**THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**

**THE VISITORS OF JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY**

#### Minutes of the Athletics Committee

The Athletics’ Committee met on February 17, 2022, in Ballroom B of the Festival and Student Center. The meeting was called to order at 2:49 p.m. by Vanessa Evans-Grevious, Chair.

# Present:

Evans-Grevious, Vanessa, Chair

Herod, Maribeth

Rothenberger, John

Welburn, Craig

## Others:

Angel, Mark, Assistant Vice President, Finance

Major, Lara, Rector

Molina, Rudy, Vice Provost Academic & Enrollment Management

Bourne, Jeffrey, Director of Athletics

Burgess, Brad, Assistant A.D. for Internal Development

Cramer, Ginny, Assistant Director, Media Relations, University Communications

Knight, Jack, University Counsel

LaPorta, Stephen, Assistant A.D. for Compliance

Phillips, Jennifer, Senior Associate A.D. for Student-Athlete Development/SWA

Soenksen, Roger, Faculty Athletics Representative

Straughn, Cameron, Team Physician

White, Kevin, Associate A.D. for Sports Programs

She then called for a motion to approve the minutes. It was moved by John Rothenberger and seconded by Maribeth Herod to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2021, meeting of the Athletics’ Committee.

**Sports Update**

Jeff Bourne, Director of Athletics, provided an overall sports update. JMU teams have compiled a 97-62-2 cumulative record for a .609 winning percentage. 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 no later than July 1, 2023. A follow-up press conference on February. 2 established July 1, 2022, as the official start date meaning that all sports, including football, would participate in the Sun Belt the next year. The move also initiates a transition period to competing in FBS football, scheduled to be fully FBS no later than the 2024 fall season. JMU’s move to the Sun Belt generated a total audience reach of 28.7 million over a one-week stretch encompassing the November 6 announcement. Native JMU Athletics social media posts (not shares of Sun Belt or other posts) on November 6 related to the announcement generated over 600,000 impressions across all social platforms. JMU has had five teams appear in the national rankings in 2021-22, highlighted by football finishing third and ranked as high as second in various parts of the season. In addition, men’s soccer has been as high as 15 and field hockey 24. In preseason polls, lacrosse was No. 12 and softball No. 17. JMU finished the regular season ranked third in the FCS in attendance at 21,769, placing JMU in the top four of FCS in all 10 seasons since the stadium’s expansion in 2011. JMU would have ranked 86th in all of FBS with that average, ahead of 46 other FBS programs. The Dukes also would have ranked fourth among the expanded, 14-team Sun Belt. For the year, JMU sold 6,853 total season tickets. Football went 12-2 overall and reached the FCS semifinals for the fifth time in the last six seasons. The Dukes finished ranked No. 3 in the country in their final FCS poll. Cole Johnson was named the CFPA National Performer of the Year, and Ethan Ratke earned the Fred Mitchell Outstanding Place Kicker Award as the best kicker in all divisions of college athletics outside of FBS. He 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. Altogether, 10 different Dukes earned All-America honors, with Ratke earning consensus All-America status. Cole Johnson was named CAA Offensive Player of the Year and Ethan Ratke CAA Special Teams Player of the Year. Men’s basketball sits at 14-11 following a slew of injuries, including three top players. The result comes after a 9-2 start, including the program’s first-ever victory over Virginia in its 12th try. It was JMU’s best start since the 1986-87 campaign. Against a challenging non-conference schedule, women’s basketball got off to a 3-7 start and currently sits at 11-12 overall, having lost two key starters to season-ending injuries – one before the start of the season and one partway through the season. Swimming & diving went 4-3 in dual meets. Women’s tennis sits at 2-4 overall, having upped its strength of schedule significantly in hopes of building an at-large resume. Men’s Tennis has started 5-0, its best start to a season since 1989-1990. Alissa Humphrey was a key member of leading Team USA to the WBSC U18 Women’s Softball World Cup Gold Medal in December. She was one of four Team USA players named to the 12-player All-World Team. Lacrosse opened the season 0-2 against a top-five North Carolina squad and fellow ACC member Virginia Tech. Molly Dougherty was named to the top-50 watch list for the Tewaaraton Award. Baseball gets started February 18 with Chase DeLauter honored as a preseason All-American. In December, Perfect Game rated him the No. 1 college prospect in the country and No. 3 overall in the entire draft. Associate A.D. Tom Kuster was awarded in late July with the John Randolph Award from the CAA. He later added the Hall of Fame Award from the Virginia Athletic Trainers’ Association in January. Mr. Bourne then concluded his update.

**Intercollegiate Athletics Program Report (APA Audit)**

Mark Angel, Assistant Vice President, Finance, asked if there were questions from Committee Members relating to the 2021 Intercollegiate Athletics Program Report (APA Audit); the report was shared with Committee Members prior to the meeting. The report presented a summary of the findings from the recent APA Audit conducted on the JMU Athletics Program, a report required by the NCAA. In following the reporting guidelines set forth by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the report revealed JMU’s numbers; the Total Operating Revenue for FY 2021 for the Department, was roughly $52.9M, with $46.1M collected from student fees, while the Total Operating Expenses for FY21, were $52.9M, with over $9.8M providing aid to students. It was reported that JMU’s Subsidy Percentage for FY21 was 59.6% ($52.9M) falling below the 70%-subsidy threshold standard set forth by the Cox Bill for all NCAA Division I-AA Institutions. It was reported that the Audit approved the University’s reporting processes of the data, and yielded no management recommendations for the University.

**Student-Athlete Disciplinary Report**

Jeff Bourne, Director of Athletics,asked if there were questions from Committee Members relating to the 2020-2021 Student-Athlete Disciplinary Report; the report was shared with Committee Members prior to the meeting. The report provided a summary of the judicial violations, sanctions and disciplinary actions incurred by student-athletes for 2020-2021, as required by the General Assembly, noting that 23 judicial charges occurred over nine student-athletes, representing four sports programs. The largest category for charges was “Failure to Comply” meaning a sanction was imposed and the Student-Athlete failed to complete the required disciplinary penalty. The report referenced that in addition to sanctions and disciplinary actions imposed by the Court System and JMU’s Office of Student Accountability Restorative Practices (OSARP), JMU coaches have the autonomy to enforce additional penalties, including removal from the team, scholarship reductions, additional community service obligations, program suspensions, scrimmage suspensions, and team program strikes. Mr. Bourne concluded this update by thanking the coaches for their leadership and for holding their respective student-athletes accountable.

**Development Update**

Brad Burgess, Assistant Athletics Director for Internal Development, provided a fundraising update. Overall fundraising up over $500K versus 2021 and 2019 in the Annual Fund. Total fundraising is up versus 2021, but down versus 2019 due to the completion of the AUBC Capital Campaign. The Dukes Rise Campaign has added new donors and seen an increase in donations from existing donors. The Dukes Rise Challenge has seen $100K in challenge gifts since early December; First challenge met 50 donor goal; Second challenge stands at 25 on a goal of 50. That challenge expires after Giving Day, which is Tuesday, February 22. While Mr. Burgess noted that progress has been made, he acknowledged that there is still more work to be done. A goal of expanding the Annual Fund to $5M and increasing the donor count to 5K, continues to be a Duke Club aspiration. Mr. Bourne spoke on the importance of creating a giving culture early at JMU with current student-athletes and the general student body, in an effort to expel the notion that the University “does not need resources” and also to establish an expectation of students to give both at the Athletics and University level. He discussed exploring best practices by UVA and other peer schools. Following questions from and conversation among Committee Members, Mr. Burgess concluded his update.

**FBS Transition**

Jeff Bourne, Director of Athletics, offered an update given JMU’s transition to the Sun Belt Conference. Mr. Bourne acknowledged that while most of our sports programs will compete in the Sun Belt Conference, a few “non-halo” sports will seek out another home in which to compete; these sports include Women’s Lacrosse, Field Hockey, and Women’s Swimming and Diving. Lacrosse will be joining the American Athletic Conference for 2022-2023; Field Hockey, while applying for affiliate membership with the A-10 and Big East, may be an independent for the coming year; however, it does have a complete schedule in place, and Swimming and Diving will likely complete in the Coastal Collegiate Sports Association (CCSA). Field Hockey as a potential independent, will have no Title IX implications, but would have to “win out” and receive an at large bid, as there is no automatic qualifier. Scheduling continues to be a challenge, however, JMU is being both strategic and creative as they build out schedules to ensure that they have both balance and are competitive. Mr. Bourne acknowledged that this transition year would be a learning year for the department, but that scheduling would remain a top priority. With the transition to FBS, the department will require some coaching contractual revisions to better align with other peer schools in the Sun Belt Conference. The Athletics Department is collaborating with the University to strategize resources and ways to build a strong academic arm that will ensure that both current and recruited student-athletes continue to be successful in the classroom. Despite JMU’s transition to the Sun Belt, the same high academic standards will remain an expectation, including maintaining a GPA that aligns with that of the general student body and also maintaining an APR of 960 or higher. Rudy Molina, Vice Provost Academic & Enroll Management, VP Student Academic Success/Enrollment Management, spoke to this partnership and dedication to promote continued academic success through this conference transition for both current and potential (recruited) student-athletes. Mr. Bourne shared the impact on transfers and also Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) now that JMU has transitioned to FBS. Stephen LaPorta, Assistant A.D. for Compliance and Jennifer Phillips, Senior Associate A.D. for Student-Athlete Development/SWA, then provided Committee Members with an update of new NCAA legislation which passed in early January, including the implementation of a newly-adopted constitution effective August 1, 2022, and the formation of a Transformation Committee. Mr. Bourne shared that COVID continues to impact our sports programs; however, cases are thankfully declining. Dr. Cameron Straughn, Team Physician, touched on the current COVID landscape including protocols and testing cadences for the various sports programs during their competitive seasons and shared that his medical staff is continuing to navigate what transition to post-pandemic will look like. Upon fielding questions from Committee Members, Mr. Bourne concluded his update.

There being no further business, Ms. Evans-Grevious then called for a motion to adjourn. It was moved by Maribeth Herod and seconded by ­­­John Rothenberger. The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Vanessa Evans-Grevious, Chair

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Donna L. Harper, Secretary to the Board