

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF VISITORS
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**

**Meeting of
Thursday, December 1, 2022
Merten Hall, Hazel Conference Room (1201)**

MINUTES

PRESENT: Rector Horace Blackman and Visitor Carolyn Moss.

ABSENT: Vice Rector Simmi Bhuller, Secretary Jon Peterson and Visitor Wendy Marquez.

ALSO, PRESENT: Visitors Reginald Brown, Lindsey Burke and Michael Meese; Erin Rogers, Staff Liaison; Sophia Nguyen, Undergraduate Student Representative, Ayondela McDole, Graduate Student Representative; Gregory Washington, President; Ken Walsh, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Chief of Staff; Mark Ginsberg, Provost and Executive Vice President; Anne Gentry, University Counsel and Sarah Hanbury, Secretary pro tem.

I. Call to Order

Rector Blackman called the meeting to order at 8:11 a.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

A. Executive Committee Meeting Minutes of September 29, 2022 (**ACTION ITEM**)

Due to the Executive Committee lacking a quorum, Rector Blackman suspended the vote on the Executive Committee meeting minutes of the September 29, 2022 until the next committee meeting.

III. Rector's Comments

Rector Blackman noted that in accordance with the updated Electronic Meeting Policy that passed in September, Visitor Kazmi requested to participate remotely due to a personal matter. Due to Visitor Kazmi's need to be in Bangladesh, Rector Blackman approved Visitor Kazmi's remote participation request. Rector Blackman informed the committee that when board members participate electronically roll call voting will take place and, in this instance, Visitor Kazmi's remote participation would affect the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee, the Development Committee as well as the Full Board.

IV. President's Comments

Dr. Washington noted he would reserve his comments for the full board session.

V. Closed Session

- A. Honorary Degrees and Special Awards (Code of VA: §2.2-3711.A.11)
- B. Public Contract (Code of VA: §2.2-3711.A.29)
- C. Consultation with Legal Counsel pertaining to actual or probable litigation (Code of VA: §2.2-3711.A.7)
- D. Consultation with Legal Counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice (Code of VA: §2.2-3711.A.8)

Rector Blackman suspended the closed session until the full board meeting.

VI. Adjournment

Rector Blackman adjourned the meeting at 8:13 a.m.

Prepared by:

Sarah Hanbury
Secretary pro tem

**BOARD OF VISITORS
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**

**Meeting of
Thursday, December 1, 2022
Merten Hall, Hazel Conference Room (1201)**

MINUTES

PRESENT: Rector Horace Blackman, Secretary Jon Peterson, Visitors Reginald Brown, Lindsey Burke, Anjan Chimaladinne, James Hazel, Juan Carlos Iturregui, Wendy Marquez, Michael Meese, Carolyn Moss, Dolly Oberoi, Nancy Prowitt, Robert Pence and Robert Witeck.

ABSENT: Vice Rector Simmi Bhuller and Visitor Mehmood Kazmi.

ALSO, PRESENT: Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Faculty Representative; Erin Rogers, Staff Liaison; Sophia Nguyen, Undergraduate Student Representative, Ayondela McDole, Graduate Student Representative; Gregory Washington, President; Ken Walsh, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Chief of Staff; Mark Ginsberg, Provost and Executive Vice President; Deb Dickenson, Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration; Anne Gentry, University Counsel and Sarah Hanbury, Secretary pro tem.

I. Call to Order

Rector Blackman called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m.

Rector Blackman stated that the board is accepting public comment at this session and that registration for making oral comments was open until 9:30 a.m. on Monday, November 28 through the form on the Board of Visitors website. No registrations for oral comments were received. Written public comments that were received will be made a part of the public record of this meeting. In addition, written comments will be accepted through the same form until the full board meeting adjourns this afternoon.

II. Approval of Minutes

A. Full Board Meeting on September 29, 2022 (ACTION ITEM)

Visitor Hazel **MOVED** that the board approve the Full Board Meeting Minutes for September 29, 2022. The motion was **SECONDED** by Secretary Peterson. Rector Blackman opened the floor for discussion. There was none. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE**

III. Rector's Report

A. SCHEV Orientation Attendance (ACTION ITEM)

Rector Blackman provided the following report:

- Reminded the board of the email that was sent to them noting they are required to file an annual financial disclosure through the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council's portal. The filing period to submit the financial disclosure through the portal is January 1 through February 1, 2023, covering the reporting cycle of January 1 through December 31, 2022.
- Reminded the board that the Executive Committee approved the continued use of the previous board self-evaluation survey during their meeting on September 29, 2022 as required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to develop a self-evaluation process. Rector Blackman informed the board that the survey would be sent on Tuesday, January 3, 2022 by Gesele Durham, Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness and Planning and that the survey is to be completed by Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. Rector Blackman noted that the survey results will be included in February's

meeting materials and will be discussed in open session during the full board meeting on Thursday, February 23, 2023.

- Rector Blackman noted that two student groups were recognized during the September 29, 2022 Meeting: The Black Student Body of Mason and Thursdays for Tomorrow. He continued to note that Dr. Washington, Visitor Marquez and himself committed to meeting with both student groups and additionally invited the BOV's student representatives, Sophia Nguyen and Ayondela McDole to attend. He informed the board that that reports regarding these meetings were provided in the meeting materials.
- Reminded the board of two upcoming events to RSVP for:
 - The Mathy House Holiday Reception hosted by Dr. Washington and Nicole Washington on Friday, December 9, 2022.
 - Winter Commencement on Thursday, December 15, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.
- The Rector concluded his report by addressing the topic of SCHEV Orientation attendance. He relayed that in accordance with the Virginia Code, new Board members are required to attend a SCHEV Orientation during the first two years of their service. If they are unable to comply, the matter is to be brought to the full Board. Visitor Oberoi was unavailable to attend the orientation last year and was deterred this year due to her health. Rector Blackman recommended that the Board find sufficient cause for Visitor Oberoi missing the October 2022 orientation with the understanding that she has made a commitment to attend the orientation in Fall 2023.

Visitor Meese **MOVED** that the board finds sufficient cause for Visitor Oberoi to attend SCHEV's Orientation next year. The motion was **SECONDED** by Secretary Peterson. Rector Blackman opened the floor for discussion. There was none. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE**

IV. President's Report

A. Strategic Plan (ACTION ITEM) (ATTACHMENT 1)

Dr. Washington provided the following highlights:

- Announced that Deb Dickenson has been named to the position of Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration and this new role becomes official this week.
- Over the last two years Mason has hired more than 360 faculty members. During the past year 185 faculty members have been hired. The cohort of 185 faculty members represents one of the most diverse groups that Mason has hired.
- Congratulated Ed Maibach, University Professor in the Department of Communication and the director of Mason's Center for Climate Change Communication for being elected to the National Academy of Medicine. Dr. Washington noted that this is a significant feat given that Mason does not have a medical school and that Dr. Maibach, does not formally work in the medical field.
- This past year Mason accepted the largest freshman class in the history of the institution. This took place after Mason graduated not only the largest graduating class of the university but in the state.
- Mason has five programs in the top 100 in the world in the latest Global Ranking of Academic Subjects, with the Antonin Scalia Law School leading the way at 28th worldwide, 17th in the United States, and 13th among U.S. public institutions.
- The strategic plan has been completed:
 - Within the strategic plan an initiative has been launched to evaluate West Campus development. Towards that end Mason has entered into a formal MoU to explore the development of a Joint Cricket Pitch/Baseball field to replace the current Baseball field, thereby bringing the possibility of Major League Cricket to the region.
 - Exploring other possible partnerships for West Campus development including the Washington Spirit (Practice Facility), the United States Tennis Association (Tennis and Pickleball) and the St. James (Tennis and Pickleball).
- Advancement updates:

- The university will seek approval from the Board during their February 23, 2023 meeting for the Center for the Arts to be named the Barry Dewberry and Arlene Evans Center for the Arts in recognition of their \$10 million pledge.
- Through a second transformational gift the Center for Government Contracting in the School of Business will now be known as the Greg and Camille Baroni Center for Government Contracting.
- Played the Patriot Pantry Challenge video (<https://youtu.be/j9pl6d7SB4w>) to help stock the Mason Patriot Pantry with 5,000 pounds of non-perishable food and hygiene items by February 2023.
- Introduced Ken Walsh, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Chief of Staff, to present the Strategic Plan.
 - A preview of the strategic plan was given during the President's Planning Conference on July 28, 2022.
 - The formal strategic plan document was provided in the board book as well as a physical copy at this meeting.
 - An overview of the work performed over the last year was given;
 - Input was received from a wide range of stakeholder groups to include but not limited to BOV members through focus groups, surveys to the university community and interviews. This input was processed by a working group that consisted of faculty and staff which was then shared broadly with a steering committee. The steering committee consisted of faculty, staff, students, alumni, outside representatives and the President's Innovation Advisory Council (PIAC).
 - Strategic Plan's Five Key Priorities:
 1. Mason Student Experience: Deliver a distinctive and inclusive student experience that fosters lifelong engagement.
 2. Research: Expand the impact of Mason's research, scholarship and creative enterprises.
 3. Partnerships: Expand partnerships for economic and social impact.
 4. DEI: Exemplify a university culture of diversity, equity and inclusion.
 5. Faculty and Staff: At the foundation of the plan is ensuring faculty and staff success.
 - Strategic Plan Timeline Overview:
 - The strategic plan spans five years from FY23 through FY27.
 - Across the five strategic plan priorities there are 15 strategies that expand to 66 actions and more than 200 tactics which the progress metrics will be measured against so simple progress metric dashboards will be available in real time on the website
 - During the next BOV meeting more detail will be provided regarding the progress metrics that were identified and the types of dashboarding that will be done within that.
 - A formal progress report will be provided at the Annual Planning Conference on July 27, 2023 with an update every December.

Visitor Prowitt **MOVED** to approve the Strategic Plan Resolution as it was provided in the meeting materials. The motion was **SECONDED** by Secretary Peterson. Rector Blackman opened the floor for discussion. There was none. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE**

V. Committee Reports

A. Finance and Land Use Committee

Visitor Moss briefed the board on the topics presented and discussed during the Finance and Land Use Committee meeting, which included three (3) action items that require full Board approval:

1. The Committee voted that the Board approve modification of the Activities Building project budget from \$3.75M to \$11M and increasing the size from 15,000 to 25,000 gross square feet. This temporary structure would house rehearsal space for the Green Machine, shared space for teaching, events and recreation, well-being and

other University Life activities. The expected lifespan is 15 years, which can be extended with diligent maintenance.

2. The Committee voted for the Board's approval to modify the Johnson Center HVAC Upgrade project budget in the University's Capital Plan. This includes replacement of four existing central station air handling units and associated smoke control systems, which are at the end of their useful life. The project was put on hold during the pandemic and this action increases the budget to \$6.52M from \$5.34M, reflective of COVID supply and escalation costs, as well as design changes from DEB.
3. The Committee voted for the Board's approval to modify the Fairfax Aquatic and Fitness Center project budget in the University's Capital Plan. Much of the building and its systems are original to the building which opened in 1997 and are at the end of their useful life. The project is currently in the schematic design phase and this request increases the budget from \$10M to \$14.4M, due to post-pandemic material inflation and delays.

Visitor Moss noted the following items would be moved en bloc at the end of the committee reports:

1. Capital Matters
 - a. Activities Building (**ACTION ITEM**)
 - b. Johnson Center HVAC Replacement Project (**ACTION ITEM**)
 - c. Aquatic Fitness Center Capital Renewal (**ACTION ITEM**)

3:40 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. B. Development Committee

Visitor Chimaladinne briefed the board on the topics presented and discussed during the Development Committee meeting, which included:

- Board of Trustees (BOT) - Michael E. Stievater, Foundation Chair
 - The fall board cycle concluded on October 27, 2022.
 - The BOT welcomed Fred Thompson Jr. as a new trustee and approved Nadeem Butler as Treasurer and Finance and Real Estate Committee Co-Chair.
- VP, Advancement and Alumni Relations – Ms. Trishana Bowden, Vice President, Advancement and Alumni Relations/President
 - Philanthropic revenue through November 30, 2022, is \$20.6 million.
 - The Office of Annual Giving has continued to put systems, processes, and programs in place this semester to achieve Dr. Washington's goal of a 10% participation rate of undergraduate alums by June 30, 2027.
 - Preparations continue for the launch of George Mason University's 1-billion-dollar campaign.
- Center for Health Workforce at Mason – Dr. Caroline Sutter, Assistant Professor, School of Nursing
 - The center's vision is "Each person, community, and region in Virginia has equitable access to an appropriate and well-trained health workforce."
 - Goals of the Center for Health Workforce are to:
 - Expand the Health Workforce to meet evolving community needs;
 - Improve the distribution of the Health Workforce to reduce shortages;
 - Enhance Health Care Quality through professional development, collaboration, and evidence-informed practice; and
 - Develop and Apply Data and Evidence to Strengthen the Health Workforce.

There were no action items from the committee to bring before the full board.

3:45 p.m. – 3:50 p.m. C. Research Committee

Visitor Prowitt briefed the board on the topics presented and discussed during the Development Committee meeting, which included:

- Dr. Andre Marshall, Vice President for Research, Innovation, and Economic Impact, provided an update on research activities.
- Professor Charles Chavis and Doctoral Candidate Ayondela McDole provided a presentation about the John Mitchell Jr. Program for History, Justice, and Race.

There were no action items from the committee to bring before the full board.

3:50 p.m. – 3:55 p.m. D. Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee

Visitor Oberoi briefed the board on the topics presented and discussed during the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee meeting, which included:

- They met with the Auditor of Public Accounts to discuss the initiation of their annual audit of the university's financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2022. In addition to their opinion on Mason's financial statements, the Auditor also plans to issue a separate Internal Controls and Compliance Report covering internal controls over financial reporting and to perform procedures to support the Single Audit of the Commonwealth's compliance with requirements applicable to Education Stabilization Funding programs. Work is expected to begin next month and be completed by May 2023.
- Mason's Chief Information Officer, Kevin Borek, provided the Committee with an overview of Mason's information technology environment. Like most universities, Mason operates in a distributed IT environment, although most administrative processing is centralized. The complexity of the environment continues to increase as Mason addresses changes in requirements, statutory obligations, and growth in volumes and offerings. There are a number of actions being taken to strengthen IT governance across the enterprise and to strengthen important processes for managing IT service delivery and related risks. Key processes include the information security compliance program; portfolio and project management; configuration and change management; and identity management and access control; among others. Management expects these actions, which will take multiple years to fully implement, will rely on sustained leadership to support cultural change to improve the long-term effectiveness, efficiency, and strategic alignment of Mason's technology.
- The Committee reviewed the annual report of approved waivers of contractual conflicts of interest and the audit and compliance status reports included in the meeting materials.
- Since the last meeting, the audit team has had a Senior Auditor candidate accept an offer to start on December 12, 2022. Together with the IT audit position filled this summer, this will bring the audit team to five professionals. The audit team continues to make satisfactory use of co-sourced professionals to accomplish audit work.

There were no action items from the committee to bring before the full board.

3:50 p.m. – 3:55 p.m. D. Academic Programs, Diversity and University Community Committee

Visitor Moss briefed the board on the topics presented and discussed during the Academic Programs, Diversity and University Community Committee meeting, which included:

- Provost Mark Ginsberg provided a preview of Winter Graduation, Spring Semester registration and an overview of other important dates. He shared an update on the newly approved by SCHEV, the College of Public Health and faculty who have received promotion and tenure, as well as a preview of faculty the Board will vote on for tenure and emeritus status. He also provided an update on the expansion of classes in the spring and beyond at the Mason Square campus. He also highlighted Mason faculty and staff with service milestones, faculty honors, and provided remarks in memory of Rebecca Hartley who passed away recently and had served as Director, Export Compliance and Secure Research as well as a Volunteer Assistant Track and Field Coach.

- Juliet Blank-Godlove, Dean of Students of University Life, and Lauren Long, Executive Director of Student Involvement provided an overview of co-curricular student engagement. They provided data on how much engagement has grown over the last four academic years through the number of registered student organizations, event attendance, diversity and career-readiness.
- Fernando R. Miralles-Wilhelm, Dean of the College of Science, provided a review of the college's academic programs and an outline of the college's core strengths which included services to students, pursuing research in areas of societal consequence, and a move toward access, equity, diversity and inclusion as well as community engagement. He also described the college's ongoing strategic planning efforts as well as areas of potential future growth.

Visitor Moss noted the following items would be moved en bloc at the end of the committee reports:

1. Program Actions
 - a. Closed Degree Program
 - i. Health and Medical Policy, MS (**ACTION ITEM**)
2. Faculty Actions
 - a. Elections of New Tenured Faculty (**ACTION ITEM**)
 - b. Conferral of Emeritus/Emerita Status (**ACTION ITEM**)

Secretary Peterson **MOVED** to approve the following six (6) action items, en bloc, as they were provided in the meeting materials:

1. Activities Building (Finance & Land Use)
2. Johnson Center HVAC Replacement Project (Finance & Land Use)
3. Aquatic Fitness Center Capital Renewal (Finance & Land Use)
4. Closed Degree: Health and Medical Policy, MS (APDUC)
5. Faculty Action: Elections of New Tenured Faculty (APDUC)
6. Faculty Action: Conferral of Emeritus/Emerita Status (APDUC)

The motion was **SECONDED** by Visitor Moss. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE**

VI. Closed Session

- A. Honorary Degrees and Special Awards (Code of VA: §2.2-3711.A.11)
- B. Public Contract (Code of VA: §2.2-3711.A.29)
- C. Consultation with Legal Counsel pertaining to actual or probable litigation (Code of VA: §2.2-3711.A.7)
- D. Consultation with Legal Counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice (Code of VA: §2.2-3711.A.8)

Secretary Peterson **MOVED** that the board go into Closed Session under the provisions of Section 2.2-3711.A.1, for Honorary Degrees and Special Awards; Section 2.2-3711.A.29, to discuss a Public Contract related to the Arlington Initiative; Section 2.2-3711.A.7, for Consultation with legal counsel pertaining to actual or probable litigation including briefings on:

- Agrawal v. GMU
- Amison v. GMU
- Auerswald v. GMU
- Ganley and Surber v. GMU et al.
- Jeong v. GMU
- Kashdan v. GMU
- Kinuani v. GMU

Mahmud v GMU
Morrison v. GMU et al.
Rourke v. Rowan et al.

and Section 2.2-3711.A.8 for Consultation with Legal Counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice concerning the aforementioned items. The motion was **SECONDED** by Visitor Hazel. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Following closed session, Secretary Peterson **MOVED** that the board go back into public session and further moved that by roll call vote the board affirm that only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements under the Freedom of Information Act were heard, discussed or considered in the closed meeting, and that only such business matters that were identified in the motion to go into a closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered in the closed meeting. Any member of the board who believes that there was a departure from the requirements as stated, shall so state prior to taking the roll call, indicating the substance of the departure that, in his or her judgment, has taken place. **ALL PRESENT BOARD MEMBERS RESPONDED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE BY ROLL CALL.**

Secretary Peterson **MOVED** that the board approve the awarding of honorary degrees at a future date to the individuals discussed in closed session for that purpose. The motion was **SECONDED** by Visitor Moss. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE**

VII. Public Comments

No registrations for oral or written public comments were received.

VIII. Adjournment

Rector Blackman expressed that Mason's thoughts and condolences are with The University of Virginia (UVA) for the tragic shooting that recently occurred. Rector Blackman called for any further business to come before the board. Hearing none, he adjourned the meeting at 3:37 p.m.

Prepared by:

Sarah Hanbury
Secretary pro tem

Attachment 1: Strategic Plan Resolution (1 page)

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF VISITORS
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**

WHEREAS the Board of Visitors held a Planning Conference on July 28, 2022, to discuss the strategic direction of the University; and

WHEREAS the University community has been engaged in discussions toward the development of a new strategic plan for the preceding year, with input from a wide range of internal and external stakeholders via interviews, focus groups, town hall meetings, and survey,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF VISITORS OF GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY that the university-wide Strategic Plan presented by the President of the University, which was crafted in collaboration with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and key internal and external stakeholders, and in alignment with existing policies and frameworks in the Commonwealth of Virginia, is adopted,

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President is charged implementing the university-wide strategic plan, titled "2022 Strategic Direction,"

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President is charged with producing regular updates to the Board of Visitors and the university community on progress against the 2022 Strategic Direction including both qualitative descriptions and quantitative performance metrics.

Adopted: December 1, 2022



Jon M. Peterson
Secretary of the Board of Visitors