**THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**

**THE VISITORS OF JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY**

#### Minutes of the Athletics Committee

The Athletics’ Committee met on November 18, 2021, in the Allegheny Room of the Festival and Student Center. The meeting was called to order 1:04 p.m. by Vanessa Evans-Grevious, Chair.

# Present:

Evans-Grevious, Vanessa, Chair

Jankowski, Maria

Rothenberger, John

Welburn, Craig

## Others:

King, Charles, Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance

Representatives from JMU IMPACT Diversity Program

Student Representatives from College of Business Leadership Program

Bourne, Jeffrey, Director of Athletics

LaPorta, Stephen, Assistant A.D. for Compliance

Phillips, Jennifer, Associate A.D. for Compliance/Student-Athlete Services/SWA

Phillips, Ty Assistant A.D. for Facilities & Events

Polglase, Geoffrey, Deputy Director of Athletics

Wood, Cliff, Senior Associate A.D. for Development

Ms. Evans-Grevious thanked the Athletics staff and administration for their hard work in moving JMU to the Sun Belt Conference. She then called for a motion to approve the minutes. It was moved by John Rothenberger and seconded by Maria Jankowski to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2021, meeting of the Athletics’ Committee.

**Sports Update**

Jeff Bourne, Director of Athletics, recognized Christy Morgan, Head Field Hockey Coach, for her CAA Coach of the Year honor and related team accomplishments from this past season, including regular season champions of the Colonial Athletic Association. Coach Morgan addressed the committee and thanked them for their on-going support; she noted the resilience of the student-athletes and coaches over the past year and expressed the importance of creating a culture and building character in her student-athletes. Mr. Bourne noted that JMU teams have compiled a 64-32-2 cumulative record for a .663 winning percentage across all sports. On November 6, 2021, JMU held a joint press conference with the Sun Belt Conference to announce the university’s move to all-sport membership in the Sun Belt beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year (July 1, 2022). The move also initiates a transition period to competing in FBS football, scheduled to be fully FBS by the 2024 fall season. As part of JMU’s transition to the Sun Belt, the CAA Board of Directors elected to enforce a bylaw restricting JMU’s participation in all team sport championships. Mr. Bourne noted that the student-athletes were disappointed, but had accepted the decision and are focused on moving forward. JMU President Jonathan Alger was named to the Knight Commission, a key advocacy group in intercollegiate athletics, which will offer further exposure for JMU coaches and our sports programs. JMU has had three teams appear in the national rankings in 2021-22, highlighted by football ranked second in the initial poll of the season. In addition, men’s soccer has been as high as 15 and field hockey 24. In major professional sports drafts, baseball’s Chase DeLauter has been targeted early by multiple prospect outlets as a first-round selection in the MLB Draft, which would make him the highest draft pick in JMU baseball history. Football is off to a 9-1 start and ranked No. 2 in the country. The record includes a 4-1 slate during a mid-season stretch of five consecutive ranked opponents. Ethan Ratke set all-time NCAA all-divisions (I, II & III) career records for field goals and points by a kicker, while moving into third all-time in points by any FCS player at all positions. JMU will be making its final appearance in the FCS Playoffs this December. Men’s soccer went 1-3-1 in its final five matches to finish at 11-5-1 and third in the CAA standings after being ranked as high as 15th midway through the season. Women’s soccer went 9-9-1 overall and finished third in the CAA. Volleyball went 17-7 and finished second in the CAA; Miëtte Veldman was named CAA Player of the Year. Field hockey went 12-7 overall and clinched the CAA regular season championship for the second straight season. Eveline Zwager was named CAA Player of the Year. Cross country finished fourth in the CAA Championship. Miranda Stanhope placed second in the title meet for the second time in two college seasons, and led JMU to a 19th-place team finish at the NCAA Southeast Regional after a 28th-place individual showing. Swimming & diving is off to an 3-2 start. Among coaching contract updates, Loren LaPorte of softball was extended through the 2029 season, Christy Morgan through the 2025 fall season, Tommy Baker through the 2025-26 season and Shelley Klaes through the 2026 spring season. Following questions from Committee Members, Mr. Bourne concluded his update.

**Academics Update**

Jennifer Phillips, Associate A.D. for Compliance/Student-Athlete Services/SWA, then provided an Academics update. Ms. Phillips reminded Board Members that a portion of D-1 schools’ share of NCAA revenue were tied to the respective institutions’ student-athletes’ academic achievement. These funds are allocations beyond the distributions received for basketball performance. Criteria for receiving the funds is based upon an institution meeting at least one of the following requirements: An Academic Progress Rate (APR) of 985 or higher, an overall all-sport Graduation Success Rate (GSR) of 90% or higher, and/or a Federal Graduation Rate (FGR) that is at least 13 points higher that the FGR of the student body at that institution. JMU met the criteria requirement for an APR of 985 or higher for 2020 (990), with 15 of 18 sports programs posting a perfect 1.00 APR. Further, Ms. Phillips shared that the Academic Tutoring Program continues to be a major factor in promoting Student-Athlete academic success, with over 3,700 tutor meetings being scheduled by Student-Athletes in the 2020-2021 academic year. She shared that the tutor program is being expanded to include a mentoring program, which will be piloted with our Men’s Basketball Program and add our Women’s Basketball Program in the Spring. Ms. Phillips reported that the Student-Athlete Multi-Year Graduation Success Rate was 89%, which made for the fifth-straight year that this Strategic Plan Accountability Measure of meeting or exceeding an 85% rating was achieved. Additionally, she highlighted that the department achieved an average cumulative GPA of 3.087; this was the fourth-straight year of meeting/exceeding the 3.0 threshold outlined in the University’s Strategic Plan. Further, Ms. Phillips shared the numerous academic accolades achieved this past academic year, including 680 Athletic Director’s Scholar Athlete Awards, 549 student-athletes making the CAA Honor Roll (formerly the CAA Commissioner’s Academic Award), 218 student-athletes being named to the Dean’s List and 94 student-athletes making the President’s List. She shared that for the first time since 2015, JMU had two student-athletes be named to the CoSIDA Academic All District Team: Cole Johnson (Football) and Miëtte Veldman (Volleyball). Ms. Phillips concluded her update by addressing questions from Committee Members, which included a discussion regarding the importance of the tutoring program as JMU transitions to the Sun Belt Conference, re-evaluating transferred credits from other institutions, and the necessity of establishing a true Missed Class Time Policy and Priority Registration for student-athletes. Ms. Phillips shared that the department is currently collecting information from other Sun Belt peer institutions regarding their policies. Ms. Evans-Grevious encouraged Ms. Phillips to share the findings at a future Board meeting and that the Athletics Committee would take the information to the full board for review.

**Facilities Update**

Ty Phillips, Assistant A.D. for Facilities and Events, offered an Athletics Facilities Update which included numerous completed and in-planning improvements to Athletics facilities across campus, including videoboard enhancements at Sentara Park and Bridgeforth Stadium; sound improvements were also made at Bridgeforth. A two-phased construction renovation has begun at Sentara Park. Phase I will consist of installing home/visiting locker rooms, a sports medicine suite with hydrotherapy and a home-coach’s area, while Phase II will repurpose existing space to provide an official’s locker room, concessions storage, laundry area, and a heating/cooling storage room. The two-phase, $2.9M project is slated to be completed by August, 2022. The Athletics Plecker Center weight room is currently undergoing a renovation to replace equipment, flooring and graphics. The $750,000 project is scheduled for completion in January, 2022. The Baseball/Softball lobby entrance in Memorial Hall will receive a new makeover replacing its storefront entrance with full glass, new carpet, display cases, graphics, updated lighting, ceiling tiles, and paint. A budget of $185,200 has been designated to the project, with a timeline of Spring, 2022. The newly renovated space will also present a future naming opportunity. Mr. Phillips then offered an overview of the Convocation Center renovation/repurposing, noting that the 113,275 GSF renovation will become the new hub for multiple sports programs and departments. The renovated building will primarily become the new Volleyball arena and indoor training area for the Track and Field program. Other repurposed areas will provide office space and locker rooms for Lacrosse, Men’s and Women’s Soccer, Track & Field/Cross Country, Field Hockey, and Volleyball. Mr. Phillips shared that the $17M project would also provide a variety of mixed-use spaces, such as auxiliary locker rooms, conference rooms, concessions, storage, academic area, multi-purpose rooms, nutritional area, indoor track, sports medicine and strength & conditioning areas. The Convocation Center renovation is set to begin in February 2022 and is targeted to be completed by March, 2023. Seat expansion and lighting improvements are scheduled to begin in June 2022 on the Softball field at Veteran’s Memorial Park. The renovation includes adding approximately 650 seats and improvements to the press box for increased operations; the renovation is budgeted at $2.75M and is expected to be completed by February 2023. The addition of broadcast level lighting to the facility should be completed by August 2022 and is budgeted at $569,600. Mr. Phillips shared that resurfacing of the tennis courts was recently completed in August, and that renovations to the Softball locker rooms will begin later this month. Other in-planning projects include the installation of two new hydrotherapy pools in the APC and renovation to the kitchen area in the APC fueling station. Finally, improvements are being explored for the Baseball/Softball weight room, as well as the Bridgeforth East Side weight room, which serves a large portion of our Olympic sport programs. Mr. Phillips concluded his update by taking questions from Committee Members.

**Development Update**

Cliff Wood, Senior Associate Athletics Director for Development, provided a fundraising update. The year is trending well. The annual fund is ahead of fiscal year 2019 which was the last year not affected by the pandemic. The annual fund is behind roughly $150K fiscal year 2021 due to the Dukes Unite campaign which ran last year from early October to mid-November. The annual fund numbers should pass last year as we move past the impact of Dukes Unite. We are launching a new fundraising campaign this week to ride the momentum of joining the Sun Belt conference; the campaign is branded “Dukes Rise” and will have a three-part focus: highlighting JMU’s trajectory in moving to the Sun Belt Conference, resilience shown by our student-athletes coming out of the pandemic, and a membership drive aimed to increase new donor participation. Mr. Wood shard that two new endowments were recently established: Kin Headley Memorial Fund (Men’s Basketball and Cheerleading) and the Brad Babcock Memorial Fund (Baseball) Following questions and discussion by Committee Members involving donor engagement, Mr. Wood concluded his update.

There being no further business, Ms. Evans-Grevious then called for a motion to adjourn. It was moved by Maria Jankowski and seconded **by** Craig Welburn**.** The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

 Respectfully submitted,

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 Vanessa Evans-Grevious, Chair

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Donna L. Harper, Secretary to the Board