

**LONGWOOD UNIVERSITY**  
**BOARD OF VISITORS**  
**March 19, 2021**  
**Minutes**

**Call to Order**

The Longwood University Board of Visitors met on Friday, March 19, 2021 in the Stallard Boardroom. The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Rector Eric Hansen.

Members present:

Mr. Eric Hasnsen  
Ms. Pia Trigiani  
Mr. Michael Evans

Other Board members present:

Mrs. Eileen Anderson (via Zoom)  
Ms Katharine Bond (via Zoom)  
Mr. Steven Gould (via Zoom)  
Mr. David Hallock (via Zoom)  
Mr. Larry Palmer (via Zoom)  
Ms. Colleen Margiloff (via Zoom)  
Ms. Rickshawn Adkins Roane (via Zoom)  
Ms. Polly Raible (via Zoom)  
Ms. Cookie Scott (via Zoom)  
Mrs. Nadine Marsh-Carter (via Zoom)

Also present (via Zoom):

President W. Taylor Reveley IV  
Dr. Larissa Smith, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Ms. Louise Waller, Vice President for Administration and Finance  
Ms. Victoria Kindon, Vice President for Strategic Operations  
Ms. Courtney Hodges, Vice President for Institutional Advancement  
Dr. Tim Pierson, Vice President for Student Affairs  
Ms. Michelle Meadows, Director of Athletics  
Dr. Lee Bidwell, Faculty Representative  
Mr. Cameron O’Brion, University Counsel  
Mr. Justin Pope, Vice President and Chief of Staff

## **Rector's Welcome and Approval of Minutes and Consent Agenda:**

The Rector welcomed the group, thanked all members for their continuing service and said he was pleased to be gathered at a moment with the light at the end of the tunnel following the challenges of the past year.

President Reveley gave a welcome and an overview of the agenda. The Rector asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mrs. Nadine Marsh-Carter so moved, Mr. Gould seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Justin Pope gave an overview of the University's current Covid-19 response status. He described the current campus situation as stable, with a relatively constant and manageable rate of positive cases following an initial uptick early in the semester, as was seen on many campuses. He said a higher proportion of cases than before are among commuter students and being acquired off campus and brought back, and there seems to be less spread on campus itself. There are also fewer contact exposures, so fewer students have been in quarantine this semester. While the news has been positive, it is clear from the experience of other Virginia schools, several of which have had hundreds of simultaneously active cases at a time in recent weeks, that spread can occur rapidly. The case decline in the state has plateaued and may start to increase; however, case numbers and hospitalizations in Prince Edward and the Piedmont Region have fallen to some of the lowest levels since the beginning of the pandemic. He said lessons learned include the importance of aggressive contact tracing and quarantine, the value of a real-time dashboard, and a strong culture. He commended the Department of Athletics for its extraordinary detailed planning and success so far, with more than 3,400 surveillance tests administered so far under Big South and NCAA testing protocols, and a positivity rate of .0023 on those tests. Longwood's two basketball teams in particular were extremely successful in managing Covid this year. Lastly, he recapped Longwood's on-campus clinic vaccination efforts and said VDH is aware Longwood remains ready to offer further assistance. He said some students who are eligible have been able to access vaccinations through the VDH registration system, and the University Health Center is also willing to play a role in helping vaccinate students if provided with supply and proper authorization.

Dr. Smith gave an overview regarding the new state law requiring Longwood and other Virginia public universities to explore their historic connections to slavery. She noted Longwood's work of historical reckoning has been actively underway for a number of years, and has naturally made its first focus 20<sup>th</sup> century civil rights history. The research into Longwood's 19<sup>th</sup> century is complicated by the fact that Longwood began as a private institution, housed in a no-longer-standing building constructed in the 1840s. Longwood did not become a public institution until 1884. Longwood knows of no records right now that shed direct light on the labor practices in the early days of the institution. There is, however, important context on local history, notably described in the award-winning book "Israel on The Appomattox," which focuses particularly on the free black community. Based on that work, we suspect a combination of white, free black and enslaved labor was involved in the construction of that building. Also, as part of our Bicentennial Initiative Longwood has begun to conduct research on the role of African-Americans as employees in Longwood's early history.

Dr. Bidwell reported she had asked faculty about their own lessons from the pandemic, noting the challenges have inspired creativity and ideas that may continue to prove useful. Zoom has some benefits that may last, such as the ability to access recorded lectures, continuity of instruction, and more accessible office hours. Online instruction is exceptionally time-consuming for faculty, cutting into time for scholarly activities. Faculty also report Zoom and other technologies have helped some faculty connect with others in academia and attend conferences in new ways, and classroom innovations here at Longwood, particularly in areas like music, can benefit students going forward. She urged Longwood to support such initiatives into the future.

Jonathan Page along with Cameron O’Brion gave an overview of the process of developing the new Title VI policy. He said training on the front end about Title VI-related issues is an effective way to prevent Title VI complaints and issues, and his office will continue to work actively in that area, while offering support and resources to students who report experiencing discrimination, even if there is not a formal finding of discrimination.

Cameron O’Brion said development of the policy was a substantial undertaking, on which Jonathan Page worked extremely hard, along with Dean of Students Jen Fraley and Title IX Coordinator Sasha Johnson. He echoed that a big difference is that Title IX comes with extensive federal guidance about how to implement on campus, but Title VI more straightforwardly obliges institutions to address race-based discrimination or harassment without providing specific direction on how. He noted the process for a Title VI complaint is similar to the Title IX process. He noted that there are a range of reasons people file complaints, and the informal resolution process gives Jonathan Page the ability to address complaints flexibility. He also commended the dual role of Jonathan, in that Title VI concerns the University’s legal obligations under Title VI, while his role in the Office of Multicultural Affairs concerns what the University should do. Mr. Palmer asked how the policy might intersect with pro-active actions, for instance with regard to recent violence nationally against Asian-Americans. Mr. Page responded by describing his office’s work with Asian-American students and groups, and commitment to working proactively.

Mr. Evans made a motion to approve the Title VI policy, Mr. Hallock seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Raible asked a question about disseminating information and understanding of the policy, and Mr. Page described plans for next steps, including web and printed communication that will be distributed across campus, as well as working with Dr. Smith to work to share information with faculty. Mr. Hansen asked about programming for underrepresented students, and Mr. Page gave an overview of a number of Longwood’s offerings related to this area, and also the impact of the upcoming University Diversity Strategic Plan. President Reveley called the approval of Longwood’s first Title VI policy a “proud step.”

In response to a question from Mr. Hansen about the University’s financial strength, Ms. Waller said Covid expenses for this year are turning out to be more than expected but she believes will be manageable. She said she is happy with the status reflected on the financial dashboard, and this year could have gone much worse. Of the federal stimulus funding that will be allocated to

Longwood, a large portion must be allocated directly to students, but the portion available institutionally will be helpful in offsetting revenue losses associated with Covid.

In response to a question about philanthropy, Ms. Hodges said much like the faculty, Institutional Advancement has learned habits such as virtual donor visits that she believes will continue to play a role post-Covid. She also reported the Family Scholarship Campaign had concluded successfully, with 90 new scholarships, despite the challenges of the pandemic.

In response to a question about mental health counseling, Dr. Pierson described some of the adjustments Counseling and Psychological Services has made, in particular initial group work with students suffering from anxiety and depression. He described other aspects of reach-out to students across Student Affairs. He noted other metrics of student involvement such as Greek Life and student government have been surprisingly strong. He addressed a question regarding hazing training, describing training and communications with national chapters. He said it is something the University watches very closely, and in partnership with other community members.

Mr. Hansen asked Mr. Kindon to discuss the current admissions cycle. She responded that the year has been challenging, but Longwood has kept on-campus visits going, and commended her team for adjusting to difficult circumstances. While in the past Admissions may have had 1-2 events per day, it now has 10-12 smaller events. While applications and deposits have been notably normal or even strong, the uncertainty this year is unprecedented. Besides the relative lack of visits, SAT score submissions were optional this year for Longwood and most schools, which has upended college application patterns nationally. Many more students will be on wait lists this year. Also it is clear that this past year is having a significant negative impact nationally on families financially.

President Reveley noted the success of both the men's and women's basketball programs this season, against the backdrop of extraordinary efforts by Michelle Meadows and the Athletics Department. He also noted the news regarding the new statue of Barbara Johns that will stand in the U.S. Capitol, and thanked Dr. Kim Little personally for the work of the nursing program in support of helping vaccinating our community. Dr. Little expressed her appreciation.

Mr. Hansen echoed his thanks, and gratitude to all at Longwood for their perseverance through the challenges of the year, taking positives from the experience.

The secretary asked for a motion pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3711(A)(1) that the Board convene in closed session to discuss matters pertaining to personnel, for consideration of promotion and tenure as customary at the spring meeting. Mr. Hallock so moved, Mr. Gould seconded and the motion was approved unanimously. A motion was offered by Mr. Palmer to return to open session. Mr. Gould so moved, Ms. Scott seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

In compliance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, the Board returned to open session. Mr. Evans moved that the board certify by roll call vote that, to the best of each member's knowledge, 1) only matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements were

discussed, and 2) only matters identified in the motion for closed session were discussed. Ms. Trigiani seconded, and all members in attendance voted by roll call to certify: Mrs. Raible, Mrs. Anderson, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Evans, Mrs. Margiloff, Mrs. Marsh-Carter, Ms. Scott, Ms. Trigiani, Ms. Bond, Mr. Hallock, Mrs. Roane, Mr. Hansen and Mr. Gould.

The rector asked for a motion to approve the recommendations of the President and Provost regarding promotion and tenure. Mrs. Anderson so moved, Mr. Hallock seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

There being no further business, the Rector adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m.