

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA 24450-0304

Board of Visitors Executive Committee September 10, 2024

Members present

John Adams '96
Teddy Gottwald '81
Kate Todd
Tom Watjen '76
Damon Williams '90

Others present

Maj. Gen. Cedric Wins '85
Col. Bill Wyatt
Patrick O'Leary '90

Other board members present

Conrad Garcia

John Adams called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. The meeting was held in the offices of McGuireWoods at 800 E. Canal St., Richmond, Va. pursuant to public notice. The board secretary, Col. Bill Wyatt, recorded the minutes. The meeting was streamed live and is archived at:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/7w1VpFnwBhY?si=IHxG4bXEQYzhhCNt>

Mr. Adams gave a brief overview of the meeting agenda and purpose. He discussed three key priorities for the board this year including: 1.) affordability of attending VMI, 2.) successful integration of the new commandant and Corps discipline and morale, and 3.) external marketing and communications.

Maj. Gen. Cedric Wins briefed the committee on a number of topics including matriculation, admissions and recruiting, attrition, his interactions with the Corps of Cadets, behavior of some cadets off post, the accreditation process, and the strategic plan. He told the Executive Committee that VMI exceeded its matriculation goal of 495 new cadets and attrition during Matriculation Week was lower than average. Maj. Gen. Wins has spoken to the Lexington mayor regarding cadets parking and house rentals in town. VMI and the city are looking forward to a closer partnership to help improve those situations.

Teddy Gottwald asked whether cadets still hold each other accountable for conduct outside of barracks. Maj. Gen. Wins said there is still a process for doing so. Gottwald also asked about the status of updates to VMI regulations to align with the new organizational structure as VMI begins the accreditation process. Maj. Gen. Wins said those updates are in progress.

Mr. Adams discussed a new standing committee of the Board of Visitors: the Cadet and Personnel Affairs Committee. The committee will have oversight of more than just the Institute's Inclusive Excellence efforts. Rather the committee will have oversight of the



health and well-being initiatives for cadets, faculty, and staff. A discussion of proposed bylaw changes ensued.

Tom Watjen expressed concern over the draft bylaw changes that were proposed to create the new committee. He said the bylaw language describing the Inclusive Excellence Committee expresses the board's commitment to and the principles adopted by the board in 2021 regarding diversity. Watjen believes removing this language from the bylaws is taking a step back.

Col. Wyatt explained how the board will use consent calendars at the full board meeting next week to approve non-controversial and procedural motions. Ideally, the consent calendars will free committee chairs to discuss more substantive matters during their committee reports.

Mr. Gottwald told the Executive Committee about a number of findings from a recent audit from the Auditor of Public Accounts. Maj. Gen. Wins said most of the findings have already been corrected.

Mr. Watjen made a motion to move the Executive Committee into closed session. The motion was seconded by Kate Todd. The motion passed unanimously. At 3 p.m., the Executive Committee moved into closed session to discuss the following topics:

- 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 evaluation of the Superintendent's performance and discussion of individual personnel matters.
- 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) (7), pertaining to actual or probable litigation of the Institute.
- 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 Executive Committee returned to open session at 3:49 p.m. A motion was made by Teddy Gottwald and seconded by Damon Williams to certify the closed session. A roll call vote of the members present was taken. All members present voted to certify the closed session.

At 3:51 p.m., Mr. Watjen made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Gottwald. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

