

State of Louisiana

MINUTES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JIMMY D. LONG SR. LOUISIANA SCHOOL FOR MATH, SCIENCE, AND THE ARTS

December 7, 2020

The Board of Directors of the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts met on Monday December 7, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. in the Jimmy D. Long Board Room, LSMSA, in Natchitoches, LA. Mrs. Gahagan called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Ms. Anne Dejoie-Lucas recorded the minutes. Mrs. Gahagan welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Mrs. Sharon T. Gahagan (Chair)
Mr. Tony Davis (Vice Chair) (via Zoom)
Rep. Beryl Amedee (via Zoom)
Dr. Jason C. Anderson
Ms. Leanne M Broussard (via Zoom)
Mr. Jared Dunahoe (via Zoom)
Dr. Vickie S. Gentry (via Zoom)
Ms. Chanda Johnson (via Zoom)
Ms. Marian "Suzy" Johnson (via Zoom)
Ms. Denise Karamales (via Zoom)
Mr. Jimmy D. Long Jr. (via Zoom)
Ms. Meredith McGovern (via Zoom)
Senator Beth Mizell (via Zoom)
Representative Charles Owens (via Zoom)
Dr. Larry Tremblay (via Zoom)
Dr. Arthur S. Williams (via Zoom)
Dr. Steve Horton, LSMSA Executive Director (non-voting)

Members Absent:

Mr. Joseph E. "Jed" Cain
Mr. Kirby Hopkins
Dr. Kimberly Walker McAlister
Ms. Martha T. Smiley
Mr. Richard Strong

Guests Present:

Matthew Couvillion, LSMSA Alumni Association (via Zoom)
Ken Sills, LSMSA Attorney (via Zoom)
Mr. John Allen, LSMSA Chief of Staff
Dr. Kristy Pope-Key, LSMSA Director of Academic Services
Ms. Emily Shumate, LSMSA Director of Enrollment and Student Services

Ms. Ali Landry, LSMSA Foundation Executive Director
Mr. Mike Sumner, LSMSA Coordinator of Enrollment Services

A Quorum of Board members being present, the meeting proceeded with business.

AGENDA ITEM 1: APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 28, 2020, BOARD MINUTES

Mrs. Gahagan requested the Board's review of the September 28, 2020, Board minutes and requested any additions or corrections.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Art Williams, seconded by Ms. Chanda Johnson, and unanimously passed, the Minutes of the September 28, 2020, meeting stand approved as read/reviewed.

AGENDA ITEM 2: CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Gahagan reported that she had no requests for comment.

AGENDA ITEM 3: DISCUSSION OF TREEN AUDITORIUM NAMING REQUEST

The Board received several requests for comment at the September meeting for the removal of the Treen name on the auditorium. The Board took no action at that meeting.

Based on the comments and prior action, Dr. Tremblay recommended that the Board again take no action since it was not required. The Board discussed the pros and cons of taking any action and respectfully acknowledging consideration of the comments

Following Attorney Sills discussion of acceptable ways to proceed,

Upon motion duly made by Ms. Suzy Johnson to close the discussion for this meeting and fix it to the Agenda for the March meeting, there was no second, and the motion died.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dunahoe to end the discussion and not fix it to the March Agenda, seconded by Mr. Davis, discussion ensued before the vote.

Discussion continued as to whether there needed to be a set time to re-open this item, or if motion could simply be to close the discussion.

Mr. Dunahoe withdrew his motion prior to vote.

Upon new motion duly made by Mr. Dunahoe, seconded by Mr. Davis, and passed by majority vote, discussion of this item ended, with no conditions attached.

Representative Amedee abstained from voting, citing her late arrival to the meeting and not participating in the discussion leading to the vote. All other members in attendance voted in favor.

AGENDA ITEM 4: APPROVAL TO WAIVE SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS - GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR 2021 SENIOR CLASS

Due to the pandemic and current situations and changes at LSMSA this school year, Dr. Key asked the Board to waive certain graduation requirements related to Special Projects for seniors. It would not impact the other classes at this time.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Anderson, seconded by Dr. Williams, the Chair called for further discussion to make sure everyone understood the request.

Unanimously passed, the Board approved waiving the Special Projects requirement for the senior class of 2021.

AGENDA ITEM 5: PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE STUDENT HANDBOOK

Ms. Shumate asked the Board to consider striking language restricting students from having “non-traditional” hair colors.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Dr. Tremblay, and unanimously passed, the Board agreed to the proposed change to the Student Handbook.

AGENDA ITEM 6: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

AGENDA ITEM 7: UPDATE ON THE RESIDENCE HALL PROJECT

Dr. Horton chose to address both agenda items simultaneously, recapping the School’s decisions for fall and spring semesters and focusing primarily on the upcoming spring semester’s “back to campus” plan that brings students back in smaller cohorts instead of all at once. There is a link on the school website with detailed information about this process.

The use of REACH software will provide the ability to better track the students. If the on-campus situation changes, LSMSA can react quickly and revert back to online instruction.

LSMSA was also recognized by the United States Department of Education as a Blue Ribbon school.

Dr. Horton also noted that Angela Couvillion has returned to the School as its registrar; and Ali Landry is the new Executive Director of the Foundation.

The residence hall completion is on track and should begin the process of securing furnishings and technology and developing the punch list by January 31.

AGENDA ITEM 8: REPORT FROM THE IDEA COUNCIL

Dr. Anderson reported that there is no report from The Council at this time.

AGENDA ITEM 9: REPORT FROM THE FACULTY

Dr. Anderson reported on the faculty accomplishments submitted since September 2020. Refer to Exhibit A9E1 for accomplishments submitted on behalf of Dr. Christina Hillesheim, Dr. Allison Landry, Dr. Al Benner, and Dr. Charles Jones.

AGENDA ITEM 10: DIVISION REPORTS

Refer to Exhibit A10E1 for Mr. Allen's Finance and Operations report. The report includes updates on areas that have seen significant savings, such as personnel and food services; how those numbers might influence attrition; and how those savings will be applied around campus for the remainder of the fiscal year to cover major costs such as thermographic cameras, outdoor seating, and more. He added that he's reached out to the state budget manager and will review options such as The Governor's Homeland Security Office to assist with reimbursement of some of the Covid-related costs. The Foundation has granted \$75,000 each for the fall and spring semesters to help with the thermo cameras and software for the next three years until it can be built into the state budget. They've also assisted with classroom equipment and technology.

Refer to Exhibit A10E2 for Dr. Key's Academic Services report, which includes retention and withdrawal data; grade concerns and academic probation; dual enrollment data; and faculty and staff accolades that have made the virtual and hybrid learning environments successful. Key added, "I want to thank the Board for your unwavering support of our project and our vision. Thank you for the ways you take care of our campus and our students."

Refer to Exhibit A10E3 for Ms. Shumate's Enrollment and Student Services report, which includes virtual platforms being used this year for recruiting, meetings, exploration days, and more. LSMSA is reaching out to faculty and members for student recommendations, to youth organizations throughout the state, and also working with the Foundation for a professional advertising campaign for the school in an effort to boost application and enrollment numbers. Mike Sumner has assumed responsibility for LSMSA's Summer@LSMSA program, which introduces the school to students in middle school. LSMSA is committed to doing some version of Summer of LSMSA this summer, hopefully in-person as well as on-campus.

With student cohorts returning to campus in Spring 2021, LSMSA is re-filling SLA and RA positions that were vacated last year due to the pandemic and will be challenging them to connect with students both virtually and in-person to revive and continue the living/learning experience. Ms. Shumate also explained that the new REACH software system (made possible with assistance from The Foundation) is designed for boarding schools and will technologically improve The School's sign-in/sign-out processes and provide better monitoring of students' whereabouts by staff, faculty and parents.

Refer to Exhibit A10E4 for Ms. Landry's LSMSA Foundation report, which includes financial updates on what the Foundation has raised to-date. Revenue is up 6% from Nov. 30, 2020, and assets are up 9% over the same period from last fiscal year. The Foundation's recent audit results can be viewed on their website and includes details of allocations that the Foundation made for school support as well as support for the Alumni Association and the Parents Council.

No Action Required

AGENDA ITEM 11: OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Gahagan indicated that pins would be sent to Senator Mizell, Ms. Broussard, Ms. McGovern and Representative Owen. LSMSA Board Vice Chair Tony Davis is resigning from his position on BESE's board, which will also terminate his position on LSMSA's board. Mrs. Gahagan said, "He's been an excellent Board member, very dedicated and very interested. We will certainly miss him."

No Action Required

AGENDA ITEM 12: DATE FOR NEXT BOARD MEETING

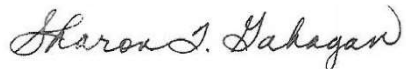
The *tentative* date for the next Board meeting is March 8, 2021.

No Action Required

There being no further business,

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Dunahoe, and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



Sharon T. Gahagan, EdS.
Chair



Steven G. Horton, PhD.
Secretary