



**Virginia Commonwealth University
Office of the Board of Visitors**

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January 9, 2025

Division of Legislative Automated Systems (DLAS)
Attn: Legislative Documents and Reports Processing

Via email to: reportdocs@dlas.virginia.gov

To whom it may concern:

Pursuant to Section 23.1-1303(B)(13) of the Code of Virginia, on behalf of the Virginia Commonwealth University Board of Visitors I am herewith enclosing the Annual Executive Summary of the Board of Visitors of Virginia Commonwealth for filing.

Contact information for this report is as follows:

Name: Chelsea Gray, Executive Director of Board and Executive Operations
Telephone Number: 804-828-9213
Email address: cgray8@vcu.edu

Best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chelsea R. Gray".

Chelsea R. Gray
Executive Director of Board and Executive Operations Assistant Secretary and Board Liaison
Virginia Commonwealth University

**Document Title**

Annual Executive Summary of the interim activity and work of the Board of Visitors of Virginia Commonwealth University for calendar year 2025 pursuant to §23.1-1303(B)(13) of the Code of Virginia

Author

Virginia Commonwealth University

Code Section

Title 23.1, Chapter 13, Section B(13) requires that the governing board of each public institution of higher education shall submit to the General Assembly and the Governor and make publicly available on the institution's website an annual executive summary of its interim activity and work no later than the first day of each regular session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

Members of the Board of Visitors of Virginia Commonwealth University

Current members and their term expiration dates:

1. Ms. Ellen Fitzsimmons, Rector (Term expires: June 30, 2026)
2. Hon. Peter Farrell (Term expires: June 30, 2026)
3. Dr. Clifton Peay (Term expires: June 30, 2026)
4. Dr. Vernon Dale Jones (Term expires: June 30, 2026)
5. Mr. Anthony Bedell (Term expires: June 30, 2027)
6. Ms. Rooz Dadabhoy (Term expires: June 30, 2027)
7. Mr. Steven DeLuca, Vice Rector (Term expires: June 30, 2027)
8. Mr. Gurpreet (P2) Sandhu (Term expires: June 30, 2027)
9. Dr. Kenneth Lipstock (Term expires: June 30, 2028)
10. Dr. Siobhan Dunnivant (Term expires: June 30, 2028)
11. Mr. Randolph Reynolds, Jr. (Term expires: June 30, 2028)
12. Mr. Clarence (C.J.) Sailor (Term expires: June 30, 2028)
13. Mr. Neil Amin (Term expires: June 30, 2029)
14. Ms. Lara Tyler Chambers (Term expires: June 30, 2029)
15. Mr. Andy Florance (Term expires: June 30, 2029)
16. Ms. Lori Jennings (Term expires: June 30, 2029)



Executive Summary

Annual Executive Summary of the interim activity and work of the Board of Visitors during calendar year 2025 in accordance §23.1-1303(B)(13). Questions regarding the Executive Summary can be addressed to Chelsea R. Gray, Executive Director of Board and Executive Operations at cgray8@vcu.edu or via phone at 804-828-9213.

The goal of the Board of Visitors of Virginia Commonwealth University is to operate in a transparent manner as contemplated in Section §23.1-1303 (B)(1) and in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act including Sections 2.2-3707 and 2.2-3711 concerning public access to information.

During the 2025 calendar year the Board of Visitors held quarterly committee and board meetings, a budget and enrollment workshop, an orientation, a retreat, a special meeting, and five executive committee meetings¹. All meetings were open to the public, notice was provided, and agendas and minutes were published pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act §23.1-1303. Agendas of the meetings can be found at <https://bov.vcu.edu/meetings/>. Minutes of the meetings can be found at <https://bov.vcu.edu/meetings/minutes/>.

Any business that was conducted in a closed session at a meeting was done pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act §2.2-3711.

In addition, an attorney from the Office of the Attorney General was invited to attend all meetings.

Pursuant to §23.1-1303(B)(1) of the Code of Virginia the Bylaws of the Virginia Commonwealth University Board of Visitors has adopted Bylaws which were updated and approved by the board at the September 13, 2024 board meeting. The Bylaws are posted on Virginia Commonwealth University Board of Visitor's website at <https://bov.vcu.edu/bylaws/>.

Pursuant to §23.1-1303(B)(9) and in accordance with the Bylaws of the Board of Visitors of Virginia Commonwealth University, the Board meets annually with the president to deliver the president's evaluation and employment contract in closed session. This was done at the September 12, 2025 Board meeting.

¹ For discussion of prospective candidates for an open senior position at VCU. Action was taken at only one meeting.

Activity

March 21, 2025 Action Items

The Board of Visitors of Virginia Commonwealth University approved the following unanimously²:

1. December 13, 2024 minutes
2. Create a new Master of Science degree in Cardiovascular Perfusion
3. Program discontinuance for the Master of Education in Adult Learning
4. Reorganize the Department of Endodontics and Oral Diagnostic Sciences to establish two departments - the Department of Endodontics and the Department of Oral Diagnostic Sciences in the School of Dentistry
5. Rename the Department of Anatomy and Neurobiology to the Department of Anatomy and Neuroscience in the School of Medicine
6. Reorganize the three DePillars departments into one department in the School of the Arts
7. Reorganize the Department of Theatre and the Department of Dance and Choreography into one department in the School of the Arts
8. Rename the Department of Chemical and Life Science Engineering the Department of Chemical, Biomolecular, and Environmental Engineering in the College of Engineering
9. Reorganize VCU Life Sciences and the Department of Biology into the School of Life Sciences and Sustainability within the College of Humanities and Sciences
10. Reorganize the Division of Urology in the Department of Surgery into the Department of Urology in the School of Medicine
11. Amendment to the 2024-2030 Six-Year Capital Plan, VCU Catering and Event Space
12. Execute Term Contracts, Professional Architectural and Engineering Services
13. Construction Services Contract, 901 West Franklin Street Renovation
14. BOV Statement on Governance and Ethical Leadership
15. Regulation 8VAC90
16. VCIMCO board appointment
17. Resolution to recognize Erich W. Damm, Ph.D., for their commitment to VCU
18. Resolution to recognize Charles Feltcher Christian, M.D., for their contribution to VCU
19. Resolution to recognize Sonia Ylahcevic, Ph.D., for their commitment to VCU
20. Appointment of Ms. Ellenfitzsimmons as Rector, Mr. Steven DeLuca as Vice Rector, and Dr. Dale Jones as Secretary for FY26
21. The Resolution of Certification
22. Action items, as presented and discussed in closed session:
 - a. Acquisition of properties
 - b. Execution of construction services contract
 - c. Named funds over \$50,000
 - d. The special awards recipients

² One member of the board was absent from the March 21, 2025 board meeting.



- e. The recipient(s) of the BOV Scholarship
- f. Resolution of Virginia Commonwealth University Regarding the Presidential Executive Order on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Resolution of Virginia Commonwealth University Regarding the Presidential Executive Order on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was approved by the majority of the Board of Visitors. Eleven board members voted in favor, four voted against, and one was absent.

No action was taken at the April 9, 2025 meeting.

May 9, 2025 Action Items

The Board of Visitors of Virginia Commonwealth University approved the following unanimously³:

1. March 21, 2025 meeting minutes
2. April 9, 2025 Enrollment and Budget Workshop minutes
3. Audit, Integrity and Compliance Committee Charter and Meeting Planner
4. Proposed Audit, Integrity and Compliance Department Charter
5. FY2026 Audit Work Plan
6. FY2026 University Ethics and Compliance Program Initiatives
7. Project Plans and Demolition, School of Dentistry
8. Authorization to Initiate a Capital Project, VCU Catering and Events Space
9. Demolition, 700 and 720 West Grace Street
10. 2026-2032 Six-Year Capital Plan
11. Issue Financing for Property Acquisition, 720 West Grace Street
12. Establish a new Bachelor of Science (BS) in Robotics and Autonomous Systems degree program, College of Engineering
13. Rename the Department of Biostatistics to Department of Biostatistics and Health Data Science, School of Public Health
14. Establish a Master of Science (MS) in Finance degree program, School of Business
15. 2.5% tuition increase for undergraduates for FY26 and a \$200 increase for mandatory fees and all other information presented and discussed
16. The Resolution of Certification⁴
17. Action items, as presented and discussed in closed session⁵:
 - a. Two leases
 - b. Demolition of property
 - c. Named funds and physical spaces over \$50,000

³ One member of the board was absent from the May 9, 2025 board meeting.

⁴ Two members of the board who participated in the May 9, 2025 board meeting were absent from the vote for the resolution of certification.

⁵ Two members of the board who participated in the May 9, 2025 board meeting were absent from the vote for the closed session action items.

d. Faculty tenure appointments

June 25, 2025 Action Items

The Board of Visitors of Virginia Commonwealth University approved the following unanimously:

1. May 9, 2025 meeting minutes
2. Fiscal Year 2026 Budget as presented by Dr. Meredith Weiss, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration and Chief Financial Officer
3. Six-Year Plan as presented by Dr. Meredith Weiss, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration and Chief Financial Officer
4. Amendment to Contract and Financing, West Grace Street Housing Project
5. Execute a Purchase Order, EBSCO Industries, Inc.
6. Execute a contract, student health insurance (United Healthcare), with a provision that it only be considered for one year, during which time additional vetting will be conducted for future contract consideration.
7. The Resolution of Certification⁶
8. Action items, as presented and discussed in closed session⁷:
 - a. Lease
 - b. Contract

September 12, 2025 Action Items

The Board of Visitors of Virginia Commonwealth University approved the following unanimously⁸:

1. June 25, 2025 minutes
2. Academic and Health Affairs Committee Charter and title
3. BOV Electronic Communication and Virtual Meeting Policy
4. BOV Resolution Related to the Optional Retirement Plan for Employees of VCU Selected Defined Contribution Benefit Plan for Employees of VCU
5. Facilities, Real Estate, and Administration Committee Charter
6. Amendment to the 2026-2032 Six-Year Capital Plan and Authorization to Initiate a Capital Project, Sadie Heath Cabaniss Hall Window Replacement
7. Amendment to the 2026-2032 Six-Year Capital Plan, Authorization to Initiate a Capital Project and Project Plans, James Branch Cabell Library Fourth Floor Special Collections and Archives Expansion

⁶ Four members of the board who participated in the June 25, 2025 board meeting were absent from the vote for the resolution of certification.

⁷ Four members of the board who participated in the June 25, 2025 board meeting were absent from the vote for the closed session action items.

⁸ One member of the board was absent from the September 12, 2025 board meeting.



8. Revised Project Plans, Athletic Village Phase I: Outdoor Track Facilities and Practice Fields
9. Finance and University Resources Committee Charter
10. Contract: Audio Visual Products and Maintenance Services, Epitome Networks
11. Contract amendment: Construction Services, Scherer Hall Renovation
12. Contract amendment: Construction Services, 901 West Franklin Street Renovation
13. BOV Student, Faculty and Staff Representatives
14. Resolution To Recognize Frank J. Tortorella, MD For Their Commitment To Virginia Commonwealth University
15. Resolution To Recognize Thomas P. Loughran, MD For Their Commitment To Virginia Commonwealth University
16. Appointment of two members to the BOV Executive Committee as members-at-large: Andy Florance and P2 Sandhu
17. The Resolution of Certification
18. Action items, as presented and discussed in closed session:
 - a. Real property acquisitions and disposition
 - b. Contracts
 - c. Named funds over \$50,000 and physical spaces eligible for naming
 - d. Faculty tenure appointments, changes in status and other personnel actions
 - e. Compensation of the chief audit and compliance executive
 - f. 9% increase to President Rao's base pay, increasing to \$895,618 and increasing his deferred compensation to \$345,647 (\$75,000 increase)

October 9, 2025 Executive Committee meeting⁹

The Board of Visitors of Virginia Commonwealth University Executive Committee, pursuant to the BOV Bylaws Section 7(A)(2), unanimously approved the Resolution of Certification and the lease agreement as presented and discussed in closed session.

No action was taken at the October 24, 2025 Retreat meeting.

November 21, 2025 Action Items

The Board of Visitors of Virginia Commonwealth University approved the following unanimously:

1. September 12, 2025 meeting minutes
2. September 22, 2025, September 25, 2025, September 29, 2025, October 2, 2025, and October 10, 2025 BOV Executive Committee meetings minutes
3. Academic, Health Affairs, and Research Committee Charter and Planner

⁹ Three committee members were absent from the October 9, 2025 Executive Committee meeting. The Rector appointed an ad hoc member to participate.

4. Proposal to establish the Master of Science in K-8 Mathematics Teacher Leadership
5. Proposal to reorganize and close the Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics and the Department of Statistical Sciences and Operations Research into one department: the Department of Mathematics and Statistics
6. Proposal to rename the Department of Chemical and Life Science Engineering to the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
7. Proposal to rename the Department of English to the Department of Language and Literature
8. Proposal to discontinue the Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies
9. Proposal to discontinue the Bachelor of Science in Financial Technology
10. Proposed Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures
11. Proposed Term Faculty Promotion Policies and Procedures
12. Amendment to the 2026-2032 Six-Year Capital Plan and Authorization to Initiate a Capital Project, Engineering West Hall Cooling Tower Replacement and Architectural Pyramid Renovation
13. Project Plans, West Grace Street Housing Project
14. Execute a Contract Amendment, Professional Architectural and Engineering Services, VCU Dentistry Center
15. Execute a Contract Amendment, Construction Services, Athletic Village Phase I: Outdoor Track Facilities and Practice Fields
16. Issue Financing and Execute a Contract, West Grace Street Housing Project, Early Construction Services
17. VCU Athletics Name, Image, Likeness (NIL) Policy
18. The Resolution of Certification¹⁰
19. Action items, as presented and discussed in closed session¹¹:
 - a. Contracts
 - b. Named funds over \$50,000
 - c. Physical spaces eligible for naming
 - d. Faculty tenure appointments

¹⁰ Two members of the board who participated in the June 25, 2025 board meeting were absent from the vote for the resolution of certification.

¹¹ Two members of the board who participated in the June 25, 2025 board meeting were absent from the vote for the closed session action items.