

BOARD OF VISITORS
FULL BOARD MEETING
December 10, 2021
MINUTES

1. Call to Order/Establish Quorum – Mr. Devon M. Henry, Rector

Mr. Devon Henry, Rector, called the NSU Board of Visitors meeting to order at approximately 9:05 a.m. A quorum was established with a 10-0 Roll Call vote. The motion to approve the virtual attendance was made by Mr. Delbert Parks and seconded by The Honorable James Dyke, and approved with a 10-0 roll call vote. Below is a list of individuals that joined the meeting.

Participants – Board Members

Mr. Devon M. Henry, Rector
Mrs. Heidi Abbott
Dr. Terri L. Best
Mr. Dwayne B. Blake
Ms. Mary L. Blunt
Bishop Kim W. Brown
The Honorable James W. Dyke, Jr.
Mr. BK Fulton
Mr. Delbert Parks
Dr. Harold Watkins, II

Participant – Virtual

Mr. Larry A. Griffith

Non-Participants – Absent Board Members

Dr. Deborah M. DiCrocce
Ms. Joan G. Wilmer

Participant – Faculty Representative to the Board

Dr. Geoffroy de Laforcade, Professor of History and Interdisciplinary Studies

Participant – Student Representative to the Board

Mr. Jaylin Drewry, SGA President*

Participant – Counsel

Ms. Pamela F. Boston, University Counsel and Senior Assistant Attorney General
Mr. James D. Wright, Associate University Counsel and Senior Assistant Attorney General
Ms. Deborah A Love, Senior Assistant Attorney General/ Chief, Office of the Attorney General (for Closed Meeting only)

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Participant – Non-NSU

Ms. Anne VanMiddlesworth, U.S. Higher Education Leadership Manager, Apple, Inc.

Bob Whicker, Apple, Inc.

Jack Bums, Apple, Inc.

Participants – NSU Administrators and Staff

Dr. Javaune Adams-Gaston, President

Dr. Gerald Ellsworth Hunter, Vice President and Chief Financial officer, Finance and Administration

Mr. Clifford Porter, Vice President, University Advancement

Dr. Justin L. Moses, Vice President for Operations and Chief Strategist for Institutional Effectiveness

Dr. DoVeanna Fulton, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

Ms. Melody Webb, Athletics Director

Ms. Tanya S. White, Chief of Staff

Mr. Eric W. Claville, J.D., M.L.I.S., Executive Advisor to the President, Governmental Relations

Dr. Dawn Hess, Chief Compliance Officer

Mrs. Derika Burgess, Chief Audit Executive

Mrs. Kimberly Gaymon, Scheduler/Financial Services Specialist

Mr. Christopher M. Gregory, Information Technology Specialist, OIT

Ms. Inda Walker, Clerk to the University President/Board Liaison

Observers – NSU Administrators and Staff

Dr. Tony Atwater, Faculty Senate President

Dr. Leonard E. Brown, Vice President, Student Affairs

Dr. Andrew Carrington, Assistant Vice President, Finance and Administration

2. Opening Remarks – Mr. Devon Henry, Rector

Rector Henry reflected on the previous historical day, the visibility, and the recognition that Norfolk State and other HBCU's are receiving, although long overdue, will gladly be embraced and leveraged for bigger things.

Rector Henry states that having met the students at the President's house was a great highlight. Engaging the amazing minds of the students was truly encouraging as he heard the Board Members say that they were happy for the opportunity to share experiences and knowledge with the next generation. He states that the future is bright for the students at NSU.

3. State of the University – President Javaune Adams-Gaston

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Dr. Adams-Gaston gave an overview of where the university is now, one of the main accomplishments, *Level 2 in 22 and 21 and Done*, and the impact that it will have on the university and the students. She thanks everyone for their hard work.

Her main focus was impact. The things that NSU is doing and the great impact they are having on our students, faculty, staff, the community. She thanked Anne VanMiddlesworth, U.S. Higher Education Leadership Manager for Apple Nationwide, for coming.

Dr. Adams-Gaston states that what we are doing is making a difference. Partnerships such as the Spartan Innovation Academy is making a great difference, however, opportunities without dollars makes it difficult to make a difference. As we look at the past budgets and how the institution has received funds in the past, what the Governor has done is a great step in the right direction, and we want to help the Commonwealth to continue to take those steps.

Our Academic Partnerships with Connectivity is helping us to move the needle on why it is important to have online learners, who are largely adult learners, who want to pursue the next phase of their degree, and they are able to get a Master's Degree in a year's time. We opened the portal on November 11 of this year and already we have students signed up. This is the first HBCU that has partnered with Academic Partnerships.

We also look humbly at the gifts that we are receiving. We received \$1,080,000 from Penn National and TheScore for the Dozoretz Program (DNIMAS Program), some of the brightest minds at this university. The program was initially designed for students to have a full scholarship when they came to the university, and that included tuition, fees, room, and board. Over the years, because of lack of money, that had to be scaled back to tuition and fees only for most of the students. We want to get back to fully funding these students. These students are turning down prestigious institutions to come to NSU.

Pharrell Williams hosted an Economic Business Forum in October at NSU, which was phenomenal. NSU received national, local, and international coverage. The real impact was that Mr. Williams brought financial investors who represented \$3 trillion. That means that we get to create economic opportunities for NSU and the City of Norfolk. This really changed the status of who we are.

We have activated the Spartan Innovation Academy. This distribution of devices gives everyone equal footing. We have a wonderful partnership with Apple.

Ms. VanMiddlesworth states that she is mesmerized with everything that is going on at NSU. She emphasized that the world is mobile, connected, it's global, it's All In. Everything that the student needs is there with them at all times. The students that come out of these programs are the ones that sit on the top of the resumes when they apply for jobs.

Impactful things that our students are doing:

- Our students won the SANS + HBCU Cyber Range Fall Classic Cyber Ware competition and have been invited to compete in the Tournament of Champions to be held in Washington, DC in December.
- We have millions of dollars for research at NSU that is available to our graduate and undergraduate students. NSU is one of 6 HBCU's that will share a gift of \$100,000,000 from Johnson and Johnson over the next 5 years to increase the number of black nurses in clinical practice.
- Our student athletes are doing extremely well inside and outside of the classroom.
- Netflix Partnership
- Partnership with For Offshore Wind.

4. Faculty Representative to the Board – Dr. Geoffrey de Laforcade

The Faculty Senate has elected new executive officers:

Vice- President, Dr. Matthew Russell of Visual and Performing Arts
Secretary, Dr. Shaun Anderson of Health, Physical Education and Exercise Science.

Dr. de Laforcade states that he was there to express faculty concerns. He read from his prepared comments.

He states that faculty is sincere in their passion as educators and determination to help our students grow, and because this is a teaching institution, there will always be faculty who excel in the classroom and put aside their scholarly pursuits. He highlighted the need for more faculty, and the fact that faculty are overloaded, overwhelmed, and burnt-out. He states that if the goal is to increase enrollment, we should be hiring more faculty and support staff.

Dr. de Laforcade is grateful for the opportunity to come before the Board and he is not complaining. The faculty are all proud to work at NSU and see the university as a shining light of heritage and talent.

Rector Henry thanked Dr. de Laforcade for his report and thanked him for his candor.

Dr. Fulton addressed the issues around faculty workload and the consciousness for creating a better environment for teaching and research for faculty. The university has contracted

with a consultant and we are looking at our data with respect to the number of courses and the number of students in courses. It was noted that the average class size is 12 to 1.

The underlying issue is more funding is needed.

Communication, faculty senate engagement, and quantitative stood out for Board members. If these 3 things are addressed as a body, they will be the most beneficial in terms of the Board's role.

It will be helpful for the Board members to understand the scope of the consultant's work plus the funding and any actionable plan anticipated to come out of the consultant's work.

Dr. Tony Atwater, President of the Faculty Senate, states that the number one issue of the Faculty Senate is the area of teacher workload. Lots of his faculty colleagues are in the 50-70 age limit and they are stretched. He would like to see a faculty sabbatical program, as well as have a distinguished faculty awards program.

As the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, Ms. Blunt has volunteered the Committee to look at this information and bring it to the Board.

5. Student Representative to the Board – Mr. Jaylin Drewry

At the start of the Fall 2021 semester, 3 initial goals were set.

1. Effectively facilitate dialogue between students and faculty.
2. Advocate for policies and practices that would safeguard students' health and safety while on campus.
3. Uphold the Spartan experience standard that has been set in stone.

Expectations have been exceeded.

Fall 2021 semester review:

- SGA partnered with Communications and Marketing to create a video campaign to the university about the Fall return to campus during Covid.
- SGA rolled out a campus wide in-person and virtual campaign to remind students to wear a mask while in doors on campus.
- SGA implemented new targeted initiatives throughout the semester. Establishing two subject focused oversight committees "Spartan Wellness" & "Spartan Success." Both committees have begun working towards achieving their overall objectives.

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- There were two University Town-Halls allowing students to voice their concerns to faculty and administration.
- SGA successfully planned and carried out in-person Homecoming activities while still in the middle of a global pandemic.
- Throughout the semester each SGA liaison held weekly meetings with their respective departments and areas.

In the works for the Spring 2022 Semester:

- The first “State of the Student Body Address” delivered by the SGA President will take place.
- A joint summit between Virginia State University SGA & Norfolk State University SGA will take place on our campus to develop solutions to a variety of issues in a diplomatic setting and form. This collaborative summit between the two institutions will be called “V2.” The title represents “Virginia Two,” two institutions working together to make a positive impact across the Commonwealth.
- Advocacy to make Norfolk State University a voting polling location will continue so that students will have direct access to the polls for midterm elections in the Fall of 2022.
- Preparation has begun for the first in person Spartan Fest since the start of the pandemic. Spartan Fest will take place April 9th – 16th.

The University focusing more on students’ health, particularly mental health, is imperative. Campus safety is also a concern. A lot of incidents have taken place on this campus and around the nation. It was agreed that a report can be done for the breakdown of sessions for the use the Counseling Center.

There was lots of talk regarding the alert system that is being used at the university. Mr. Drewy stated that he was disappointed at the communications for the campus incident.

6. Action Item

Board’s Annual Executive Summary – The report has to be approved by the Board and will be submitted to the Governor’s Office by January. There being no questions or comments the following motion was made.

The Honorable Jim Dyke motioned, seconded by Mr. Fulton, the Board unanimously approved the Annual Executive Summary of Board’s Activity and Work.

7. Motion – Closed Meeting

Bishop Brown read the motion for Closed Meeting seconded by The Honorable Dyke, the Board unanimously moved to adjourn and reconvene in Closed Meeting Section 2.2-3711(A) 1, 4, 7 and 8 and 2.2-3705.3 (7) of the Code of Virginia, for the following purposes, pursuant to the noted subsections:

Section 2.2-3711(A) 1, 4, 7 and 8 of the Code of Virginia, for the following purposes, pursuant to the noted subsections:

(1) and (4): To discuss personnel matters, including more specifically, discussion of assignment, appointment, promotion, salaries, performance, evaluations as well as the promotion of and granting tenure to certain university employees; and disciplining or resignation of specific individuals, and salaries; and performance evaluations of specific individuals and certain university employees; and

To discuss or evaluate performance of departments of the University that necessarily involve discussion regarding performance of individual employees, more specifically related to reports, investigative notes, correspondence, and information furnished in confidence and records otherwise exempted, of the university Internal Audit Office and the Office of the State Inspector General; and

For the purpose of discussion of reports submitted by a high-level University employee at Norfolk State University, which includes discussion of the subject matter of goals and performance; and

(7) and (8): Consultation with legal counsel regarding specific matters requiring the provision of legal advice pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the university, including more specifically for legal counsel to give a status update on pending and potential litigation of which the Board should be made aware; along with any necessary consultation with legal counsel regarding matters noted in this motion; and further that the President, and the Provost, and the University Counsel would be present.

8. Open Meeting

The Board having reconvened in the Open Meeting, took a 10-0 Roll Call vote on certification that (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from Open Meeting requirements, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting by the Board. Any member of the Board who believes that there was a departure from the requirements as stated above, shall so state prior to the vote, indicating the substance of the departure that in his, or her judgment, has taken place.

Action Item

Mary Blunt moved that because of the impact of Covid 19, the Board of Visitors would retroactively approve the one-year extension of the probationary period for tenure and promotion upon request for faculty members. The Board further requires that any request for the extension must be received in the office of the Provost no later than May 3, 2022. Seconded by the Honorable Jim Dyke. The Board unanimously approved.

9. **Old Business** - There was none.
10. **New Business** – There was none.
11. **Public Comment**– there were no public comments.
12. **Announcements** – Dr. Javaune Adams-Gaston

Dr. Adams-Gaston announced the closing of Wilson Hall for the period beginning December 17-January 2.

NSU just received a check for \$500,000 for the Dozoretz Program (DNIMAS).

13. **Adjournment** – The meeting concluded at 1:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Inda Walker, Board Liaison

Devon M. Henry, Rector, Board of
Visitors