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**THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
THE VISITORS OF JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY**

Volume LXI No. 1

**Minutes of the Meeting of September 13, 2024**

The Visitors of James Madison University met on Friday, September 13, 2024 in the Festival Conference and Student Center Board Room on the campus of James Madison University. Suzanne Obenshain, Rector, called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

**PRESENT:**

Bell, Dickie	James, Kay Coles
Bolander, Jeff	Obenshain, Suzanne, Rector
Caudle, Larry	Rexrode, David
Edwards, Terrie, Vice Rector	Smith, Steve
Eiland, Joanie	Thacker, Nikki
Fiorina, Carly	White, Jack
Galati, Tom	Wood, Nicole Palya

Stafford, Sydney, Student Representative to the Board, 2024-25  
Kirkpatrick, David, Secretary

**ABSENT:**

Stoltzfus, Michael

**ALSO PRESENT:**

King, Charles, President  
Carter-Hoyt, Malika, Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion  
Kolvoord, Bob, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Langridge, Nick, Vice President for University Advancement  
Miller, Tim, Vice President for Student Affairs  
Moore, Towana, Vice President for Administration and Finance  
Roan, Matt, Director of Athletics  
Tongen, Anthony, Vice President for Research, Economic Development, and Innovation  
Wood, Melinda, Vice President, Enrollment Management  
Vass, Mary-Hope, Assistant Vice President, Communications and University Spokesperson  
Ott-Walter, Kathy, Speaker, Faculty Senate  
Knight, Jack, University Counsel

The Rector welcomed new board members Larry Caudle, Joanie Eiland, Tom Galati, Dave Rexrode and Nikki Thacker. She also welcomed Sydney Stafford, the 2024-25 Student Representative to the Board and Brielle Lacroix, Student Government Association President.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

On motion of Kay Cole James, seconded by Terrie Edwards, the Consent Agenda was approved which included the minutes of the April 18, 2024 and April 19, 2024 board meetings and the Executive

Committee Meeting held on August 21, 2024.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Academic Excellence**

Nicole Palya Wood, Chair, presented the report of the Academic Excellence Committee. The minutes of the April 18, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment A)

Ms. Wood reported on the following topics from the committee meeting:

- 1) Divisional update from the Provost, Bob Kolvoord;
- 2) Artificial Intelligence in Teaching and Learning Portal from;
- 3) Work-Based Learning Experiences Panel; and
- 4) Topics of Interest were shared to consider holding one joint meeting with the Student Affairs Committee.

On motion of Ms. Wood seconded by Carly Fiorina, the report of the Academic Excellence Committee was accepted.

### **Advancement and Engagement Committee**

Terrie Edwards, Chair, presented the report of the Advancement and Engagement Committee. The minutes of the April 18, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment B)

Ms. Edwards reported on the following topics from the committee meeting:

- 1) Funds raised to date;
- 2) Update from Nick Langridge, Vice President for University Advancement;
- 3) Transcendent Innovation – Reimagining Higher Ed and Industry Partnerships
- 4) Digital Advertising Efficiencies in Enrollment Marketing
- 5) On motion of Ms. Edwards seconded by Nicole Palya Wood, the Advancement and Engagement report was accepted.

### **Athletics Committee**

Dickie Bell Chair, presented the report of the Athletics Committee. The minutes of the April 18, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment C)

Mr. Bell reported on the following topics from the committee meeting:

- 1) Matt Roan, Director of Athletics provided introductions, NCAA, Sun Belt Conference and JMU Sports Update;
- 2) 2023-2024 Strategic Plan Accountability Measures;
- 3) Compliance Update;
- 4) Student-Athlete Focus;
- 5) Development Report; and
- 6) Future Agenda Items

On motion of Mr. Bell, seconded by Terrie Edwards, the Athletics report was accepted.

### **Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee**

Jeff Boland Chair, presented the report of the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee. The minutes of the April 18, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment D)

Mr. Bolander reported on the following topics from the committee meeting:

- 1) AI update;

- 2) Workforce Planning;
- 3) Annual Report;
- 4) Internal Audit Budget; and
- 5) 2024-2025 Internal Audit Plan.

On motion of Mr. Bolander, seconded by Tom Galati, the Audit, Risk and Compliance report was accepted.

#### **Finance and Physical Development Committee**

Steve Smith, Chair, presented the report of the Finance and Physical Development Committee. The minutes from the April 18, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment E)

Mr. Smith reported on the following from the committee meeting:

- 1) Financial Review;
- 2) Audit Review for 2022-23 with an unmodified opinion on the financial statements;
- 3) Bond Rating Update;
- 4) 2023-2024 Receivables Write-Offs;
- 5) 2025-2026 Budget Requests;
- 6) Six-Year Plan Update;
- 7) Campus Security Update;
- 8) Workforce Planning.

On motion of Mr. Smith, seconded by Carly Fiorina, the board approved the six year plan.

On motion of Mr. Smith, seconded by Carly Fiorina, the Finance and Physical Development report was accepted.

#### **Governance Committee**

Jack White, Chair, presented the report of the Governance Committee. The minutes of the April 18, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment F)

Mr. White reported on the following from the committee meeting:

- 1) JMU Board Self-Evaluation;
- 2) 2025 Board Retreat – June 5-6, 2025; and
- 3) Review of the JMU Board Manual will be updated as appropriate for consideration at the November meeting.

On motion of Mr. White, seconded by David Rexrode, the Governance report was accepted.

#### **Student Life Affairs Committee**

Terrie Edwards, Chair, presented the report of the Education and Student Life Committee. The minutes from the April 18, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment G)

Ms. Edwards reported on the following topics from the committee meeting:

- 1) Student Affairs Update from Tim Miller, Vice President for Student Affairs;
- 2) Student Government Association Report from Brielle Lacroix, President; and
- 3) Summer Orientation and Community Impact.

On motion of Ms. Edwards, seconded by Nicole Wood, the Student Affairs report was accepted.

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### **FACULTY SENATE UPDATE**

Kathy Ott Walter, Faculty Senate Speaker provided an update from the Faculty Senate and background information on the Faculty Senate's roles. In addition, several faculty members were recognized. The upcoming priorities for the Faculty Senate are shared governance, Academic Affairs policy, AP position clarification, appeals and grievance procedures, the faculty involvement for the upcoming provost search, and faculty retention.

(Attachment H)

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD UPDATE**

Sydney Stafford, student representative to the board, provided the following updates:

The upcoming goals of this position: participating on the presidential search committee, improving student engagement, educating and informing students, and working to collect student feedback on the JMU presidential search.

(Attachment I)

### **JMU FOUNDATION UPDATE**

Warren Coleman, president and chief executive officer of the JMU Foundation, provided the following updates:

- The mission of the JMU Foundation is to support and serve the JMU community. As that is carried out, the vision is to provide an ever-growing and sustainable source of private support for the university community by promoting a prudent investment policy, stewardship and earning the trust of our constituents;
- An overview of the endowment and observable trends was also provided.

(Attachment J)

### **PRESIDENTS REPORT**

President Charles King presented information on the following: (Attachment K)

- Some major university events were recognized to include the University Welcome with more than 1,100 faculty and staff in attendance. In addition, several employees were recognized for their significant contributions to the university through the Purple Star Awards. These award recipients are nominated by their peers. Senior leaders addressed approximately 5,000 incoming first-year and transfers at the New Student Convocation;
  - It has been reported from 2023 data that 95.2% of graduates with a bachelor's degree and 96.4% of graduates with advanced degrees have reported career outcomes;
  - JMU experienced a record number of applications for the fall 2024 academic year, 42,091. This is a 7% increase from 2023, a 25% increase from 2022 and an 81% increase from 2021;
  - The first-year application demographics include: 41% male and 59% female, 47% out-of-state, 23% first generation, 718 international applications, 53 states and U.S. Territories (minus South Dakota) are represented, and applications were received from 128 countries. A total of 2,280 transfer applications were received;
  - The Class of 2028 is made up of the following: 3,583 in-state students, 1,431 out-of-state students, 43% males, 57% females, 28.5% out-of-state, 17% first generation, representing 37 states and includes 797 transfer students. This information is current as of Sept. 2, 2024;
  - Reengineering Madison is an initiative that includes implementing significant technology such as an enterprise constituent relationship management (CRM) system and new data
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solutions for managing and visualizing JMU's data. An update was provided to cover the CRM implementation progress;

- ERP assessment and selection is beginning. The team is evaluating vendors and implementation partners, with a decision by June 2025;
- JMU ranked #27 best public university and #70 overall by the *Wall Street Journal*, out of 500 universities;
- Moving up from #15 to #8 in the nation for best on-campus food by Princeton Review, JMU Dining has been consistently ranked within the top 20 for more than 20 years. This is based on student feedback;
- The only D1 school to be in the top 10 for all active channels, JMU social ranked #5 as a top D1 higher education institution for social media by RivalIQ;
- Princeton Review also ranked JMU #1 in the nation for best athletics facilities;
- In August, Gov. Glenn Youngkin visited JMU to ceremonially sign the "Building Blocks for Virginia Families Initiative." These bills boost the state's early learning program and childcare options for working parents. The JMU Young Children's Program is one of the largest local childcare providers, and by the fall 2025, it is projected to serve 120 children;
- Every incoming first-year and transfer student is working with the Constructive Dialogue Project and deliberative forums developing skills of dialogue across divides through the Madison Center for Civic Engagement;
- Raj Vinnakota, President of the Institute for Citizens and Scholars, will speak at JMU as the Constitution Day speaker on Sept. 25 in the Wilson Hall Auditorium at 7 p.m.;
- The following faculty were recognized: Dr. Laura Katzman, with the College of Visual and Performing Arts, is the 2024 recipient of Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery Director's Essay Prize; Dr. Barbara Reisner, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, recognized by the Northeastern Section of the American Chemical Society for outstanding contributions to the academic field of chemistry; and Dr. Steve Reich and Dr. Rebecca Brannon, Department of History, were awarded National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowships;
- The annual fall move-in and Weeks of Welcome were successful. There are 6,532 students living in residence halls, including 4,959 first-year students living on campus. The total attendance for the Weeks of Welcome was 40,809;
- A total of \$28.1M was raised in 2024, which is the second highest fundraising year since 2022;
- JMU supporters, Stan and Rosemary Jones, have made a commitment of \$2.5M toward the Carrier Library renovation and expansion project. A wing will be named in honor of their generous gift;
- An overview of the university's policy updates was provided to include the policy changes and updates to the student handbook;
- Athletics competed in the Learfield Directors Cup with the following results: ranked #77 in the nation, earned 292 points (seven sports contributing to the total), and earned the highest finish among Sun Belt Conference schools and the third highest among the Group Five programs;
- The following Dukes were recognized for their participation in the 2024 Summer Olympics:

- Current JMU Director of Track and Field, Delethea Quarles, joined the USA coaching staff to head the U.S. jumps and multi-events;
- Jackie Benitez, Class of 2020, played for the Puerto Rican women’s basketball team; and;
- Ongeziwe Mali, Class of 2020, played for the South African women’s field hockey team;
- JMU has worked to develop operational plans for the Thursday night football game on Oct. 10;
- The President’s Report will always conclude with future items. The following items are being considered for the next board meeting: standardized tests at JMU, student disability accommodations, NCAA scholarships and roster limits, Name, Image and Likeness (NIL), and the pending enrollment cliff.

### **PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH FIRM – RUSSELL REYNOLDS**

Kay Coles James, Presidential Search Committee Chair recognized the search firm members Joi Hayes, Steve Newton & Jett Pihakis.

### **SUN BELT MEDIA VALUATION**

Sam Knehans, Sr., associate commissioner and chief communications and branding officer with the Sun Belt Conference, provided the media valuation for the 2023 season. Some of those highlights are:

- Total media valuation for the Sun Belt was \$892M, which comes from live game sources and earned media sources both contributing to the metrics;
- JMU is the highest performing brand with \$112M in media value;
- More than 35 million viewers watched Sun Belt Conference games during the 2023 football season; JMU had the 2nd highest live game viewership;
- Among all Sun Belt schools, JMU is leading the online and print news mentions with 37.1K in 2023 and leading in social media valuation of \$4.2M and social media mentions at 102.4K.

(Attachment L)

### **IMPACT OF FAFSA**

Brad Barnett, associate vice president for Enrollment Management and Financial Aid director, provided an update on the impact of FAFSA challenges:

- Two categories of challenges experienced: preparation and processing;
- Identified non-need-based funds to provide a replacement award for prior “state grant” recipients with more than one in college;
- Identified students who lost eligibility due to FAFSA changes and provided a replacement award upon review of their renewal eligibility;
- Adjusted deadlines to help students and families;
- Number of FAFSA’s at year’s end in 2023-24 = 13,139;
- FAFSA challenges compressed the timetable for students/parents and subsequently JMU for loan processing;
- Staff with Admissions stepped up to support the Financial Aid Office with data processing.

(Attachment M)

### **CAREER OUTCOMES**

Myles Surrett, associate vice president for Career, Experiential Learning and Transitions, and Libby Westley, director of the University Career Center, provided an update on 2023 Career Outcomes.

- A career outcome is defined as full or part-time work, fellowships or service programs, military service or graduate school;
- 4% of degree recipients have a career outcome;
- Overall bachelor’s degree recipients have an outcome of 95.2%;
- JMU’s career outcomes are significantly above the national average and among R2 institutions
- JMU advanced degree recipient career outcomes are 97.2%;
- 66% of employed bachelor’s-degree recipients are working in Virginia;
- 73% of employed advanced-degree recipients are working in Virginia;
- 77.3% of JMU nursing majors who graduated indicated they are employed in Virginia
- 226 JMU graduates are teaching in Virginia;
- The University Career Center reaches students through the following touchpoints: appointments, career fairs, career closet, classroom presentations, headshots, and programming.

(Attachment N)

Rector Obenshain then called for the board to move into Closed Session. Terrie Edwards made the following motion.

“I move the Board go into closed session to discuss the following matters:

1) Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.1 of the Code of Virginia, I move we go into closed session to discuss personnel matters involving promotions, performance, retirements, hiring, resignations, salary adjustments, and status changes of faculty members, university administrators and appointees;

2) pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.3 of the Code of Virginia, to discuss the acquisition of real property located in Harrisonburg, Virginia; and

3) pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.7 to consult with legal counsel pertaining to actual or probable litigation; and

(4) pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.8 to consult with legal counsel for the provision of legal advice by such counsel.”

The motion was seconded by Jeff Bolander and the Board moved into closed session. Following the closed session, Ms. Obenshain then stated the following:

**During the closed session, the board discussed only matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only those types of matters identified in the motion for the closed session.**

**RECORDED VOTE: the following is an affirmative recorded, member by member vote:**

Bell, Dickie  
Bolander, Jeff  
Caudle, Larry  
Edwards, Terrie, Vice Rector

Fiorina, Carly  
Eiland, Joanie  
Galati, Tom  
James, Kay Coles

Obenshain, Suzanne, Rector  
Rexrode, David  
Smith, Steve

Thacker, Nikki  
White, Jack  
Wood, Nicole Palya

Ms. Obenshain then asked if there were any motions to come forward.

On motion from Terrie Edwards, seconded by Nicole Palya Wood, approved the Personnel Action Report.

On motion from Steve Smith, seconded by Carly Fiorina, approved the purchase of 430 Eastover Drive at a price of \$395,000.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, on motion of David Rexrode, seconded by Steve Smith, the Board voted to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.

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Suzanne Obenshain, Rector

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David C. Kirkpatrick, Secretary