



# WILLIAM & MARY

CHARTERED 1693

BOARD OF VISITORS RETREAT  
ELECTRONIC MEETING  
AUGUST 3, 2020  
1:00 P.M.

## MINUTES

### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY**

Mr. John E. Littel, Rector  
Mr. William H. Payne II, Vice Rector  
Ms. Barbara L. Johnson, Secretary  
Hon. Mari Carmen Aponte  
Mr. Mirza Baig  
Mr. Victor K. Branch  
Mr. S. Douglas Bunch  
Ms. Sue H. Gerdelman  
Mr. James A. Hixon

Ms. Cynthia E. Hudson  
Ms. Anne Leigh Kerr  
Hon. Charles E. Poston  
Ms. Lisa E. Roday  
Mr. J.E. Lincoln Saunders  
Ms. Karen Shultz Kennedy  
Mr. H. Thomas Watkins III  
Mr. Brian P. Woolfolk

### **OTHERS PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY**

President Katherine A. Rowe  
Ms. Peggy Agouris, Provost  
Dr. Warren W. Buck III, Chair of the Principles for Naming and Renaming Working Group (presenter)  
Ms. Christy S. Coleman, Executive Director of the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation (presenter)  
Ms. Carla Moreland, President of the Alumni Association  
Ms. Carrie Nee, University Counsel  
Ms. Amy Sebring, Chief Operations Officer  
Mr. Michael J. Fox, Secretary to the Board of Visitors  
Ms. Jessica L. Walton, Deputy Secretary to the Board of Visitors  
Members of the President's Cabinet  
Staff Liaison  
W&M students, faculty and staff, and members of the public via YouTube livestream

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. John E. Littel, Rector called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. The Rector welcomed Carla Moreland, President of the Alumni Association. He also recognized speakers Christy Coleman, Executive Director for the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, and former BOV member Dr. Warren Buck, chair of the Principles for Naming and Renaming Working Group and Special Advisor to the President for Equity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The Rector also recognized guests of Mr. Will Payne, Vice Rector, watching on the YouTube link, George Monroe Jr. and Jennifer Stacy, members of Highland's Descendant Advisory Panel.

The meeting was held in accordance with Item 4-0.01.g of the 2020 Appropriation Act, which provides governing boards with the ability to hold meetings electronically without a quorum present while the Commonwealth is under a State of Emergency.

#### **FALL RE-OPENING UPDATE**

President Katherine A. Rowe noted that since there is another Board meeting later in the month, she would keep her update brief to allow the invited speakers more time.

President Rowe announced that due to the track of Hurricane Isaias the EMT and Provost have decided to close campus August 4.

Providing an update on fall reopening, she said an announcement was sent Friday, July 31 adjusting the pace of return to campus to a lower density while watching the ongoing trends in the public health environment. Adjustments will continue to be made based on the public health environment.

President Rowe announced there would be a Town Hall focused on reopening Wednesday, August 5. Town Hall goals: (1) planning for fall and how decisions will be made; (2) how public health data is being used; (3) what are testing protocols at present; and (4) what are rules regarding masks and social distancing on and off campus.

She then gave a brief update on the Memorial to the Enslaved. The design is almost finalized. There have been multiple site walks recently and the construction work will be visible this fall to those on campus. The President anticipates a final design in early September. Fundraising is also expected to be completed this fall. She will have additional information at the next Board meeting.

The President shared the university is moving forward as planned with new faculty hiring guidelines. Diversifying faculty and expanding inclusion in the classroom are top priorities.

#### **“RESEARCH, TEACHING, AND NARRATIVE CORRECTION”**

Ms. Christy S. Coleman, Executive Director of the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, began by discussing the power of narrative and how it impacts communities; putting forward curated content on the public landscape designed to put forth a particular narrative, that is deliberately exclusive, is harmful.

Ms. Coleman stated there is the conventional wisdom if we don't know our history, we are doomed to repeat it. She said the real issue is that we do not know much history at all. Instead there is a confluence between history, heritage, and culture which is different. This develops more nostalgia building versus historical understanding.

History is documentable. History is the study of us right now, it is always evolving. History doesn't change but the questions that are asked of a certain time are. Memory is entirely different. It is the interaction had with a person or place. Memory is often flawed and singular.

Viewing history from a single point of view is the mistake that we, as a nation have continued to make. There needs to be a collective heritage. There needs to be a way to build community based on the voices of varying players in that historical past.

Ms. Coleman said that with the partnership and work of William & Mary, it is her desire to help accelerate the process of how information goes from scholarship to the public. She said there is a need to take a far less conservative (fast or slow) approach to help William & Mary become less risk averse, be a community resource on divisive issues that also have the capability to pull people together. Such issues can force the finding of a common humanity and empathy, and force us to recognize that if you say something you have to mean it and you have to act.

There has been significant work done under the Lemon Project over the last decade that has unveiled key historical facts and records around the university. This work is also impacting the city of Williamsburg and its residents. With the partnerships available it is important to create and correct the narrative we share so we can move forward together. While it may be uncomfortable, we will not be right with each other until we get the history right.

A discussion ensued between Ms. Coleman and the Board.

Ms. Coleman further said identifying the research work William & Mary is undertaking regarding understanding African American and indigenous communities that were brought to campus over time is important. It is critical how it is disseminated to campus and shared with the community. People should feel like a partner not a guest. You want to see and hear what the community is asking and see the impact of the work or the lack thereof. Relationships and partnerships are key to the success.

Ms. Coleman concluded her time with another brief discussion with the Board.

#### **PRINCIPLES OF NAMING AND RENAMING**

Dr. Warren W. Buck III, Chair of the Principles for Naming and Renaming (“PNR”) Working Group, reported on the activities and findings to date of PNR. PNR had its first meeting on June 30 and met 17 hours to date; not including email exchanges and six Listening Sessions conducted with students, faculty and staff, and alumni. PNR also has a webpage that contains a comment section for members of the William & Mary community and the public to provide input on the charges assigned to PNR. Dr. Buck highlighted several comments ranging from change all names to change no names.

PNR has deliberated with all comments in mind and thus far arrived at the following three mission imperatives: (1) the campus landscape should teach; (2) the campus landscape should affirm and bear witness to complexity; and (3) the campus landscape should promote fearless and level-headed self-examination of the history and present state of the university.

President Rowe shared the current timeline of PNR with the Board. After review with President Rowe, PNR recommends draft Mission Imperatives now and draft principles for community feedback in mid-August. Based on feedback, principles will then be presented to the President who will in turn bring them to the Board. In addition to the principles, PNR will present a short list of suggested buildings and/or spaces to be initially considered for renaming, and a Land Acknowledgement which formalizes

and acknowledges those that inhabited the land where William & Mary was built. The university is working with Tribal leaders to ensure the language is correct for the Acknowledgement.

President Rowe presented the three Mission Imperatives to the Board suggesting they be incorporated into the work of the Board's committee on Administration, Buildings and Grounds, and the Design Review Board.

A discussion ensued, led by the Rector. The Board ultimately decided not to adopt the Mission Imperatives but allow additional time to review what was presented and take under consideration at the next Board meeting.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

Mr. Littel brought forth **Resolution 1: Revisions to the Bylaws of the Board of Visitors** for consideration by the Board. He noted that there were four additional amendments added from the redline version of the Bylaws provided to the Board on July 2. Three are technical and the fourth is a substantive change to Article V, section V.A.1 that would permit the Rector to appoint a larger Executive Committee.

The Rector requested a motion to move the amendments as a block, Mr. Watkins so moved, and Ms. Aponte seconded. The Rector asked for any discussion. Ms. Kerr suggested the change to Article V, section V.A.1. be removed and explained her reasons for opposing. The Rector then reviewed his arguments for the draft amendment. Further discussion ensued to include a sunset provision of one year. The Rector then requested a substitute motion to move the amendment to Article V, section V.A.1., Mr. Hixon so moved, and Ms. Aponte seconded. The amendment was approved by roll call vote conducted by Mr. Fox, Secretary to the Board of Visitors, by a vote of 12-4. Mr. Baig, Ms. Kerr, Mr. Saunders, and Mr. Woolfolk opposed the motion. Ms. Hudson was absent.

The Rector requested a motion to move the three remaining technical amendments. Ms. Johnson so moved, and Ms. Roday seconded. The amendments were approved by roll call vote conducted by Mr. Fox.

Hearing no further discussion, the adoption of Resolution 1, as amended, was moved by Mr. Hixon. Motion was seconded by Ms. Schultz and adopted by roll call vote conducted by Mr. Fox.

Mr. Littel brought forth **Resolution 2: Corporate Resolution to Transact Business and Confirm Authorized Business Agents for William & Mary**. Mr. Watkins moved adoption of Resolution 2. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hixon and approved by roll call vote conducted by Mr. Fox.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

Ms. Johnson moved the William & Mary Board of Visitors convene into closed session pursuant to Va. Code §2.2-3711.A.1 for discussion of the following: assignment, appointment, performance and salaries of specific officers or employees, including the President and Executive Leadership Team; and the performance of schools and departments where the discussion will necessarily involve evaluation of the performance of specific individuals; and Va. Code §2.2-3711.A.8 for consultation with legal

counsel regarding specific personnel and compliance matters requiring legal advice. Motion was seconded by Ms. Schultz and approved by roll call vote conducted by Mr. Fox

The Board members and multiple members of the ELT entered the closed session at 3:52 p.m.

#### **RECONVENED SESSION**

Following the closed session, Board members and ELT members returned to the open session at 4:18 p.m. Ms. Johnson moved that the Board certify by roll call vote that, to the best of each member's knowledge, only matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements under the Freedom of Information Act were discussed, and only matters identified in the motion to have the closed session were discussed. Motion was seconded by Mr. Payne and approved by roll call vote conducted by Mr. Fox.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Littel confirmed there will be a Board meeting on August 25, with a possible Richard Bland Committee meeting that morning. He reminded the Board of the regularly scheduled Board meeting on September 24-25.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Rector Littel adjourned the meeting at 4:21 p.m.

August 3, 2020

### **CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED SESSION**

WHEREAS, the Board of Visitors of William & Mary has convened a closed session on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, §2.2-3712.D. of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this Board of Visitors that such closed session was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Visitors, reconvening in open session, hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed session to which this certification applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed session were heard, discussed or considered by the Board of Visitors.

#### **VOTE**

AYES:       **17**

NAYS:       **0**

ABSENT DURING CLOSED SESSION:   **0**

  
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John E. Littel  
Rector