**­THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**

**THE VISITORS OF JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY**

#### Minutes of the Athletics Committee

The Athletics Committee met on September 18, 2025, in Ballroom B of the Festival and Student Center. The meeting was called to order at 2:45 p.m. by **Dave Rexrode, Chair**.

# PRESENT:

Rexrode, Dave, Chair

Bolander, Jeff

Caudle, Larry

Galati, Tom

Hedrick, Heather

Smith, Steve C.

White, Jack

## OTHERS PRESENT:

Allen, Dirron, AVP Student Life & Involvement

DeSantis, Brandon, Associate A.D. of Integrated Health and Sports Performance

Funkhouser, Savanna, Associate Director, Government Relations

Gallagher, Sean, Student, Organizational Leadership

Hall, Holly, Associate Vice President, Dean of Students

Holmes, Becky, Director, Internal Audit

Klaes, Shelley, Head Lacrosse Coach

Knight, Jack, University Counsel

LaPorta, Stephen, Associate A.D., Governance & NIL Strategy

Linger, Elizabeth, Compliance Coordinator, Audit & Management Services

Lough, Denise, Assistant A.D. for Administration and Operations

Manko, Marrisa, Associate A.D. for Business & Finance

McNeley, Julia, Student-Athlete, 2025-2026 SAAC Co-President

Moore, Towana, Vice President of Administration and Finance

Pedersen, Dane, Head Swimming and Diving Coach

Polglase, Geoffrey, Deputy Director of Athletics

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

Read, Caitlyn, Asst VP, Government Relations

Renkin, Scooter, Assistant A.D for Development

Roan, Matt, Director of Athletics

Saylor, Chad, Associate Director, University Communications

Soenksen, Roger, Faculty Athletics Representative

Warner, Kevin, Associate A.D. for Communications and Strategic Initiatives

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

Mr. Rexrode called for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 10, 2025, Athletics Committee Meeting. It was moved by Steve Bolander and seconded by Larry Caudle.

**Sports Update: JMU, SBC, NCAA**

Matt Roan, Director of Athletics, thanked the Athletics Committee and full Board’s unwavering commitment to Athletics and expressed appreciation of the alignment that exists across the University with campus partners. Prior to the meeting, Committee Members were provided with a copy of the JMU Athletics 2024-2025 Summary Release that highlighted a year of transition including Football as Full FBS members and experiencing its first bowl victory, first Sun Belt Conference women’s soccer championship and first American Conference lacrosse championship, second straight Sun Belt Conference swimming and diving title, five regular season championships, a cumulative 3.232 department GPA, and a department-record of 9,238 hours of community service.

Mr. Roan then recognized Head Swim & Dive Coach, Dane Pedersen, for his team’s accomplishments this past season, including being named the SBC Swimming & Diving Coach of the Year and capturing the program’s second straight SBC title and seventh conference title in the last eight years. Head Lacrosse Coach, Shelley Klaes, was also recognized for capturing Lacrosse’s first American Conference Championship and second regular season title, advancing to the first round of the NCAA Championship, and her staff being named American Conference Coaching Staff of the Year. Both coaches expressed their gratitude to the Board of Visitors and Athletics leadership for their support, which has fueled success in their respective programs.

Mr. Roan shared that during a recent visit with our Title IX Consultant, JMU was commended for its ability to preserve participation opportunities across all 18 sports. Great expectations are set for the 2025-2026 academic year, as Football (East) and Women’s Soccer are preseason favorites, while Men’s Soccer is picked sixth, Volleyball (East) second, Field Hockey (Mid-American Conference) second, and Cross Country picked seventh. As of September 18, JMU teams have compiled a 13-15-4 cumulative record for a .469 winning percentage. Field Hockey sits at 4-3, Football at 1-1, Men's Soccer at 0-4-1, Women’s Soccer at 4-2-3, and Volleyball at 4-5. Women’s Golf’s fall performance was highlighted by a shared title at the Elon Invitational with Sophomore, Bella Flores, placing second individually. Former JMU golfer Neal Shipley clinched a card on the PGA Tour for the 2026 season. Women’s Tennis Senior, Daria Munteanu, will compete in the ITA All-American Championships beginning September 20 and will be the first student-athlete in program history to be invited. Cross Country will host a home meet at the New Market Battlefield on September 26; this was an annual race venue for JMU for a long time, and this will be the first race there since 2021. JMU Athletics inducted its Hall of Fame Class of 2025 on August 29 with a group featuring: women's basketball guard Kirby Burkholder (2010-2014), sprint freestyle swimmer Eva Hannesdottir (2010-2012), diver Kimberly (Helfrich) Solari Brown (2009-2013), former Senior Vice President of Administration and Finance and President Charles King (1996-2021, 2024-2025), men's basketball guard Darren McLinton (1992-1996), baseball relief pitcher Kevin Munson (2008-2010) and football linebacker Stephon Robertson (2009-2013). Kevin White, Associate A.D. for Sport Programs, was named to the Division I Men’s Soccer Oversight Committee with a term through 8/31/2028. He joins Jennifer Phillips, Senior Associate A.D. for Student-Athlete Development/SWA, who serves as the Sun Belt Conference representative to the NCAA Division I Council, which includes a subcommittee appointment to the Strategic Vision and Oversight Committee. Mr. Roan provided an update on Federal and State legislation affecting collegiate athletics, including the SCORE Act and President Trump’s Executive Order, “Saving College Sports.’ A review of the Cox Bill was provided before Mr. Roan offered an update on JMU’s efforts to maximize revenues and efficiencies, including new premium seating opportunities at Football, Basketball ticket goals and collaboration with JMU Sports Properties to generate new revenue streams. Mr. Roan then shared updates from the Conference level, including Louisiana Tech as a new member of the SBC, no later than July 1, 2027, and the Southeastern Conference’s (SEC) recent announcement of going to a nine-game Football schedule. Mr. Roan shared that in 2024, the average SBC property generated $59M in media value; JMU generated $98.8M in media value, leading in online (print) news media and social media valuations. Following questions from Committee Members, Mr. Roan concluded his update.

**2024-2025 Strategic Plan Accountability Measures**

Geoff Polglase, Deputy Athletics Director, introduced himself to new Committee Members and asked if there were questions from Committee relating to the 2024-2025 Strategic Plan Accountability Measures; the report was shared with Committee Members prior to the meeting. He mentioned that it is a requirement to annually share the accountability metrics with the Board of Visitors. Further, he noted that JMU Athletics continues to meet and exceed the majority of the measures outlined in the University Strategic Plan. The measures are included annually in the STAR Planning submission, which is aggregated into the University’s data report for accreditation and published on jmusports.com. As the university pursues its new strategic plan, Athletics will be in step with the processes, timing and the key pillars and guidepost goals to ensure alignment of a new plan for JMU Athletics moving forward. Mr. Polglase shared that the current accountability measures will remain in place through June 2026 and serve as the basis of this report again in September 2026 and that the new Athletics Strategic Plan will include a new set of accountability measures, effective July 1, 2026. These measures will first be reported on in September 2027. Following a brief discussion, Mr. Polglase concluded his update.

**House Settlement Implementation**

Stephen LaPorta, Associate A.D. for Governance and Talent Management provided an update on the recently settled *House vs. NCAA* case. *The House vs. NCAA* was settled on June 6, 2025, with new rules taking place on July 1, 2025, which affect roster limits, institutional NIL, and restrictions on third party NIL. Mr. LaPorta shared that in response to the ruling, the implementation of software platforms (CAPS and NIL-Go, run by Deloitte) will assist in monitoring roster limits, institutional spending and third-party NIL activity. Given the ever-evolving NIL landscape, Mr. LaPorta shared that **Cliff Wood** is serving as Athletics General Manager and will provide guidance relating to Contract negotiation, Contract strategy, and Revenue generation strategies. Additionally, Athletics has worked with general counsel to develop a contract that outlines compensation in exchange for non-exclusive use of NIL and for participating in revenue generating activities for the University, including a financial literacy component and contains no buyouts; however, it does address selected strategic payment dates.

To date, Mr. LaPorta shared that forty-five post *House* settlement activities have been completed by JMU student-athletes, including incoming student orientation, Coaches Caravan Tour, ticket sales videos and Football suite move-in. Mr. LaPorta concluded his update by answering questions related to the topic.

**Student Athlete Focus:** **Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC)**

Jennifer Phillips, Senior Associate A.D. for Student-Athlete Development/SWA, introduced Volleyball Student-Athlete and Co-President of SAAC, Julia McNeley, who provided a Student-Athlete Advisory Committee update, including an overview of the Sun Belt SAAC Summer Summit. Ms. McNeley emphasized the importance of Community Engagement and Community Service and shared that JMU Athletics strives to achieve a top 15 recognition among NCAA Division I institutions as measured by the annual Helper Helper engagement report. Based on the 2024-2025 Report, JMU Athletics ranked nineth among all NCAA Division I programs, boasting 9,238 hours of community service from July 1, 2024-May 2, 2025, another department record based on the 9,085 hours of community service completed last year. JMU made an economic impact that equates to $321,410 while participating in 4,912 unique commitments.  As a review of the 2024-205 academic year, Ms. McNeley shared that SAAC initiatives included participation in the NCAA Inclusion Campaign, Sports Nutrition Initiative, Let's SAAC Hunger (partnering with the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank), TimelyCare Competition; new initiatives for this year should be forthcoming. JMU SAAC welcomed a new executive team consisting of eight student-athletes, across six different sport programs. Recent and upcoming SAAC sponsored events for Student-Athletes include the Athletics Welcome Back with Special Keynote by Jeremiah Brown, the Athletics Rookie Symposium, Fentanyl Prevention & Awareness Day with the First Lady of Virginia, Suzanne Youngkin, Meet the Dukes Day and Build Your Bag Series, Powered by Truist Momentum. Board members thanked Ms. McNeley for her leadership and SAAC’s continued volunteerism in local community. Ms. McNeley then concluded her update.

**Development Update**

Scooter Renkin, Associate Athletics Director for Development, shared the results of fundraising efforts from Fiscal Year 2025 which showed overall financial growth and a record-breaking year; Mr. Renkin thanked Committee Members for their support and credited the work of the Duke Club team in collaboration with the Ticket Office for the previous year’s success. For Fiscal Year 2025, a Donor Record of 10,668 was met, a 23.2% increase from Fiscal Year 24. The Annual Fund set a record of $5,398.015, a 37% increase from Fiscal Year 24, while a new record for overall fundraising was achieved at $7,744,711, an 18.3% increase from Fiscal Year 24. Mr. Renkin shared that Fiscal Year 26 goals include: Annual Fund Goal of $5.5M and 11,000 Donors. “Diggin’ Dukes” will take place on December 2, 2025; this is the third year for the Sport Specific Giving Campaign which has positively impacted our Olympic sport programs. Mr. Renkin then offered a snapshot of the future, including embracing the “new normal,” the creation of the Student-Athlete Enhancement Fund, use of analytics to drive giving levels, “staffing for success,” and collaboration with the University in its new fundraising campaign, all the while ensuring that our focus remains “transformational” opposed to “transactional.” After a brief discussion, Mr. Renkin concluded his update.

Led by Mr. Rexrode’s closing remarks, Mr. Roan concluded the meeting by asking the Committee members for feedback concerning future agenda items they would like to be considered which included a brief discussion.

There being no further business, Mr. Rexrode, Chair, then called for a motion to adjourn. It was moved by Tom Galatiand seconded by Larry Caudle. The meeting was adjourned at 4:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dave Rexrode, Chair

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David Kirkpatrick, Secretary