mobbs (excused)

Maj. Gen. James Ring '88 (excused)

Others present:

LtGen David Furness '87, Superintendent

Col. Bill Wyatt, Board of Visitors Secretary

Nathan Moberley, Higher Education Section Chief, Office of Attorney General

1. The full Board of Visitors convened on Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 8 a.m. in the Turman Room of Preston Library in Lexington, Va. The meeting was streamed live in accordance with SCHEV guidelines and the recording is publicly available at <https://www.youtube.com/live/IGTiwbxU8q4>. Presentations used during this meeting are also publicly available at <https://www.vmi.edu/bovmaterials>.
2. Col. Dick called the meeting to order at 8 a.m. and asked the board secretary to call on those who had signed up to give public comments. Col. Wyatt noted a number of written comments had been received late on Monday, April 27, and those comments were now available for board members to review. Two individuals, Robert Morris '79 and Nancy Harvey, were called forward and provided public comment at the board meeting.



3. The regimental commander, first class president, and Honor Court president provided updates on their respective first class experiences to the board. Each cadet introduced their Class of 2027 replacements:
  - a. RCO: Devin Auzenne '26, introduced Kimlong Nguyen '27
  - b. First Class President: Maximus Ankrah '26, introduced Matthew Assouad '27
  - c. Honor Court President: Grant Rose '26, introduced Aiden Psczulkoski '27
  
4. John Williams '88, president of the VMI Foundation and chairman of the VMI Alumni Agencies Board of Directors, provided an update on VMIAA activities. He told the board fundraising efforts are strong and he is optimistic about how the fiscal year will end up. Williams talked about the donor pipeline and said the Agencies is currently undergoing a campaign readiness assessment, a key initiative in the near term. He gave a Call to Duty fundraising update and talked about the value of the endowment (\$850 million). Finally, Williams briefed the board on the more than 200 alumni engagements as well as communications and marketing efforts.
  
5. ***A motion was made by Ernie Edgar and seconded by Bill Janis to adopt the items on the consent calendar.*** The motion passed unanimously by voice vote. The following items were adopted:
  - a. Approval of the January 2026 minutes
  - b. Approval of the following resolutions:
    - i. Faculty / staff recognition
      1. Amy McKemy
      2. Al Funk
      3. Martha Potter
      4. Butch Staton
      5. Col. Gary Bissell '89
      6. Sam Kessinger
      7. Col. Donald Sunnen
      8. Sharon Conner
      9. Terry McGowan
      10. Capt. Robert McMasters
      11. Terry Wilhelm
      12. Brig. Gen. Dallas Clark '99
  - c. Approval of changes in faculty
  - d. Approval of graduation list
  - e. Approval of changes to the Faculty Handbook
  - f. Approval of changes to the Academic Regulations
  - g. Approval of curricular changes
  - h. Approval of Overarching Regulations
  - i. Approval of changes to the Administrative / Professional Handbook



- j. Approval of VMI Museum System accreditation items
  - i. Code of Ethics
  - ii. Collections Management Policy
  - iii. VMI Museum Institutional 5-year Plan
6. Nancy Phillips provided a report on the Academic Affairs Committee meeting. In addition to the items on the consent calendar, the committee discussed Corps GPA trends, study abroad participation, progress on an AI policy, the Quality Enhancement Plan, and plans for academic training / support for August 2026 matriculants.
7. Rear Adm. McKnight, chair of the Audit, Finance, and Planning Committee, said the committee received an update from Auxiliary Services, Facilities Management, and the Museum System. The committee also discussed the proposed FY2027 operating budget of \$126.2 million including a 3% tuition and fees increase for academic year 2026-27.

***A motion was made by Terry McKnight and seconded by Don Hall to approve the FY 2027 Operating Budget to include a 3.0% tuition and a 3.0% increase in mandatory fees for Virginia and non-Virginia cadets.*** The motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

8. Jim Joustra briefed the board on the Corps and Military Affairs Committee meeting. Joustra said commissions would be down a little this year due to the smaller size of the Class of 2026. The committee met with next year's first class leadership, received a briefing on cadet health and well-being initiatives, were updated on the chaplain's office, and heard an update on the commandant's summer 2026 priorities.
9. Kate Todd, chair of the Operations and Personnel Affairs Committee, said, in addition to the items on the consent calendar, the committee considered the Institute's updated Crisis and Emergency Plan. She said the full board will discuss the plan in closed session and will vote in open session.
10. Damon Williams provided an update on the Athletics Committee. He said the committee discussed the winter and spring sport highlights, the athletic budget, House Settlement, Keydet Club fundraising, and cadet-athlete conduct.
11. Ernie Edgar, chair of the Advancement Committee, said the committee received a report from the S5 cadet captain on their efforts throughout the year and heard a report on the Institute's communications and marketing efforts. The VMI Alumni Agencies told the committee about their work to support the Institute's mission through fundraising and marketing efforts.



12. Bill Janis provided an update on the Appeals Committee meeting. He said the committee reviewed the Honor Court appeals process outlined in General Order 6 and 2025-26 discussed case trends and statistics. The committee met the Class of 2027 Honor Court leaders and heard an update from the outgoing class.
13. Micheal Dick gave a quick update on the brief Executive Committee meeting held on Monday, April 27. He said since the board lacked a president at the time of the meeting, the Executive Committee discussed the process for appointment of the vacant positions.
14. At 10:24 a.m., the board moved into closed session to discuss:
  - a. Matters related to the employment, assignment, appointment, or performance of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of the public body, and evaluation of performance of departments or schools of public institutions of higher education pursuant to Va. Code section 2.2-3711(A)(1) relating to the appointment of board officers and the performance of Institute employees;
  - b. Matters related to plans to protect public safety as it relates to terrorist activity or specific cybersecurity threats or vulnerabilities and briefings by staff members, legal counsel, or law-enforcement or emergency service officials concerning actions taken to respond to such matters or a related threat to public safety pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3711(A.)(19.), relating to the consideration of the Institute's crisis and emergency management plan.
  - c. Discussion of special awards in accordance with Va. Code § 2.2-3711(A.)(11.).
  - d. Disciplinary and other matters that would involve disclosure of information contained in the scholastic records of specific cadets, pursuant to Va. Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (2), relating to discipline, sexual assault, and Honor Court cases.
  - e. Consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel pursuant to Va. Code section 2.2-3711(A)(8).
  - f. Consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3711(A.)(8.).
15. The board returned to open session at 1:03 p.m.
16. A motion was made by Ernie Edgar and seconded by Don Hall to certify the closed session. A roll call vote of the members present was taken. All members present voted to certify the



closed session.

17. A motion was made by Ernie Edgar and seconded by Bill Janis to approve the Institute's Crisis and Emergency Plan. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.
18. During closed session, the Board of Visitors has conducted its annual performance evaluation of the superintendent, LtGen David Furness '87, as required under Va. Code § 23.1-1303.(B.)(9.). The board has found that the superintendent has met or exceeded the performance measures set forth and agreed to by the board in January, 2026.

As a result of LtGen Furness' strong performance on behalf of the Institute during the 2025-2026 academic year, the Board of Visitors recommends the superintendent receive a performance bonus in the amount of \$60,000 discussed during closed session. The bonus amount represents a prorated amount since the superintendent has not served a full year. ***A motion was made by Don Hall to approve the bonus and seconded by Nancy Phillips.*** The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

19. The board president recognized Brig. Gen. Dallas Clark's service to the Institute as he prepares for his new role as CEO of the VMI Alumni Agencies.
20. ***Bill Janis moved and Ernie Edgar seconded the appointment of the following individuals as officers of the board for the 2026-27 academic year beginning July 1, 2026:***
  - a. Michael Dick '77, president
  - b. Terry McKnight '78, vice-president
  - c. Bill Janis '84, vice-president
  - d. Damon Williams '90, vice-president
  - e. Don Hall, non-alumni at large Executive Committee member
  - f. First Class president, non-voting advisory representative
  - g. Col. Bill Wyatt, board secretary

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

21. Having no further business, the board adjourned at 1:10 p.m.