

**West Liberty University  
Board of Governors**

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**Minutes  
October 13, 2021**

Attendance:

Jack Adams, Michael Baker, Arlene Brantley, Richard Carter, Thomas Cervone, Jamie Evick, Ryan Glanville, Rich Lucas, David McKinley, Jason Metz, Stephanie Shaw

Unable to Attend:

MacKenzi Jones

Administration/Faculty/Staff:

Scott Cook, Mary Ann Edwards, W. Franklin Evans, Diana Harto, Angie Hill, Lori Hudson, Aliah Keller, Jason Koegler, Annalise Murphy, Alan Olson, Joe Rodella, Sean Ryan, Shemrico Stanley, Bonnie Suderman, Lynne Ullom, Chris Wade, Maureen Zambito

**I. Call to Order/Roll Call/Quorum and Mission Statement**

Chair Lucas called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. and a quorum was established.

**II. Introductions**

**A. Introduction of New Board Member – Thomas Cervone**

Dr. Evans introduced new Board member Thomas Cervone, a West Liberty State College alumna. Mr. Cervone hails from Knoxville, TN and is a member of WLU's Wall of Honor.

**B. CMTA Presentation – Chris Wade**

Mr. Wade gave a brief overview of the company, the work they have done in the past few years, and success stories. CMTA is one of the top 25 engineering firms in the nation, creating one of the first "Net Zero" schools in WV. They renovated Arnett Hall in 2019, corrected domestic water leaks in 2020, and LED lighting and HVAC in Main Hall this past summer, which finished ahead of schedule. Boilers were replaced with new high efficiency condensing boilers and new classroom lighting and increased ventilation in Main Hall. Utility data shows a 13% energy reduction campus-wide, which translates into about \$169,000 in annual utility savings. There was a 71% reduction in campus water usage, which resulted in about \$439,000 in savings annually. As a guaranteed energy savings contractor, the debt service is satisfied by savings. WLU is on track to about double what was guaranteed in savings.

**III. Public Comment**

None.

**IV. Agenda Order**

No change to the agenda order.

**V. Approval of Minutes\***

**A. Minutes of the Full Board August 18, 2021\***

On motion by Richard Carter and seconded by Michael Baker, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to approve the minutes of the full Board of August 18, 2021.

**B. Minutes of the Executive Committee September 29, 2021\***

On motion by Jack Adams and seconded by Stephanie Shaw, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to approve the minutes of the Executive Committee of September 29, 2021.

**VI. Board Items\***

None.

\*Action Items

## **VII. President's Report**

Dr. Evans noted the Strategic Priorities:

- Academic Success
- Branding
- Community Engagement
- Operational Excellence
- Student Experience

Additional information:

- Fall Convocation was a positive move
- Renovations to the weight room in the ASRC are complete and can be viewed at homecoming festivities
- Phase III of Topper Village is complete and will be turned over to WLU
- The Athletic Hall of Fame was held October 8<sup>th</sup> with eight inductees
- A malware system has been installed through the IT Department with 24/7 monitoring
- The HVAC upgrade to Main Hall has been completed
- The University endowment has grown to well over \$23 million, and fall 2021 giving has surpassed last fall
- WLU's fleet vehicles now have consistent branding

Other items of interest:

- 500 Student athletes are currently enrolled this semester
- Although reports from the Chronical of Higher Education show a decline in fall and spring enrollments, WLU's fall did decrease, but reported an increase in spring enrollment
- With regard to COVID, 86% of employees are vaccinated and 56% of students, with surveillance testing being held every Tuesday
- The Main Hall roof is expected to cost \$820,000. Monies will come from the Foundation, HEERF, and CARES Act dollars
- Homecoming week WLU will be hosting Fairmont State and other events planned for the weekend, including a virtual alumni meeting

## **VIII. Reports**

### **A. Interim Provost (Suderman)**

Dr. Suderman noted that in the area of faculty and academic affairs, there have been some large ideas and discussions going on in the last few weeks. The number one priority in Academic Affairs has and always will be the education of WLU's students and the creation for new opportunities for them to succeed. The mid-term portion of the semester has passed, and we are in the process of getting mid-term grades in, along with several other major processes to keep Academic Affairs up and running.

In the last month or so there has been the catalog creation, creation of the new spring semester schedule to be rolled out, and students starting to register. It also includes the beginning of the promotion and tenure process for faculty. Each process is a massive project in Academic Affairs and not going completely smoothly. Dr. Suderman will take each one of these tasks to the end and do a "no fault autopsy;" what did and did not work well, in order to be fixed for the next time. The goal is that when the new Provost comes in permanently, they would have these major projects with due dates, what's due when, and issues that may have been a problem for some time corrected. They will not have to spend time on those processes and enable them to concentrate on growing programs.

With regard to accomplishments, the Education Department has received a Youth Literacy Grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation for \$4,000. The connected classrooms have expanded greatly with 42 registrants, people from other K-12 School districts getting professional development. We will be restarting our kids on campus program, with the first group coming back on campus this Friday. The Business Program is expanding internships for students, and the dean in that area is working to start a fast-track possibility, connecting with a bachelors from Pittsburgh Tech to our MBA program. The Science Program has just presented their intent to

plan a new Data Sciences degree program that will be far more math based than the program through the College of Business. This is an area that is just dying for good students to come out of these programs. We would be one of the few in the area to have the program and it would be a great opportunity for our students. A brief discussion followed regarding the class schedule and courses that are offered each semester.

**B. Enrollment (Cook)**

Mr. Cook gave an enrollment update, noting that enrollment is down this fall. We knew this was going to occur with applications down last December. We are getting ready to submit the final data file to the HEPC. The information in the packet gives a comparison going back to 2016. COVID has really hurt us; we can't get into high schools, no college fairs are being held, no campus visits, etc. There are a total of 10 student types but listed are the four largest groups. This is a five-year perspective on where WLU is and has been. Admissions has been holding on-campus events since July 2021, purchased data, and done cold leads. A brief discussion followed regarding headcount numbers provided for the budget process. Also discussed was the online/virtual offset. Last year there was a virtual option for courses, and it was a benefit to students. This year it is not an option for all our courses.

**C. Staff (Granville)**

Mr. Granville stated that Staff Council met in September as a meet and greet with refreshments served. Fundraisers were discussed, along with a Terrific Topper Award with the hope it would be a peer-to-peer recognition. There would be a submission process, a certificate awarded, campus-wide recognition, culminating with a prize or drawing. Dr. Evans countered with some suggestions, which would be to hold a monthly recognition and have peers nominate and select someone. Council is on the right page and hope to work out something to look forward to in the future.

**D. Faculty (Metz)**

Dr. Metz stated he is sharing the responses for the vote by faculty on a vaccine mandate. 125 out of 145 faculty voted, with 86% in favor of a mandate, which is a very large response rate.

Faculty also conducted a vote on the plagiarism issue. Four questions were asked with an overall response rate of 66%.

- Do you think that President Evans' leadership has been compromised due to issues of plagiarism?  
86% Yes / 14% No
- Do you think these issues can be solved through punitive action from the BOG?  
45% Yes / 55% No
- If voting today, would you vote "no confidence" in the President's leadership?  
73% Yes / 27% No
- Which of the following options best represents your current view?
  - No confidence; should resign – 60.0%
  - BOG should take punitive action – 18.9%
  - President & BOG should handle alone – 11.6%
  - Abstain from commenting – 9.5%

Dr. Metz stated parents are questioning WLU's academic integrity; how we are enforcing academic honesty when our leaders don't answer to the same standard. Faculty are struggling to enforce our student code of conduct, citing a double standard on campus. There is no proof, but also believe there will be an impact on donors and donations, along with employment implications at the University. In a nutshell, this is the information Dr. Metz was asked to relay to the BOG from Faculty Senate and the faculty at large.

**E. SGA (Jones)**

Chair Lucas read Ms. Jones' update into the minutes.

SGA has primarily focused on Homecoming over the last few weeks. As an update in case some of you were unaware of our events, the theme is "Fairytale." Serenades occurred on Monday,

celebrity server on Tuesday, and tent day was earlier today. The parade is currently scheduled for Saturday at 10:30 a.m.; however, it is supposed to rain that day. Our candidates are the following:

1. Jenna Mankowski and Michael Runkle (Alpha Xi Delta/Theta XI)
2. Sydney Jefferys and Gary Braithwaite (Chi Omega/Track & Field)
3. Hannah Jacobs and Didi Prajnabhakti (Delta Theta Kappa/Phi Delta Theta)
4. Mycah Ritchea-Yoho and Jacob Walker (Beta Rho Epsilon/Beta Theta)
5. Sierra Aniballi and Parker Sherry (Housing & Residence Life/Football)
6. Grace Dodson and Joey Adams (Lambda Psi Sigma/Kappa Delta Kappa)
7. Tianna Meyer and Parker Mazik (Acro & Tumbling/Chi Nu)

We have also gathered responses from students regarding changes they would like to see involving the Sodexo contract. A lot of responses included healthier options with more variety. The feedback also showed students wanting more meal deal options.

SGA is looking further into a possible remodel of the downstairs portion of the Union. The senate has discussed "livening" it up.

#### **F. Foundation (Hill)**

Ms. Hill referenced the Development Report contained in members board packet. The FY 21 audit was completed with a clean opinion and no recommendations, with assets growing over \$5 million for a total of \$25 million in assets. An annual report will be produced as a marketing piece to highlight some of this information and will be sent out in early December. As of 09/30/21, the Foundation has received over \$590,000 in revenue, about 1% ahead of last fiscal year at this time, 110% of the previous year. There are a number of proposals over \$1 million and proposals pending that we hope will wrap up at the end of the calendar year or early in the next calendar year. We received a significant gift from Kris Williams of \$200,000 to fund the new graphic design lab computers, renovations to Blatnik gym, and help with the Main Hall roof costs. There are 125 new donors so far this fiscal year, slightly down from last fiscal year, but some of the activities are timed differently than the last calendar. We are watching the retention number since we have such a strong new donor average last year.

We are collaborating with Alumni Affairs to oversee the recognition banquet to be held Friday night, which will debut the inaugural Impact of Philanthropy Award, with Gary and "Flip" West first to receive the award. We are working to build a culture of philanthropy on this campus, to make students aware of the impact that private dollars have, while the students are still on campus. We hope to inspire them to give back to WLU after they leave. There will be an Impact Award, recognizing and honoring those who gave \$25,000 or more last fiscal year, including a couple board members, Mr. Cervone and Mr. Lucas. We would like to recognize and thank you for your continued generous support, along with Belmont Savings Bank, Paris Construction, WesBanco, and Kris Williams and husband Jim Taibi. The annual fund mailing is being mailed as we speak and will also be visible at homecoming to encourage donors to get involved.

#### **IX. Finance Report**

Ms. Hudson directed members to the FY 22 operating budget status in the board packet. WLU is currently undergoing three separate audits at the same time. The financial statement audit by CLA, due in the next couple days; the HEERF funds audit by Ernst & Young, which should have been completed in January of 2021; and the NCAA Agreed-Upon Procedures audit for FY20, which has not been completed due to issues in that area. Having started with the University on August 16, Ms. Hudson stated that the Business Office is still without a controller and an accountant.

The financial document was discussed in detail with the Finance Committee and Ms. Hudson expanded on what Mr. Cook explained. With regard to the budget that was created for this fiscal year, we knew we were going to be down in tuition and students. It appears that the created budget will be okay if you project in graduate and undergraduate enrollment. Student housing will not be sustained. Expenses you see were only three months in and currently looks okay, but we were made aware there was also a large cut to the budget in order to balance. \$800,000 was cut from the budget and Ms. Hudson, along with Attorney Hooper, have been downloading detailed information

from the past five years; trends, line items, personal service, and labor line items, to put together and operate on a real budget.

**X. Possible Executive Session**

**A. Personnel Matter**

**On motion by Jack Adams and seconded by Richard Carter, pursuant to WV Code §6-9A-4, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to move to executive session at 5:00 p.m.**

**On motion by Jason Metz and seconded by Jack Adams, the Board rose from executive session at 6:25 p.m. and reconvened. No action was taken during the executive session.**

Chair Lucas stated, "Human Resources will provide the Board of Governors with all pertinent materials and answer any questions the board may have. Human Resources will come back to the board and the Board of Governors will have the final decision. The Board of Governors will reconvene to make the final decision after proper notice and time frames following FOIA requirements and West Virginia HEPC regulations."

**XI. Information Gathering**

None.

**XII. Next Meeting Date – Wednesday, December 8, 2021**

**XIII. Adjournment**

On motion by Jack Adams and seconded by Jason Metz, the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Richard Lucas \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

Jamie Evick \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary