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

Volume LXI No. 2

**Minutes of the Meeting of November 8, 2024**

The Visitors of James Madison University met on Friday, November 8, 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	Stoltzfus, Michael
Eiland, Joanie	Thacker, Nikki
Galati, Tom	White, Jack

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

**ABSENT:**

Fiorina, Carly  
Smith, Steve  
Wood, Nicole Palya

**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

**CONSENT AGENDA**

On motion of Tom Galati, seconded by Terrie Edwards, the Consent Agenda was approved which included the minutes of the September 13, 2024.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Academic Excellence Committee**

Jack White, Chair, presented the report of the Academic Excellence Committee. The minutes of the September 12, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment A)

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

- 1) Divisional Update;
- 2) College of Education Initiative: Lab School and Young Children's Program;
- 3) Work Based Learning Experiences;
- 4) Internships Abroad, and;
- 5) Topics of interest were shared to consider for future meetings.

On motion of Mr. White, seconded by Dickie Bell, the report of the Academic Excellence Committee was accepted.

### **Academic Excellence and Student Affairs Joint Committee**

Terrie Edwards, Co-Chair presented the report of the Academic Excellence and Student Affairs Joint Committee.

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

- 1) Explanation of Purpose;
- 2) Overview of Shared Challenges;
- 3) Disability Accommodation in University Settings; and
- 4) Future Joint Meeting Discussion.

On motion of Ms. Edwards, seconded by Larry Caudle, the report of the Academic Excellence and Student Affairs Joint Committee was accepted.

### **Advancement and Engagement Committee**

Michael Stoltzfus, Chair, presented the report of the Advancement and Engagement Committee. The minutes of the September 12, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment B)

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

- 1) Funds Raised to Date;
- 2) Major Gift and Endowment Thresholds;
- 3) VP Updates;
- 4) Social Rankings; and
- 5) Advancement System(s) Replacement – CRM (Reengineering Madison)

On motion of Mr. Stoltzfus seconded by Terrie Edwards, the Advancement and Engagement report was accepted.

### **Athletics Committee**

Dickie Bell Chair, presented the report of the Athletics Committee. The minutes of the September 12, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment C)

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

- 1) JMU Sports Update;
- 2) 2023-2024 Academic Report;
- 3) Student-Athlete Focus: Student-Athletes Utilizing Academic Resources;
- 4) JMU's NIL Committee/Program Update;
- 5) Development Report; and

6) Future Agenda Items

On motion of Mr. Bell, seconded by Joanie Eiland, the JMU Athletics Student-Athlete Compensation Policy was approved.

On motion of Mr. Bell, seconded by Dave Rexrode, the Athletics report was accepted.

**Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee**

Jeff Bolander, Chair, presented the report of the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee. The minutes of the September 12, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment D)

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

- 1) IT Security Update;
- 2) 2024 GLBA – Memo to Board; and
- 3) Status Report – Management Action Plans.

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

**Finance and Physical Development Committee**

Suzanne Obenshain, Chair, presented the report of the Finance and Physical Development Committee. The minutes from the September 12, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment E)

Ms. Obenshain reported on the following from the committee meeting:

- 1) Financial Review;
- 2) University Debt Review;
- 3) University Sustainability Update; and
- 4) Capital Projects Update.

On motion of Ms. Obenshain, seconded by Michael Stoltzfus, the Finance and Physical Development report was accepted.

**Governance Committee**

Jack White, Chair, presented the report of the Governance Committee. The minutes of the September 12, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment F)

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

- 1) JMU Board Self-Evaluation;
- 2) Reviewed the JMU Board Manual revisions and updates which the committee approved in September;
- 3) Student Handbook Review; and
- 4) Board Retreat – June 5-6, 2025

On motion of Mr. White, seconded by Jeff Bolander, the board approved the September changes to the board manual.

On motion of Mr. White, seconded by Kay Coles James the board affirmed their approval of the newly modified electronic meeting policy.

On motion of Mr. White, seconded by Michael Stoltzfus, the Governance report was accepted.

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### **Student Life Affairs Committee**

Terrie Edwards, Chair, presented the report of the Student Affairs Committee. The minutes from the September 12, 2024 meeting were approved. (Attachment G)

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

- 1) Student Affairs Update;
- 2) Student Government Association Report;
- 3) Student Representative to the Board Update; and
- 4) Health and Well-Being.

On motion of Ms. Edwards, seconded by Nikki Thacker, the Student Affairs report was accepted.

### **FACULTY SENATE UPDATE (Attachment H)**

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.

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD UPDATE (Attachment I)**

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.

### **PRESIDENTS REPORT (Attachment J)**

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

- Some major university events were recognized to include Family Weekend, Homecoming Week, Lab School celebration and the adoption of the Okanagan Charter.
- The recent University Career Fair was the largest in JMU's history, featuring over 160 employers and over 2,000 students in attendance. This was also the first time the event was held in the Atlantic Union Bank Center. JMU is planning for the spring 2025 fair.
- Several faculty members were recognized with awards and recognitions: Christopher Clinard and Erin Piker (Communications Sciences and Disorders) received a scientific research grant of \$2.06 million from the National Institutes of Health. Geary Albright (Physics and Astronomy) was awarded the 2024 Sun Belt Conference Faculty of the Year Award. JY Zhou (Center for Global Engagement) and David Kirkpatrick were awarded a major grant (~ \$500,000) from the U.S. Dept. Of State. This partnership with the University of Montana brings emerging leaders to JMU from institutes focused on U.S. government and civic leadership.
- JMU was recognized as a STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System) Gold Institution by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). STARS measures and encourages sustainability in all aspects of higher education.
- Upcoming legislative priorities include: Fast Flex Nursing Program, Johnston Hall, New Residence Hall, Cox Bill (Athletic Legislation), Governor's 2025 Budget, General Assembly dates (Jan. 8-Feb. 2), and the Legislative Reception Jan. 28, 2025.
- The JMU podcast *Being the Change* is produced by Madison Magazine as an extension of the Being The Change initiative.

- 2027 Campus Master Plan: The last plan update was in 2017. Sasaki Associates Inc. have been selected, have worked with over 600 universities globally and have been recognized for innovation and creativity.
- JMU Athletics update: JMU men's soccer is #16 in the nation (as high as #8), JMU women's soccer conference season is sitting at 11-3-5, making them the 2024 regular season champs, JMU football: all games are sold out except for the upcoming Marshall game, student tickets sold out in less than an hour every game, and the team is bowl eligible, JMU field hockey is 14-5 overall and 7-1 in the first season in MAC.

The President's Report will always conclude with future items. The following items are being considered for the next board meeting: NCAA scholarships and roster limits, name, image and likeness (NIL/Honors1), 2025 General Assembly update, and Capital Campaign.

### **FUTURE ENROLLMENT STRATEGY**

Melinda J. Wood, Vice President, Enrollment Management presented information on future enrollment strategy:

- Enrollment Cliff: directly connected to lower birthrates in 2008-2009, sharp trajectory of high school graduates peaking in 2025, slight projected decline in 2026 and beyond, slow, steady growth for JMU to meet enrollments goals.
- National Demographic Projections: declines across the U.S. between 2025-2035.
- Virginia Demographic Projections: JMU better positioned for enrollment opportunities, 12.5 growth (2015-2025), 7% decline (2025-2035), declines in Virginia are in central and southwest Virginia, growth in areas around northern Virginia, Richmond and beach areas.
- There is stability planned for Virginia.
- Goal to increase out of state student efforts: JMU has benefited from the migration of students from the northeast to the south.
- Future enrollment strategy: develop high school underclassman prospective student funnel, capitalize on brand awareness, campus visit programming (on campus and virtual), grow first-year applicant pool, identify and increase presence in new and emerging markets, expand transfer recruitment, and grow scholarships for recruitment.

### **WHY TEST-OPTIONAL ADMISSION**

Bob Kolvoord, Interim Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs, and Melinda J. Wood, Vice President, Enrollment Management, presented on Test-Optional Admission:

- History of admission standards: test optional policy adopted in 2018, JMU joined the Common Application in 2021.
- Advanced study diploma vs. JMU admission: every student must meet academic requirements.
- System of checks and balances: annual review of advanced studies diploma, extensive application reader training, utilize three years admission decisions by high schools.
- Measures of success: retention rates have remained above 89% for the past 30 years, graduation rates have fluctuated between 80-84% over the past 15+ years.

- JMU should remain test-optional: no evidence of change to academic success, proven methodology to identify students for admission, increase applications for first-generation, rural and Pell students, remain competitive for applications.

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 disposition of publicly held 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	James, Kay Coles
Bolander, Jeff	Obenshain, Suzanne, Rector
Caudle, Larry	Rexrode, David
Edwards, Terrie, Vice Rector	Stoltzfus, Michael
Eiland, Joanie	Thacker, Nikki
Galati, Tom	White, Jack

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

On motion from Terrie Edwards, seconded by Tom Galati, approved the Personnel Action Report.

On motion from Larry Caudle seconded by Dickie Bell, approved to direct the president to study the future of the university’s presidential home.

On motion from Terry Edwards, seconded by Larry Caudle, approved that the student representative to the Board of Visitors be given full voting rights at the appropriate time for selection of the new University president.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, on motion of Tom Galati, seconded by Jeff Bolander, 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