

MINUTES

**BOARD OF VISITORS PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION
FOR PROPOSED 2020-21 TUITION AND FEES**

March 19, 2020

In accordance with *Code of Virginia* §23.1-307(E), requiring boards of visitors to hold public comment sessions prior to acting on any proposed increase in undergraduate tuition or mandatory fees, an ad hoc committee of Virginia Tech’s Board of Visitors met in open session on Thursday, March 19, 2020, in Assembly Hall of the Holtzman Alumni Center on the Blacksburg campus.

Present

Ms. Letitia Long (Vice Rector)
Ms. Greta Harris
Ms. Anna James
Ms. Sharon Brickhouse Martin
Mr. Dennis Treacy

Also present were the following: President Timothy Sands, Ms. Kim O’Rourke (Secretary to the Board), Ms. Kari Evans, Ms. Kay Heidbreder, Mr. Mark Owczarski, Dr. Dwayne Pinkney, a member of the public, and a member of the media.

Vice Rector Long called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m. In accordance with *Code of Virginia* §23.1-307(D), a public notice of the proposed range of increase in tuition and fees was issued on February 28; the public notice included information about the public comment period. (Copy filed with permanent minutes and marked Attachment A.)

TUITION WORKSHOP

The meeting began with a 15-minute tuition workshop presented by Dr. Dwayne Pinkney, Senior Vice President and Chief Business Officer. Dr. Pinkney’s PowerPoint presentation covered affordability and financial aid to Virginia Tech students, student success rates, the level of state support, how state support and tuition revenue are used, and factors influencing tuition development, as well as the proposed 2020-21 tuition and fees. (Copy filed with the permanent minutes and marked Attachment B.)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Following the presentation, Ms. Long called on Ms. O'Rourke to review the guidelines for the one-hour public comment period. Each speaker was allotted three minutes to speak and were to limit their comments to the topic of tuition and fees. Speakers were asked to pre-register, and if any time remained, then walk-ins would be given the opportunity to speak.

Five individuals from the Virginia Tech community (as determined by their email addresses) registered to speak, one of whom was the president of the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA). The GSA president subsequently decided to submit written comments on behalf of the GSA rather than to appear in person. Only one of the registered speakers appeared at the venue to speak; the others did not attend and gave no notice. The sole speaker was Steven Warren, an undergraduate student, who spoke in opposition to the proposed increase; he left a copy of his comments to be entered into the public record. (Copy filed with the permanent minutes and marked Attachment C.)

There were no walk-in speakers.

The public comment session ended at 12:30 p.m.

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The public was also given the opportunity to submit written comments through March 22, 2020. The Board of Visitors is scheduled to take action on the proposed tuition and fees for 2020-21 at its next regular meeting on March 30, 2020. All public comments will be provided to the Board in preparation for that meeting and will become part of the public record. [Note: As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the March 30 meeting was postponed to a later date.]

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Letitia Long, Vice Rector

Kim O'Rourke, Secretary