

BOARD OF VISITORS
BOARD MEETING
October 15, 2021

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Rector Devon Henry called the NSU Board of Visitors meeting to order at approximately 8:30 am. A quorum was established with an 12-0 Roll Call vote and 3 members attending virtually. After all virtual attendees stated their reasons for attending virtually, a motion was made for the virtual attendees to attend virtually for medical reasons by BK Fulton and seconded by Bishop Kim Brown. Below is a list of individuals that participated in person and virtually.

Participants – Board Members

Mr. Devon Henry, Rector
Dr. Deborah M. DiCroce (Virtual)
Mrs. Heidi Abbot
Dr. Terri L. Best (Virtual)
Mr. Dwayne B. Blake
Ms. Mary L. Blunt
Bishop Kim W. Brown
The Honorable James W. Dyke, Jr.
Mr. BK Fulton
Mr. Larry A. Griffith (Virtual)
Mr. Delbert Parks
Dr. Harold “Harry” L. Watkins, II

Participant – Faculty Representative to the Board

Dr. Geoffrey de Laforcade, Faculty Senate President and Associate Professor, Biology

Participant – Student Representative to the Board

Mr. Jaylin Drewry

Participants – Counsel

Ms. Pamela F. Boston, University Counsel and Senior Assistant Attorney General
Ms. Deborah A Love, Senior Assistant Attorney General/Chief, Office of the Attorney General
Lyn Harper, Senior Principal, Mercer Management (Virtual)
Mr. Cory Wolfe, Associate University Counsel and Assistant Attorney General

Participants – NSU Administrators and Staff

Dr. Javaune Adams-Gaston, President
Dr. Justin L. Moses, Vice President for Operations and Chief Strategist for Institutional Effectiveness

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Dr. DoVeanna Fulton, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Gerald E. Hunter, Vice President, Finance and Administration
Mr. Clifford Porter, Vice President,
Dr. Leonard E. Brown, Vice President, Student Affairs
Ms. Melody Webb, Athletics Director
Ms. Tanya S. White, Chief of Staff
Dr. Karen H. Pruden, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources
Ms. Kimberly Gaymon, Scheduler/Financial Services Specialist
Mr. Obie Smith, Director of Operation Services
Mr. Rasool A. Shabazz, Project Engineer, OIT
Mr. Christopher M. Gregory, Information Technology Specialist, OIT
Ms. Inda Walker, Clerk to the University President/Board Liaison
Dr. Dawn Hess, Chief Compliance Officer
Derika Burgess, Chief Audit Executive
Eric Claville, Executive Advisor to the President (Interim), Governmental Relations

Observers – NSU Administrators and Staff

Dr. Andrew Carrington, Assistant Vice President, Finance & Administration
Mr. Deltnore' Hyman, Police Department
Mr. Anton Kashiri, Associate Vice President, Facilities Management
Dr. Dawn Hess,
Mrs. Derika Burgess
Mr. Elroy Smith,

Observers – NSU Faculty

Ms. Stevalynn Adams, AVP Communications and Marketing

2. **Opening Remarks:** Rector Henry welcomed everyone to the 2nd day of meetings and thanked everyone. He stated that we are very fortunate to have the relationships and the leadership that we have in the room, and very fortunate to have the support of Richmond. He stated that NSU has come a long way and he is honored as an alum to be a part of the Board. He was reflecting the prior night that NSU has come a mighty long way and yet there is so much more that we can do and that we are going to do. He then introduced NSU's 7th President, Dr. Javaune Adams-Gaskins.

3. **President's Update/Presentation Dr. Javaune Adams-Gaston**

President Adams-Gaston opened up saying that it has been a wonderful transition to the university, it has been difficult, but she has a great support team, and she goes on to say that with the right team you can do anything. She appreciates that Norfolk State University (NSU) is in a position that we can look forward and not backward.

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Last month we celebrated Founder's Day - 86 years. As she always says, if our poor mothers and fathers can begin an institution of higher education in a great depression, we can certainly survive the pandemic because we come from those who believe in the power of education so strongly that they put their resources together and made this happen. She believes that we come from a tradition of excellence and although it's a lot of hard work, President Adams-Gaston and her husband agree that this is their assignment, they feel led to be here, and they feel privileged to be here. She thanked her special guest and all who came and participated in the investiture and inauguration week. One of the things that she said in her investiture speech was "I don't feel no ways tired." She stated that our Rector said, "I know you don't feel no ways tired, but a brother is tired."

She stated that it speaks to the wonderful things that are going on here at NSU, the relationships that hold us accountable and also understanding that the mission is the most important thing. She wanted to thank publicly the University Events Group and especially her Chief of Staff, Tanya White.

In the 86 Hours of Giving the institution raised \$286,221.

The gala was wonderful, a gymnasium was transformed into a ballroom. She stated that we are truly blessed for our time in history and because of our team. Maya Chaka, the NFL's first black female referee and a NSU alum, attended the gala.

We had 19 months of Covid and that is important to notate because it made us think about the frame that we are in now, and the frame has shifted sideways. We are working hard to shift the frame back, even in the midst of Covid. We did that by starting to demonstrate a culture of care. She stated that Jaylen did a wonderful video series with her which was great way to communicate to the student body in the early days of Covid, the things that were happening and how we were moving forward. There were town hall meetings and other meetings that allowed administration to listen to the student population and find out the students' needs and concerns; course guidelines that our faculty had to pivot from in-class to virtual, then back, and hybrid; and there were vaccination clinics on campus, which is important to the community, and it's important for us as a partner in the community. And finally, we had recognition. Each student received \$500, and each faculty/staff received \$1000. NSU recognized that we wanted a vaccinated and safe community, but most importantly, we recognized that this has been hard for our community.

We have performed 5,130 Covid tests and we have had 27 positive tests. Praise the Lord because we have peers across the Commonwealth who are having outbreaks and having hard times. President Adams-Gaston stated to our students that it is their ability to take on the things that we need them to do in the midst of doing what college students would like to be doing. We need them to mask up, we need them to socially distance, and we need for them to get vaccinated. In fact, 90% of our students are vaccinated. And the other students that have medical reasons or religious reasons that won't allow them to be vaccinated, they

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also are receiving the recognition because they have been within the rules of the university. Also, 84% of our faculty are vaccinated. We continue to ensure that vaccinations are easy and accessible.

The Green and Gold Standard is what she feels has been the spirit of this institution for a long time and she addressed some of this at the investiture. We are looking at the standard to help us educate the labor force for solutions to digital threats, cyber security, cyber psychology, and we are looking to be innovative to the NSU Spartan Innovation Academy and support entrepreneurship through the NSU School of Business Innovation Center in downtown Norfolk as well as train students in The School of Nursing in *One School of Public Health*. The *One School* is ODU, NSU, and EVMS. We are looking to educate students to find solutions to problems in urban and rural communities through *Ethelyn R. Strong School of Social Work*, *Center for Research on Health Disparities*, partnership with *Appalachian School of Law*, and to showcase the talents of our students in *NSU Visual and Performing Arts*. She reminded the Board that Jay Z and Beyonce donated \$2 million to NSU, one of 5 HBCU's in the country to receive the donation, and that is specifically for students in the arts, history, and communications. We have already given 20 scholarships as of this date.

We are expanding access to education to individuals who don't have greater means through the Virginia College Affordability Network. This is due to our Enrollment Management Group, and it is a scholarship and is available to anyone who lives within a 25-mile radius.

As we move forward, we want NSU to be a place that not only prepares students for careers but a place where the public and community can look for solutions.

We are using the Green and Gold standard to provide access to education to all people, non-traditional and traditional students, coming right out of high school or coming from the military, or coming back to school after many years. We take people where they are and allow them to become all that they want to be. NSU is THAT place for all who want to be a part of this environment. We have the opportunity and the availability and the faculty and the staff and the administrators to make dreams come true.

The demands of the employment environment are important. President Adams-Gaston has spent lots of time with Career Services, CEOs, and others who to talk about what their present and future needs are. If our students can think critically, speak well, write well, work on teams, are comfortable with diversity (meaning they have experience with diversity of ideas, etc.), those are the things that CEO's are looking for. Yes, the critical academic skills matter, but things are moving so fast, and things are changing so fast that information, how we access information, and what we do with it is changing very quickly. So, for us, it is the classroom experience and it's having faculty engage and mentor students that matters. The out of classroom experience, having leadership experience, and experiences going abroad (someday we will go abroad again), and experiences with internships that really matter.

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She has been able to say to *Enroll for Virginia* and other individuals, “our students have to have paid internships!” Most of them do not have the luxury of having an internship because they need a job and are trying to pay for school and get this critical experience. But if they cannot get the paid internship, they are falling behind their peers. We are trying to get some traction around understanding and supporting and finding ways to do that. 67% of the national average of students who get an internship will get a job offer. That’s a big deal. This university is looking for ways to keep our students on track, competitive, and able to get what they need in a way that is useful to them.

Our Department of Nursing in Allied Health was recently rewarded a \$5 million award creating a Master of Health Informatics. The One School of Public Health (ODU, NSU, and EVMS). The joint school of public health received widespread support from Governor Northam and the General Assembly, which fully funded us with \$5 million: \$2.5 million for NSU and \$2.5 million for ODU. Also, Sentara Health Care invested \$4 Million: \$2 million to NSU and \$2 million to ODU to support the accreditation process. We are showing people how important NSU is for the future of the Commonwealth and worldwide. We are an institution that is built on finding ways for people, in particular black people, to be educated.

The NSU/Appalachian School of Law Agreement takes some debt away from our students because they will have one less year of schooling to pay for.

NSU will continue to be forward thinking and prepare our students for first day readiness when they go on the job or if they want to go on to graduate school.

President Adams-Gaston stated that we are having significant issues with students having mental strain since Covid. She believes that when we came out of Covid, most people came out with PTSD from Covid, which is all the things that happen when you are confined and then you get to go out and you are told that things are the same as before, and they are not. Those who already had mental health issues are exacerbated, and others are struggling with their home situation, what is expected of them. The anxiety and the depression are high, just as across the Commonwealth and across the nation. It’s hard for Counseling Center to keep up with the need.

Jaylin re-emphasized what President Adams-Gaston said and stated that he is one of those students. Having to come back to campus after a year and still be in the middle of a pandemic, still having to balance classes, and having to deal with financial burdens. However, he states that the Counseling Center is helping students.

President Adams-Gaston stated that the mental health issue is evident with the violence that happens right outside of our gates. The number one population that was having the hardest time during the pandemic was African American male athletes. Mayor Alexander has agreed to have Town Hall meetings with NSU so that NSU can be identified as a place

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where the community can work together, get a handle on this, and provide real world service to our community. We need to get to the real issue of this reckless and senseless disregard for life and the violence right outside of our doors.

Our enrollment stands at 5458 and that's one person over enrollment for last year. Our online learners have increased significantly, almost doubled from a year ago.

INNOVATIONS AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- NSU Spartan Innovation Academy
 - Providing Apple iPads to students
- Micron Cleanroom
- Bank of America
- Golden Nugget HBCU Partnership
- Netflix Partnership

NSU MAKING WAVES

- Naismith Memorial Hall of Fame
 - Robert "Bob" Dandridge, '69
- NSU ROTC Hall of Fame
 - LTC (Ret.) Clarence Demory, '68
 - Judge Raymond A. Jackson, '70
 - Dr. Melvin T. Stith, Sr., '70
 - LTC (Ret.) Antonio L. Thompson, '91
- American Baseball Coaches Association Hall of Fame
 - Marty Miller, '67
- MEAC's 50 Legends in Coaching
 - Kenneth Giles, Director, Track and Field
- HBCU White House Initiative Scholars
 - McKinley Lowery
 - Skylar Groves
- 25 Game Changers in American Theatre
 - Professor Anthony Stockard
- WNSB New Station Manager
 - Elroy Smith

NSU 6 Year Plan: We continue our institutional mission that we transform student's lives through exemplary teaching, research, and service, and we move on to our vision, which is to be a premier public institution with outstanding signature academic programs, innovative research, and community engagement opportunities.

This was a banner year for athletics: Meac championship in baseball and basketball.

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Increasing retention and graduation rates is a key priority for our institution. NSU must be innovative as an institution of higher education.

Capital Outlay Plan Priorities are tied directly to our strategic planning and budget process. Includes:

1. E. L. Hamm Fine Arts Building Renovation = \$67 M
2. New Wellness, Health, and Physical Education Building = \$58.8 M
3. Next Generation Sequencing = \$5 M
4. HVAC Renovations at Babbette B Towers North and South Halls, Charles H Smith, and Lee S. Smith Hall = \$6 M

NSU is a gem. As we continue to have people understand who we are, the largest HBCU in the Commonwealth, we will not sell ourselves short. As president, I will always make decisions in the best interest of our Spartan Community, we will keep pushing NSU forward, we will continue to push our students to excellence and success and when they leave here, they will be like Jaylen (Student Representative of the Board), who is already a perfect example of Spartan excellence. It is our time. I thank you for your continued support and it is true, I don't feel no ways tired.

4. President Adams-Gaston introduced the new station manager, Dr. Elroy Smith.

Mr. Smith stated that the vision of WNSB is to give interns and graduates an opportunity and there are 5 alumni's on WNSB that are doing a great job. He stated that we have professionals at this school. Also, we will continue to support the community by giving free Thanksgiving meals with Calvary Revival Church.

The radio station is always looking out for local artists, so they are played every hour. Membership drives are excellent. The new radio station will finally be ready in January. There was a market research of listeners between the ages of 18-44 and they like the music from the 80's and 90's and music of today, and 18% want to hear some songs from the 70's. Our slogan is Hot 91, The Soul of VA. We are currently number 20 in the market. In the next 3 years, we want to be in the top 10 in Norfolk, VA. Mr. Smith intends to change our position by creating underwriting opportunities. He plans to have vignettes on Martin Luther King, Black History Month, June Teenth, tips on buying a house, tips on furthering your education, etc., and money comes through these vignettes in order for the station to operate. He also wants to have a music conference, which is already confirmed. He wants to have a daddy daughter dance, a workshop for Women, workshop for fathers on raising young boys/men.

5. Student Representative Jaylin Drewry

Mr. Jaylin Drewry has met with over 8 departments on campus to ensure that student concerns are heard are met.

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- Division of Student Affairs
- Housing and Residence Life
- Thompson Hospitality
- Office of Information Technology
- Office of Academic Engagement
- Athletics
- Communications and Marketing
- Finance & Administration

SGA has begun to roll out new initiatives by establishing issue-focused committees. The first committee will be named Spartan Success, which will focus on the academic and career success of NSU students. The next committee will be named Spartan Wellness, which will focus on the effects of Covid-19 on the student body, this committee will also focus mental advocacy within the spartan community.

September 29th SGA held its first town hall of the semester. Students were able to attend the town hall in person and online. Having the town hall allowed students to voice their concerns directly to the respective department.

Since August, SGA has been planning homecoming activities and events. October 9th –16th NSU will be celebrating homecoming in person for the first time in 2 years. The theme is “Back Together Again, Ain’t no stopping us now” and I can assure you after 2 years of not being together, nothing will stop us from celebrating homecoming.

Jaylin Drewry thanked President Adams-Gaston for supporting the Student Government. He serves as Director Legislative Affairs of National Consortium of SGA Presidents. They are working to put together a package legislative issues that they can take to our representatives that they can discuss, including funding.

Issues that the students have are long lines and lack of food options. Students compare NSU with other universities and expect to have more choices.

6. Faculty Representative Dr. Geoffroy de Laforcade

Dr. de Laforcade stated that there is hope after returning from the Pandemic. Various departments worked hard all summer. Despite the challenges, he has seen his colleagues face enormous challenges and rise to the occasion, teach with unwavering passion, and contribute to the collective discussions. The Office of Extended Learning, The Writing Center, and Other Support Services have been extremely helpful in assisting. Many have taken course overloads in hopes that new faculty would come on board to help.

There are stories of exhaustion, over extension, and isolation from faculty. It is no secret that they work in entrenched silos. They often lack information on what is going on with

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the university. The collegiality and sense of community has been interrupted, and he hopes that efforts by the college and the Board will acknowledge faculty.

Of course, faculty has issues amongst themselves. There have been a number of resignations from the Executive Committee.

He hopes to move forward with positive energy and gain the trust of his colleagues. He stated that they have to overcome the fear that to speak freely will result in some sort of retaliation. He will do all that he can to relay the messages to the faculty and thank you for welcoming him at this table.

Delbert Parks asked about morale? Dr. de Laforcade stated that morale is good being that they see things coming from the top. He stated that faculty suffers from mental health issues as well.

Dr. DiCroce stated that she takes the report as a positive sign. She states that there is always going to be tension, but the goal is that it is a healthy tension between faculty and administration. She has positive thoughts from Dr. de Laforcade's statements and it is evident that we all want to row in the same direction, and we want to do the best for the students. At the end of the day, the faculty is the heart of the university, and we must get that piece right.

Rector Henry dismissed at 10 am for a 10-minute break. Afterward, the Board will go into Closed Session.

The Board reconvened at 10:10 am.

Bishop Brown motioned, seconded by BK Fulton, the Board with a 12-0 Roll Call vote moved to adjourn and reconvene in Closed Meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A) 1, 7 and 8 of the Code of Virginia, for the following purposes, pursuant to the noted subsections: (1):.... To discuss personnel matters, including more specifically, discussion on the compensation of a high-level University employee as well as the appointment, performance, and promotion of specific individuals and university employees; and (7) and (8): Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants regarding (1) the compensation of a high-level university employee, and (2) 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 following persons remain for the Closed meeting: President, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, University Counsel, Associate General Counsel, OAG Education Section Chief, Deborah Love

7. CLOSED SESSION

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8. OPEN SESSION

The Board having reconvened in the Open Meeting, took an 12-0 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.

9. RESOLUTION

Dwayne Blake motioned that consistent with the raise provided to most state employees, The Board of Visitors approved a 5% increase to the President's base salary as provided in her contract effective June 10th of 2021 and the Board further authorized the Rector to negotiate and execute a further amendment to the President's contract consistent with discussions held during the Closed Session. Motion was seconded by BK Fulton. Motion was unanimously approved.

Mary Blunt motioned, seconded by Dr. Harry Watkins, for approval of promotion for Dr. John Kamiru as discussed in the Closed Meeting. Motion was unanimously approved.

10. NEW BUSINESS/OLD BUSINESS

Motion was made by Mary Blunt and seconded by BK Fulton to accept the revised Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the Board. Motion was unanimously approved.

11. Public Comment

No one signed up for public comment.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Inda B. Walker, Board Liaison

Devon Henry, Rector

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