

Report from Board of Visitors Meeting, September 10, 2021
Lee Millar Bidwell, Faculty Representative to the BOV

The Board of Visitors met in Radcliff Hall, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on September 10, 2021.

- Click [here](#) for the meeting agenda
- Click [here](#) for a list of the 2021-2022 Board members. Note the changes in membership from the previous two years
 - The Rector of the Board is Ms. Pia Trigiani;
 - Mr. Hansen and Ms. Margiloff rotated off the Board this year;
 - Mr. Hallock withdrew from the Board although his name still appears on the web site;
 - Ms. Elia Fabiola “Fabi” Carter and Mr. Shawn Smith are new to the Board this year
- Click [here](#) for the complete Board materials. Note my written report to the Board was mistakenly included in the Consent Agenda, and is found on pages 32-33 of the materials

Rector’s Welcome and Consent Agenda

- Rector Trigiani opened the meeting by asking for a moment of remembrance for the victims of the 9-11 attacks. She welcomed and introduced new members of the Board and commented on how nice it was to have convocation in person.
- The Rector asked that I specifically convey to you, the faculty, the Board’s appreciation for your hard work and how impressed they are with all we do.
- [Minutes of the June 11, 2021](#) meeting were approved.
- The Rector asked for a motion, which was made and approved, to remove the Foundation operating agreement (MOU) [pages 16-21 of the Board materials] out of the Consent Agenda for discussion later in the meeting.
- The Consent Agenda was approved. I urge you to note the following items in the Consent Agenda:
 - A resolution honoring Dr. Carolyn Wells and naming the atrium in Allen Hall in her honor;
 - The LU Athletics Name, Image, & Likeness Policy
 - The 2021 Six-Year Plan to be submitted to the state

President’s Report

- The President stated that this was the first time the BOV had met together on campus since December 2019, noted the 20th anniversary of 9-11, and commented on the pleasant convocation of the previous day.
- The President’s remarks were essentially the same as those he delivered at the opening faculty meeting. He pointed out that the strengths of the university are being a public institution in Virginia, the beauty of the campus grounds, the strong endowment, and the camaraderie of the campus community. The challenges facing Longwood are the unpredictability of COVID-19 and the economy, loss of prestige of higher education

across the country, and drop in birth rates. He said that despite these challenges, he is as “optimistic as ever” about the future of Longwood.

Reports from Representatives to the Board

- *Provost Smith* explained the SACSCOC reaffirmation and QEP process and timeline to the Board. She pointed out that Section 4 of the SACSCOC Standards specifically address actions of the Board of Visitors and that some of the work they did at their June meeting were designed to meet those requirements. Rector Trigiani asked if there were any particular areas of concern. Provost Smith replied that the two most often cited issues by SACSCOC are Faculty Credentials and Section 8 on Academic and Administrative Program Review. However, the University has processes in place to ensure we can document compliance with those standards.
- *Athletics Director Michelle Meadows* described the history of the Name, Image, and Likeness issue to the Board and said that the policy that they approved in the Consent Agenda is based on the August 2021 temporary policy adopted in the Commonwealth. The policy supports athletes’ ability to earn remuneration for their name, image, and likeness; prohibits pay-for-play; does not allow athletes to use institutional marks or facilities; and requires athletes to conform to institutional values. Ms. Meadows said that Longwood is working to educate students to protect them from being taken advantage by those with “nefarious” intent. Other issues on the horizon with the NCAA include their Constitutional Convention coming up this winter and Gender Equity Review. She invited everyone to visit Willet to see the redesigned floor of the basketball court and student entrance to the building on the Moss/Johns side that took place this summer. Nov. 19-21 Longwood is hosting a multi-team event that will include American University, UMBC, and Western Carolina.
- The Rector invited questions from Board members to the other Vice Presidents. Ms. Raible asked *Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. Tim Pierson*, how student move-in went this fall. He replied that move-in went very smoothly. Students are excited to be on campus. There was excellent turn-out for the Big Game and Student Involvement Fair.
- *Vice President for Strategic Operations, Ms. Victoria Kindon* said that her area partnered with the Dean Byrne to create online modules titled “5 Things Every Lancer Needs to Know” that incoming and transfer students took over the summer; this program was designed to address some of the specific needs of students returning to in-person learning after almost 18 months of virtual education. They are tracking success outcomes from this endeavor. Rector Trigiani commented that it would be valuable to create a “5 Things Every Lancer Alumni Should Know” module that emphasized personal well-being and citizen leadership.
- President Reveley asked *Chief of Staff Justin Pope* to update the Board about COVID-19 efforts. Mr. Pope noted that in the last 10 days cases of COVID-19 had been identified in mostly vaccinated students who showed mild or no symptoms; they only were tested for the virus following contact exposure. He said this suggests that the vaccines are working well. Fewer students are in quarantine because generally vaccinated students who have been exposed do not need to do so after minimal contact exposure. Dr. Pierson noted

there is a comprehensive campus effort to address COVID-19, prevent spread, and allow campus life to remain as normal as possible. He noted that the students have been extremely cooperative. The Board complimented the leadership on their collaborative, thorough plans.

- *Vice President for Administration and Finance Ms. Louise Waller* updated the Board on the progress of the [Joan Perry Brock Center](#) construction, which is scheduled to open Summer 2023. The timing of the completion of the project coincides well with beginning the Wygal Replacement. Skanska Construction Company also was awarded the Wygal Replacement contract so after they complete the Brock Center, they will begin the Wygal project in early 2024. Ms. Waller said she is optimistic that money for construction for the Wygal Replacement will be awarded to Longwood in the next legislative session.
- (Note that *Courtney Hodges, Vice President of Advancement*, was unable to attend the meeting as her mother was ill.)
- *SGA President Anne Patterson* delivered a thorough, excellent, well-articulated report. She thanked the Board for the previous day's Convocation ceremony and said students feel a sense of hope. She said that students have been presented with many unanticipated challenges since March 2020. Being sent home was difficult, as was adapting to virtual/hyflex/hybrid instruction. Last year's incoming class was not able to experience many of the important Longwood traditions. However, last year efforts were made to make campus life as normal as possible. Lancer Productions and the Student Engagement Center were helpful in planning fun, socially-distant, safe activities. The firepits on campus were particularly valuable. This year SGA is planning to facilitate major nights to allow students from the same disciplines to gather to study. They also are very interested in addressing issues of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The Clark House Intercultural Center is a valuable place for students to gather and engage in activities that promote DEI. Overall, students are concerned about the general chaos in the world, which sometimes seems overwhelming. However, Longwood University helps them grapple with these issues. She said that Civitae is particularly valuable in helping students process weighty social issues and motivates students to address issues after they leave campus. SGA is planning a movie night on the lawn, conducting elections for first-year student representatives, and bringing in representatives from various offices on campus to make students aware of the many resources available.
- Rector Trigiani volunteered Board members to meet with the SGA and said she wants Board members to be on campus more.
- In my remarks to the Board as *Faculty Representative*, I said that as this academic year begins faculty are feeling excited, grateful, and concerned. Faculty are excited to be back in classrooms, labs, and studios fully in person. Our freedom to resume the engaging, creative pedagogy that is the hallmark of a Longwood education has been restored. I noted that while students experienced some deficits in their education due to the pandemic, it is important to note the ways that they have grown as well. I pointed out that in a discussion with my CTZN 110 students last week that they said that as a result of the pandemic disruptions they feel they are better problem solvers, more independent learners, have more perseverance, are more confident, communicate with faculty more,

and are more appreciative of being in school. We are excited to capitalize on our students' strengths. We are grateful that our salaries were restored and raises were given and acknowledged that this was possible through much collective effort across campus. Finally, I noted that faculty are concerned about low enrollment and the overall financial health of the University. I said that we acknowledge the importance of state financial support as discussed by President Reveley. However, we also are anxious about the possibility of a reduction in state support combined with low undergraduate enrollment. I noted that in the Six-Year Plan approved in the Consent Agenda that Longwood projects "a modest decline in undergraduate enrollment over the next few years," further fueling our concern. I said that the remarkable work that faculty did over the summer, as highlighted in my written report, indicates our commitment to this institution. I thanked the Board for their leadership and said we are here to work in partnership with them to continue to make Longwood a leader in higher education in Virginia.

- Rector Trigiani said she understands our concerns and wants the faculty to know that the Board is closely monitoring the overall financial well-being of the institution and that they are not "wearing rose colored glasses."
- On behalf of the *Foundation Board* Mr. Wertz asked for a motion to approve the MOU that was set aside in the Consent Agenda. He noted the revisions to the MOU and said they are designed to "reinvigorate the relationship between the Foundation Board and the BOV" and facilitate better partnership, communication, and collaboration. The Board approved the MOU. Also noted in the report is that the University endowment grew from \$94 million in June to \$97 million as of this day. They have seen a 9.2% growth in Foundation funds over a 10-year period, compared to an 8% benchmark expectation at most universities. A published report highlighting donors and the value of their gifts in awarding \$2.3 million in scholarship dollars was distributed. Currently a search is underway for a permanent Executive Director of the Foundation.
- Representing the *Real Estate Foundation*, Mr. Daniel described the history of the Hull Springs Farm and the value of the property to student learning. A new laboratory facility on site will open soon. The Real Estate Foundation wants to better publicize Hull Springs Farm and its commitment to students and environmental science. He asked the Board to approve a resolution to rename the property the Gerald L. Baliles Center for Environmental Education at Hull Springs Farm. Governor Baliles was dedicated to Southside Virginia and conservation of the Chesapeake Bay; his family has visited the property and enthusiastically endorses the proposal. The resolution was adopted with unanimous support.
- The Rector noted that this is "The Year of Joan [of Arc]" and distributed silver tokens with an image of Joan on one side and the following inscription on the other: *St. Joan of Arc, give me the courage and the fortitude to defeat my fears, and give me the strength to fight for what I believe in...*
- The Rector noted that this spring marks 50 years since Board Member Cookie Scott, Longwood's first Black alum, graduated.
- The meeting adjourned at 12:38 p.m.