



**BOARD OF VISITORS
STRATEGIC TASK FORCE**

3:00 P.M.

AUGUST 15, 2018

**JEFFERSON HOTEL COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE ROOM
101 WEST FRANKLIN STREET, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**

MINUTES

DRAFT

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. H. Benson Dendy, Chair
Mr. William Ginther
Mr. John Luke, Jr.
Mr. Richard Wagoner
Ms. Karol Kain Gray, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
Dr. Gail Hackett, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Meredith Weiss, Vice President of Administration

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT

Mr. Keith Parker
Mr. Ed McCoy

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Ms. Phoebe Hall, rector

OTHERS PRESENT

Staff from VCU

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Benson Dendy called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Dendy asked for a motion to approve the agenda for the August 15, 2018 meeting of the Strategic Task Force Committee, as published. After motion duly made and seconded, the agenda for the Strategic Task Force Committee meeting was approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Dendy asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2018 meeting of the Strategic Task Force Committee, as published. After motion duly made and seconded the Minutes of the June 22, 2018 meeting were approved.

REPORTS

Mr. Dendy opened the meeting asking Ms. Lepley to present an update on Strategic Marketing Communications. Ms. Lepley presented “Telling the VCU Story” to the group which provided a brief overview of the University Relations organization of 80 staff members within VCU. Ms. Lepley reviewed her division’s mission statement which articulates and build on the VCU brand and support the university and its academic health center through strategic, creative and effective integrated communications. Mr. Wagoner inquired about other media staff members within the schools/units of VCU that are not part of University Relations. Ms. Lepley indicated that there are approximately 150 other positions within the University that support specific schools but they work very closely with University Relations to ensure consistent and clear messaging. Ms. Lepley is the Chief Communications Officer of the University and all University level announcements are handled by University Relations.

Ms. Lepley expanded on the Branding methodology explaining how it’s built and how it’s translated to tie to all of the University’s strategic priorities in executed communications. University Relations is focusing their efforts on data-driven marketing approaches. The data shows that VCU’s number one brand asset is the website which has recently been revised to become a better vehicle for admissions.

Ms. Lepley reviewed the media spend for FY18 which has a heavy concentration in digital media (71%) of which 20% is out of state (DC, NC, PA, NY, and MD). Mr. Dendy asked about newspaper advertising and how effective it’s been for recruitment purposes. Ms. Lepley explained that the majority of the newspaper advertising was done for VCU branding and identity and not directly related to admissions. Mr. Dendy asked if the effectiveness of the newspaper advertising could be measured/captured for evaluation of perhaps redirecting that budget to better recruitment media.

Ms. Lepley explained that there was no budget for a national advertising and therefore most of the efforts are on in-state student recruitment and a quality focus on national storytelling for social media and specific media “spots” within the school in an attempt to personalize VCU.

Mr. Dendy called on Dr. Meredith Weiss to present an update on public-private partnerships and facilities-related saving initiatives now underway at VCU.

Dr. Weiss presented the newly constructed Gladding Residence Center which was a public-private partnership constructing a 12-story, 1,524-bed dormitory on VCU’s Monroe Park Campus with a total project cost of \$96.1 million. The project was entirely funded with

developer's equity; developer owns the project for 50 years and ownership transfers to the university at no cost after year 50. The university worked with the developer to design the project specifically tailored to students' needs, with the university approving each phase of the project design. The University is investigating the possibility of future public-private partnerships for other areas on campus: West Hospital, Grace Street (Three Potential Projects), Franklin Street Properties, and North of Broad Project.

Dr. Weiss also shared the details on VCU's first energy performance contract totaling \$17.9 million and scheduled for completion in Spring 2019. The scope includes 12 buildings with guaranteed savings started in year 3 of \$1.3 million for 15 years. This project will enable VCU to reduce deferred maintenance by approximately \$12 million.

Dr. Weiss also reviewed new efforts in Physical Plant to streamline operations by adding a night shift including technicians to handle both emergencies and preventive maintenance to avoid overtime costs and staff down time. Physical Plant has implemented a robust asset management system and a central ordering system of procuring groups of products for distribution among their maintenance teams which should produce savings of approximately \$200,000/year.

Board members asked that these types of initiatives be tracked and presented at future board meetings to show efforts on reducing and reallocating budgets.

Mr. Dendy asked Dr. Hackett to provide an update on VCU enrollment. Dr. Hackett provided a 5-year history on enrollment numbers showing that enrollment has remained fairly flat for the last five years. Dr. Hackett explained that enrollment in the community colleges has dropped and therefore has impacted enrollment for transfer students. Dr. Hackett reviewed the long and short term strategies for the Student Enrollment Management team within her office with a continued focus on retention and graduation rates. A more robust summer school session is also being reviewed for implementation in school year 2019.

Several board members asked about efforts to attract new students with new courses and programs. Dr. Hackett shared the limitations implemented by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) specifically relating the recently rejected Ph.D. program for pharmaceutical engineering. Dr. Hackett noted the extensive number of staff hours dedicated to these proposals and the great efforts to hopefully get each program approved.

Mr. Dendy then asked Ms. Gray to provide a brief update on the budget. Ms. Gray reported that the new budget model was fully implemented and the budget committee will recommend adjustments to the subvention to realign university resources. Ms. Gray indicated she will share the 3-year budget model at the board retreat on Friday, August 17, 2018.

Mr. Dendy thanked all presenters and asked for possible agenda items for the next meeting. Mr. Ginther offered the need to talk about key issues with measured set goals to support with the savings being realized with the new budget model. With the continued pressure on the cost of higher education there must be a strategic pathway to push forward and continue appropriate use

of resources. Ms. Hall spoke about the need for the board to have key issues identified so that the board can assist in developing a robust strategy to develop long term effectiveness. Mr. Dendy would like to have a detailed update on Development at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:31pm.