

University Athletics Committee Minutes

September 24, 2020 – 3:30 p.m.

Via Zoom

Members Present: Whit Babcock, Katie Boes, Tom Crow, Bob Denton, Patrick Finley, Trish Hammer (for Sally Morton), Rachel Holloway, Art Keown, Joseph Kozak, Mike Madigan, Joe Marcy, Ken Miller, Michael Nappier, Jay Poole, Bridget Ryan-Berman, Susan Short, Becki Smith, Kenneth Stiles, Ester Talamazzi, Eric Wiseman, Brad Wurthman

Absent with Notification: Sally Morton, Tom Burbey (until spring 2021), Allison Bowersock, Joseph Tront, Chris Wise (for Frank Shushok)

Absent without Notification:

Guests Present: Danny White, Mike Swanhart

Recorder: Anna Taylor, CALS Academic Programs

Susan Short, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

1. **Welcome** Susan Short

2. **Approval of Agenda** Group
A motion was made to approve the agenda, and was passed unanimously.

3. **Athletic Director Update** Whit Babcock

COVID 19 – Impact on Student-Athletes

Whit Babcock reviewed a slide (included in the Google drive) and explained the COVID impact planning MAG – medical advisory group, RTP – return to play.

Football student athletes are tested three times per week given their status deemed by the NCAA as a ‘high contact’ sport. This testing schedule is in-line with the MAG and required of all ACC schools and opponents. There have been some positives, but testing numbers are not released.

One more round of testing, but it looks like there will be a football game on Saturday. The university will not do anything to put students at risk. Virginia Tech wants to play 11 games. There is a 13-14-week window to play football games. Games can be played between now and April 17. There is some flexibility. It is possible to make changes to the schedule based on teams that cannot play. The NCAA gave an extra year of eligibility to student athletes for all fall sports.

Rachel Holloway thanked Whit for allowing Lane Stadium to be one of the primary sites for COVID testing. The university could not have done this without Athletics help.

Summer/Fall Inclusion & Diversity Programs

Whit Babcock reviewed a slide (included in the Google drive)

Virginia Tech has been ahead of other universities with efforts related to inclusion and diversity.

What used to be program driven is now more dialogue driven.

The department has been involved in town hall meetings.

Teamwork can be the great equalizer – student athlete group is more diverse than other groups on campus.

Other

When asked about the budget and the challenges of who gets football tickets, Whit discussed some of the considerations:

- How to work with the Governor's Order that we could have no gathering larger than 1000
- Family and friends, and no students unless they were guests of the players
- No marching band, but they will be on the screen (they will be assembled at English Field)
- No cadets except the three that will receive flags from the players
- When all pre-determined tickets were distributed, 80 tickets remained
- Ken Miller is working on the budget, will not cut sports
- For all schools, how we come out of this will determine the next 10 years
- No fans in the stands is hard to make up
- Just a rough guess that we will be in the \$40 million-range loss.

4. **Self-Introductions** Group

5. **University Athletics Committee Charge** Susan Short
Susan Short reviewed the UAC charge (below)

- *To review and provide advice on broad policy issues relating to intercollegiate athletics.*
- *Provide advice to the Athletic Director on such matters as financial aid for student athletes, residential life for student athletes, program balance between revenue and non-revenue sports, recruiting, admissions, NCAA compliance, and general intercollegiate athletic budgetary and operational matters.*
- *Provide advice to the Executive Vice President and Provost on matters related to academic progress of athletes, the admission policy for athletes, academic advising of athletes, and relations with academic departments and faculty in general.*
- *Participate in the search process for the selection of the Athletic Director. The Committee will also participate in periodic evaluations of the Athletic Director in coordination with the University official to whom the Athletic Director reports.*

Reports to: Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies.

6. **Meeting Minute Approval Process** Anna Taylor
The committee agreed to electronic voting of the meeting minutes.

7. **Athletic Department Finances** Brad Wurthman,
Senior Associate Athletics Director, External Operations

Brad Wurthman reviewed a slide and played a short video (AD Athletics in the Google drive)

- Respond to and anticipate shortfalls.

- Traditionally, tickets and fundraising are where most revenue is generated.
- Currently, Keep Jumping Initiative, cardboard cutouts, virtual events, and digital engagements are bringing in money.

The silver lining from COVID is the **Keep Jumping Initiative**

- Football Ticket Sales
 - 19% of accounts chose to donate (\$4.8m)
 - 64% of accounts chose a hybrid between donation and credit for next year (\$11.5m)
 - 17% of accounts chose a refund (\$2.7m) – Team won back 20% of this!
- Virtual 5K – We do not normally have this involvement on game day in Blacksburg.
 - 1256 participants
 - 682 new Hokie Club members
 - 41 states involved
 - 7 countries involved

Jay Poole commented on the phenomenal work that has been done to raise money and the fact that new Hokie Club members are being added even during this difficult time.

Bridget Ryan-Berman provided additional comments and reflections about the contributions by Brad and his team. In addition, she also reminded the group of Virginia Tech’s upcoming sesquicentennial celebrations and various opportunities to encourage, promote, and highlight our students and athletic programs.

8. Additional Comments

Rachel Holloway – SAASS continues their work following safety protocols trying to keep the same high level of support as always. They are on site (providing face-to-face support), but following protocol.

Mike Swanhart said this is going better than expected.

9. Upcoming Presentations/Topics

Susan Short reviewed the list of upcoming meetings. In October, the Committee will hear an update from men’s head basketball coach, Mike Young, as well as presentations from the Committee’s two student athletes.

10. Adjournment – 5:00 p.m.

Fall 2020 Semester Meeting Dates:

Thursday, October 22, 3:30-5:00 p.m. via Zoom

Thursday, November 19, 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. via Zoom

Thursday, December 17, 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. via Zoom