

COMMEMORATIONS AND MEMORIALS NAMING AND REVIEW COMMITTEE
Minutes of meeting held November 12, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 0936 in the Board Room in Smith Hall at VMI.

Attending were members of the committee:

Mr. Richard K. Hines V '66, Chair
CAD Dane Hamilton '22
Mr. Hugh M. Fain III '80
COL Keith Gibson '77
LTC Catharine Ingersoll
Mr. Lester Johnson '95
Mr. Anthony Moore '78
COL Kim C. Parker
Mr. Gene Scott '80

Also in attendance were:

MG Cedric T. Wins '85, Superintendent, VMI
BG Dallas Clark '99, Deputy Superintendent for Finance, Administration, and Support
COL Bill Wyatt, Communications and Marketing, VMI
LTC Jamica N. Love, Chief Diversity Officer, VMI
LTC Kevin Ryan '01, Office of the Superintendent, VMI
Mr. Patrick O'Leary, Office of the Attorney General of Virginia (via conference call)

Introduction and Opening Remarks

Mr. Hines made short comments welcoming the attendees and reminding them of the committee's responsibilities, especially the charge to ensure that the VMI landscape is "inspirational and inviting."

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Hines called on the committee to approve the minutes of the meeting that took place August 24, 2021. Mr. Fain so moved, and Mr. Scott seconded. The minutes were approved with no objections.

Synopsis of Survey Results

LTC Ingersoll gave a brief overview of the results of the survey of remaining inventory items, which was completed by the committee members in the weeks prior to the meeting. She categorized the objects into three categories: items for which no action need be taken, items that can be delegated to COL Gibson and his staff for contextualization, and items that should be discussed by the committee before a decision is reached.

Report from the Corps of Cadets

CAD Hamilton reported that he has been having conversations with cadets about the remaining inventory items, and his sense is that the vast majority of the corps knows very little about any of the remaining items or the history of how they came to be at VMI. He did note that current cadets desire to see more VMI graduates (especially recent graduates) represented in the physical landscape of Post. He also remarked that cadets are less concerned about removing objects and more concerned about maintaining the core VMI traditions of the Ratline, the class system, and the Honor Code.

Discussion of Survey Results

LTC Ingersoll invited discussion on the following items, determined in the survey to need no action from the committee (“remain as-is”):

- The name of Smith Hall
- The quotation in Smith Hall lobby
- The name of Maury-Brooke Hall
- The name of Scott Shipp Hall
- The name of Preston Library
- The quotation on the parapet
- The name of Crozet Hall
- Claudius Crozet’s headstone and grave
- The Alpha Tau Omega monument
- The statue of George Washington

A brief discussion ensued, and the committee agreed to forward the above items to the Board of Visitors with the recommendation that no action should be taken.

LTC Ingersoll then invited discussion on the following items, determined in the survey to be kept by VMI but be presented with additional contextualizing information or, in the case of the plaques, with updated text (“retain and explain”):

- The portrait of Smith by Hubard
- The portrait of Smith by Weyl
- The plaster model of the statue of Maury by Sievers
- The plaques commemorating Maury and Brooke in Maury-Brooke Hall
- The plaque commemorating Scott Shipp in Scott Shipp Hall
- The cannons of the Cadet Battery and the Tredegar cannons
- The Virginia Historic Landmark plaques
- The VMI Crest

Discussion ensued, particularly regarding the language on the Virginia Historic Landmark plaques. The committee agreed to forward the above items to the Board of Visitors with the recommendation that the items be retained by VMI but that COL Gibson and his staff be charged with updating and/or contextualizing these items.

Mr. Hines suggested that in the interest of time, the final group of items—those that LTC Ingersoll categorized as needing “discussion and deliberation”—be examined in a meeting of the committee to take place sometime in the weeks prior to the full BOV meeting scheduled for January 28-29, 2022.

Institute Awards

Mr. Hines called on the committee to discuss the names of two awards given each year at the Institute Awards ceremony: the Jackson-Hope Medals and the New Market Medal.

COL Gibson gave a history of the genesis of the Jackson-Hope Medal. By the time of his death in 1863, “Stonewall” Jackson was known world-wide and had developed a particularly exuberant fan base in England. This group of “English gentlemen” wanted to commission a sculpture dedicated to Jackson’s memory, and raised enough funds to commission John Henry Foley, an Irish sculptor working in London, to make the statue. A British Member of Parliament, Sir A. J. B. Beresford Hope, spearheaded the undertaking, which intended to gift the sculpture to the Commonwealth; the statue was unveiled in 1875 on the grounds of the Virginia State Capitol in Richmond, where it remains today.

In the event, the Englishmen raised more money than necessary to cover the expenses related to the statue. As a result, Mr. Beresford Hope offered the unused funds to the Commonwealth, and the Governor, James L. Kemper, suggested that the money be used to create an award to be given annually to the 1st and 2nd graduating cadets from VMI, given VMI’s significance in Jackson’s life.

The two Jackson-Hope Medals were first awarded in 1877. The medallion carries the image of Foley’s original statue, and the inscriptions “Jackson-Hope Medal” (recognizing the professor and the principal British fundraiser) and “The Gift of English Gentlemen.” VMI erected the Jackson-Hope Monument on Post in 2003 as a way of recognizing academic achievement at the institute.

The committee discussed the name of the award, the design of the medal itself, and the monument in terms of the Criteria for Review document, before determining that further information was needed before the Committee could decide if the items should be retained as-is. The committee tabled the discussion for a follow-up meeting, proposed to be held in January 2022.

Mr. Hines then gave an overview of the New Market Medal, explaining that he had examined BOV minutes to determine how the award came about. He then distributed a version of the policy governing the awarding of the New Market Medal that he had edited for factual accuracy. The committee discussed the edits, deciding that they improved the clarity of the awarding criteria and the purpose of the award.

Mr. Hines proposed a motion that the committee recommend to the Board of Visitors that they adopt the edited version of the New Market Medal policy. Mr. Fain so moved, and Mr. Moore seconded. The motion passed.

Awards Given by the United Daughters of the Confederacy

Mr. Hines noted two more awards given annually at the Institute Awards Ceremony that BG Bob Moreschi, Deputy Superintendent for Academics and Dean of the Faculty, had asked the Committee

to consider. These awards, the “Stonewall Jackson Award” for physics and the “Sir Moses Ezekiel Award” for creative endeavors, are bestowed by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. While they are not Institute awards, the Institute does permit the UDC to give these awards and participate in the Institute Awards Ceremony. The Institute has no connection with the UDC other than these awards.

The committee discussed the appropriateness of the UDC giving awards to graduating VMI students before unanimously deciding to recommend to BG Moreschi that VMI decline these awards, beginning with the Class of 2022.

Adjournment

Mr. Hines then proposed a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Fain so moved, and Mr. Scott seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 1217.

Respectfully submitted,

LTC Catharine Ingersoll