

BOARD OF VISITORS GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Planning Conference Meeting July 26, 2018 MINUTES

PRESENT: Rector pro tem Hazel and Secretary Purvis; Visitors Cumbie, Marquez, Moreno, Prowitt, Reagan, Rice, Witeck, and Zuccari; Faculty Representative Renshaw; Student Representatives Keatinge and Pettine; President Cabrera; and Secretary pro tem Cagle

ABSENT: Rector Davis; Visitors Alcalde, Blackman, Chimaladinne, Petersen, and Roth.

GUESTS:

Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees

President's Council

Outgoing President, Alumni Association

Incoming President, Alumni Association

Faculty Committee Representatives

I. Rector pro tem Hazel recognized Janet Bingham, Vice President of University Advancement and Alumni Relations, upon the news of her retirement, and thanked her for all she had done for Mason. The audience responded with applause. Rector pro tem Hazel called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. and called on President Cabrera.

II. President Cabrera provided welcoming remarks. He recognized the groups in attendance: the Board of Visitors (BOV), the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, the President's Council, and faculty representatives. He introduced the new BOV members and provided a brief background on each: Mr. Edward Rice, Mr. Paul Reagan, Ms. Ignacia Moreno and Ms. Denise Turner Roth (absent due to family emergency). President Cabrera recognized Dr. Peter Freeman, Chair of the George Mason Research Foundation. President Cabrera recognized two new members of the Board of Trustees: Mr. Al Grasso and Mr. Sumeet Shrivastava. He noted that Mr. Shrivastava is also the incoming Alumni Association president, following Ms. Jen Shelton, the outgoing Alumni Association President. President Cabrera recognized the two new Student Representatives, Bekah Pettine (undergraduate Student Body President) and Becca Keatinge (GAPSA President), and welcomed the Keith Renshaw, Chair of the Faculty Senate.

President Cabrera explained that during the BOV meeting the following day, the Board would elect their officers, make committee appointments, provide his evaluation in Closed Session, and approve his goals for 2018-2019.

President Cabrera highlighted the location of the Planning Conference, noting the MIX (Mason Innovation Exchange) was the former Fenwick Library and is currently being used as space to support multiple current and future entrepreneurship programs. He noted the hope that entrepreneurship together with other high impact learning practices will become part of Mason Impact. He explained that Mason was working on a requirement that in order to graduate, the

students will need to demonstrate participation in one of four possible types of high impact learning practices: engaging in an entrepreneurial project, research, study abroad, or a meaningful social service or social impact innovation activity.

President Cabrera provided an overview of Mason's progress. He noted that Mason is largest public university in Virginia and the fastest-growing, accounting for 48% of the growth in enrollment in the Commonwealth in the last decade; Mason is more diverse than any time in the past, the most diverse university in the Commonwealth; Mason has a default rate of 2%, on par with flagship and elite universities; 70%+ of Mason's student graduate within 6 years and the graduation rate for transfer students is approximately 72%; Mason's graduation rates do not vary between Pell and non-Pell grant recipients; Mason attained Carnegie R1 classification in January 2016, being the youngest university in this category and posting a 15% growth in research expenditures this year. President Cabrera noted all of this success while public investment in higher education has been in decline with Mason receiving significantly less money per student than the average research university. He thanked several of the attendees for their role in legislative conversations regarding the Commonwealth budget which resulted in increased funds for Mason and in financial aid for the students. President Cabrera noted Mason increasingly depends on private support, noting the money Mason receives from the Foundation each year has almost doubled since 2012.

President Cabrera noted the recent sad news of the passing of John Toups, following the passing of George Johnson and Earle Williams last year. He recognized that generation of individuals, including Til Hazel, Sid Dewberry, and Dwight Schar, who did so much for Northern Virginia and Mason.

President Cabrera outlined the Strategic Plan, noting the update that was completed last year. He explained that his annual goals are based on that Plan, noting the following four categories:

1. Expand access to excellence and transformative learning
2. Grow research and innovation of consequence
3. Strengthen thriving, inclusive academic community
4. Build foundation for the future

He provided highlights of each goal including:

- Under Goal 1: Fully implement Mason Impact to allow all Mason students to participate in high impact learning practices; develop a signature course for all undergraduate students which reflects the University's values and commitment to diversity, inclusion and well-being; redesign the first-year experience; exploring the possibility of partnering with a for-profit entity to expand online education opportunities; meet *Smart Growth* enrollment targets; develop a strategy that engages the Mason community in executive and professional education, non-degree programs offered to members of the community; continue to increase the retention and completion numbers.
- Under Goal 2: Increase research expenditures and value of awards by 10%; review research-intensive graduate programs; re-evaluate Mason's position in medical research

and education; launch two university-wide multidisciplinary research institutes in computing/data science and in sustainability/resilience.

- Under Goal 3: Expand events and forums for community-wide dialogue around critical, difficult issues; increase the proportion of instructional faculty to mirror the diversity of the student body; adopting COACHE framework to increase faculty engagement; re-examine Mason's leadership development programs.
- Under Goal 4: Complete West Campus, SciTech, and Arlington concepts to support planned growth; develop better analytics tools; upgrading critical information technology; establish university-wide corporate relations team and strategy; conclude the current fundraising campaign with the largest number possible.

President Cabrera outlined the four morning working sessions as follows:

- Serving Students
- Partnerships for Access
- Scholarship and Research
- Securing and Sustaining Talent

He introduced David Wu, Provost, and announced his new five-year term as Provost.

III. Provost David Wu framed the morning topics and posed the following questions to the group: What sets Mason apart? How are we different? He explained there are typically two types of universities in the United States: (1) prestigious Tier 1 research universities that typically have a very low acceptance rate and (2) large regional state universities that provide access to a larger population. He noted that Mason dares to be different from the typical model and strives to accomplish both – provide access to a large population of students and access to the degree of academic excellence that is afforded to a student at the prestigious research universities. Dr. Wu noted that the idea of academic excellence and accessibility is not typically combined at a university. He outlined three main pillars of excellence:

- Transformative learning
- Inclusion and sense of well-being
- Research innovation

Provost Wu explained that throughout the morning the group would see many examples of how Mason tries to accomplish this unique model. He noted it was an ambitious goal that required the help and thoughts of all those in attendance.

Ms. Gbemi Disu, Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives, provided instructions for the groups and rotations at each station.

IV. President Cabrera recognized Visitor Shawn Purvis and Michelle Marks, Vice President for Innovation and New Ventures, and highlighted the ADVANCE partnership between Mason and Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) that will create new pathways for thousands of students. He explained this program would help close the gap in needs in the Northern

Virginia workforce. Visitor Purvis announced that Northrop Grumman would be sponsoring \$1 million for the ADVANCE program to kick off their partnership. The audience responded with applause. Visitor Purvis noted that in addition to this sponsorship from the Northrop Grumman Foundation, they have a commitment of 25 students year-over-year for internships and job opportunities and they will work with their veterans employee resource group to support the veterans as they accomplish their career transition from the military to college to internship to the workforce. Ms. Marks commented that this gift would allow hundreds of students to attend Mason and get their Bachelor's degree for the cost of a community college tuition. She thanked Visitor Purvis.

President Cabrera recognized Bethany Usher, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, and noted her leadership of Mason Impact. Ms. Usher announced that on Friday, August 3, there would be a celebration of Student Scholarship at the MIX to recognize all the students who have been engaged in research, creative, community, or entrepreneur projects over the summer. She invited all to attend this showcase of talent.

President Cabrera invited comments from the floor. Numerous members of the group provided comments and feedback on the information received from the four working sessions. President Cabrera responded to questions and comments. He thanked the group for their feedback and input and encouraged the conversations to continue.

V. President Cabrera recognized Frank Neville, Chief of Staff and Vice President of Communications and Marketing. Mr. Neville encouraged the group to subscribe to the George Mason YouTube channel so that the productions can be viewed in real time as they are produced. He recognized the creative team behind the new video for prospective students and asked them to introduce themselves and their roles: Elliott de Luca, art director; Margaret Mandell, senior copywriter; Joseph Boyd, videographer and video editor; Will Sidaros, senior at Mason studying film, actor and grip; Sam Hakes, videographer, director and producer of the video. They explained it was a 'campaign' piece for the school instead of event documentation style, to speak to the school's strengths, philosophy, and principles. The video was shown and was recognized with applause from the audience.

VI. Rector pro tem Hazel called for a lunch recess at 11:55 a.m. and advised the meeting would reconvene at 1:00 p.m.

VII. Rector pro tem Hazel reconvened the meeting at 1:05 p.m. and called on President Cabrera. President Cabrera called on the new BOV members to provide their feedback on the morning session topics. He recognized Visitor Reagan. Visitor Reagan reported the following take-aways from his group:

- Under the topic of Securing and Sustaining Talent, the group learned about the difficulty of the onboarding process and how long it takes to get an employee enrolled. He noted, in his experience, this is a recurring theme in the state government as well. He

noted a comment from the group was the disparity in trends between schools within the University.

- Under the topic of Serving Students, the group learned about the acute problem of mental health on campus and that the problem is getting more intense. He noted that as Mason grows, the need for services is going to become more intense. Visitor Reagan found it remarkable that the graduation rates are consistent across groups and noted that is a great story to tell.
- Under the topic of Partnerships for Access, the group learned about the opportunities that exist for online education and the enormous demand for online education among adult learners and people who have some college credit.
- Under the topic of Scholarship and Research, the group learned about the ambitious goal of \$224 million by 2024. He noted the great diversity in Mason's research portfolio.

Visitor Moreno commented that Visitor Reagan summarized many of her observations. She shared that prior to this meeting, she did not know about the amazing accomplishments and progress of the current team. Visitor Moreno noted that part of her take-away is that the story of George Mason needs to get out and make sure people know about the research that is happening, the students that are graduating from Mason, and that many are staying in the area and helping to grow the economy. She noted that through her conversations, there is clearly a commitment to excellence and making the big ideas a reality. Visitor Moreno reported her take-away from the Partnerships for Access session was the important emphasis on the adult learner population in order to make the four-year college degree a reality for this group.

Visitor Rice reported the following take-aways from his group:

- Under the topic of Scholarship and Research, the group learned about the strengths and areas that need strengthening, noting that Mason has the preparation and willingness to go after those areas that need strengthening. He noted the great potential of the Innovation Center for Personal Health with INOVA, UVA, and Mason working together.
- Under the topic of Securing and Sustaining Talent, the group learned about human resources, payroll, and Search 2.0 training. He noted the good indicators and the noted room for improvement, giving people a challenge and providing good feedback on what has been done.
- Under the topic of Serving Students, the group received a lot of data including the statistics that 90% of Mason graduates are employed locally and that the incoming class is 50% is from the underrepresented population of the Commonwealth.
- Under the topic of Partnerships for Access, the group learned about the flexibility, affordability and portability of education and that there are 3,000 coming to Mason each Fall from Northern Virginia Community College.

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President Cabrera thanked the Visitors for their feedback and comments. He called on Ms. J.J. Davis, Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance, to present the Financial Framework.

Ms. Davis presented the University's finances at a macro level. She noted the Commonwealth's budget was delayed this year and thanked all who assisted and supported the effort to put the budget together. Ms. Davis reported Mason's S&P rating was upgraded, a testament to the efforts of everyone managing funds well. She also reported that Forbes rated Mason as one of America's top employers. Ms. Davis shared the Commonwealth's rating on Mason student ROI, which looked at the cost of education relative to wages post-graduation, and noted this was a very positive selling point for Mason. She explained the debt history and the marked improvement over the past five years, noting the work of George Mason University and the George Mason Foundation to achieve this. Ms. Davis discussed the revenue sources and the major expense categories, while noting the goal to remain affordable, accessible, and high quality. She noted the competition for students due to the decline in the high school population, compliance requirements, and the high cost of living in Northern Virginia. Ms. Davis emphasized the continuing disinvestment from the Commonwealth and Mason's pursuit of its fair share of those funds, noting the disparity in the amount of money Mason receives per student compared to its sister institutions in Virginia. She discussed the increased services for the students, the Core Campus construction, the water infrastructure, and IT and the connectivity issues.

Ms. Davis outlined the four afternoon sessions as follows:

- Planning for Growth
- Campus Planning
- Fundraising
- Government Relations

President Cabrera called on BOV members to provide their feedback on the afternoon session topics. He recognized Visitor Zuccari. Visitor Zuccari reported the following takeaways from her group:

- Educating the legislators with the Mason story and asking more questions about the discrepancies, especially during election years.
- With the growth of the buildings and the projected 7,000 students, the effort of managing all the time on all the campuses, noting the class size in the buildings would not have a significant change.
- Jack Nicholson attended the first event at the now EagleBank Arena.

She thanked Scott Nichols and Kathy Cagle for their support of the Board of Visitors.

President Cabrera recognized Rector pro tem Hazel. Rector pro tem Hazel reported the following takeaways from his group:

- It was interesting to hear about the plans for West Campus, noting it was a 50-year plan and that perhaps there were things that could be done sooner that would be more relevant, citing Arlington as a possibility.
- The current campaign has been very successful, but more needs to be done, including hiring more people and setting a new goal for a new campaign at the conclusion of this one.
- Regarding CyberX, even though the legislative language was passed, the funding will not happen for another year, Year 2 of the budget. He noted the opportunity to continue the discussion with legislators.
- Between Mason and Northern Virginia Community College, there are presently 100,000 students in class, making northern Virginia the education engine of the Commonwealth. He noted this message needs to be shared in Richmond.

President Cabrera recognized Visitor Rice. Visitor Rice reported the following takeaways from his group:

- The disparity between the different universities in terms of state remuneration, noting the many of the growth opportunities at Mason are in consortia or partnerships with other organizations.
- The management of expected growth and management of unexpected changes and the preparation needed to handle those events.
- The total growth of the campus from 400,000 square feet to 9,000,000 square feet, noting the incredible increase.

President Cabrera recognized Visitor Cumbie. Visitor Cumbie reported the following takeaways from his group:

- Regarding working the legislators on Mason's behalf, he noted the need to have more Mason graduates in the legislature and the need to work harder to get increased support
- The degree of continued growth at Mason and preparing for the changes that will accompany that growth.

Visitor Cumbie shared his connection to Mason over the years beginning in the early 1980's with then ICAR, now SCAR. He noted that in the 1990's, his firm was hired to develop the SRA building, and now his connection is serving as a Board of Visitor. Visitor Cumbie noted the amazing amount of change in that time and the increase in the Foundation's assets over the last 20 years.

VIII. President Cabrera provided the following closing thoughts:

- Regarding the concept of being the "education engine" of the Commonwealth, Mason is driving almost half of the growth in the Commonwealth.
- The disparity in the funding from the Commonwealth is increasing while the number of students is growing faster than any of the other sister universities.

- How can Mason continue to deliver on the mission of changing more lives for the better within the parameters and circumstances of funding? He noted the need to think differently about how Mason accomplishes its mission, noting being open to the idea of public/private partnerships as well as other non-traditional solutions.

President Cabrera commented on the theme of “Dare to be Different” and Mason branding that tells the unique Mason story. He thanked the group for their time and feedback, noting it was a very productive and informative day.

President Cabrera informed the group that Geo Mason wine would be available during the reception, noting this was a project led by the Alumni Association with labels designed by Mason students. He informed the group that for every bottle sold, \$3.00 goes to scholarships.

President Cabrera recognized Mr. Sean Mallon, Associate Vice President of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, to share information about the MIX. Mr. Mallon reported that over 30,000 cards were swiped through the reader since October 2017, represented over 5,000 unique individuals from across the campus. He invited the group to visit with the students and see the various innovative displays.

IX. Rector pro tem Hazel thanked the group for their attendance and support. He adjourned the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathy Cagle
Secretary pro tem