

**APPROVED BY BOARD 9/21/21**

ONLINE VIRGINIA NETWORK AUTHORITY BOARD

December 17, 2020

**MINUTES**

The Online Virginia Network (OVN) Authority Board met on Thursday, December 17, 2020 via Zoom.

Present from the Board were:

Delegate Alex Askew  
Peter Blake  
Adnan Bokhari  
Delegate Kirk Cox  
Jane H. Dané  
Senator Adam Ebbin  
Speaker Eileen Filler-Corn  
Senator Ghazala Hashmi  
James Hazel  
Karen Jackson  
Delegate Mark Keam  
David Leichtman  
Fletcher Linder  
Sharon Morrissey  
Senator Steven Newman  
Susan Patrick  
Ron Ripley  
John Rothenberger

Absent:

Dietra Trent

Also present were:

Jonathan Alger  
Andy Casiello  
Earl Nance  
Tara Kuhn  
David Burge  
Van Wilson  
David Kozoyed  
Heather Huling  
Rusty Waterfield  
Austin Agho  
Jason McClain  
Bo Ram Yi  
Sheri Prupis  
Holly Whistler  
Liz Bartles  
Sarah Herzog

Tony Maggio  
Marc Austin  
Charles Kreitzer  
Caitlyn Read  
Sarah Spota  
Greg DuBois  
Lisa Sedlock  
Bruce Aird  
Caitlin Shear  
Scott Harrison  
Brian Payne  
Ahmad Taheri  
Janette Muir  
Darren Troxler  
Kevin Borek  
Beverly Rebar

Annie Gibson  
Mark Smith  
Kelly Clawson  
Ellen Davenport  
Lucia Ball  
Don Stansberry

## **WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS**

Speaker Filler-Corn thanked President Alger and James Madison University for hosting the meeting. The previous meeting focused on the future of OVN, degree evaluation and a proposal for an expanded scope of OVN. The General Assembly acknowledged the critical role of online learning, OVN and our public institutions' ability to continue to provide high-quality education.

President Alger thanked the Speaker for her support of higher education and welcomed board members. James Madison University is proud and grateful to be a new member of the OVN this year. Alger thanked the General Assembly and former speaker Kirk Cox for their efforts. Members of the JMU faculty have learned how to use technology in new ways. It is important to engage the growing number of working adults who are pursuing degrees that need additional training online and can't necessarily come to a brick and mortar campus. The concept of lifelong learning is something that we need to be talking about more as a Commonwealth and I think OVN will be a great way to embrace that concept.

## **APPROVAL OF July 17, 2020 MEETING MINUTES**

Upon a motion by Senator Ebbin and seconded by Delegate Keam, the minutes were approved by roll-call vote (*Ayes: Askew, Blake, Bokhari, Cox, Dané, Ebbin, Filler-Corn, Hashmi, Jackson, Keam, Leichtman, Linder, Morrissey, Newman, Patrick, Ripley, Rothenberger; Nays: None*).

## **APPROVAL OF BUDGET for 2021-2022**

Upon a motion by Sharon Morrissey and seconded by Delegate Askew, the budget was approved by roll-call vote (*Ayes: Askew, Blake, Cox, Dané, Ebbin, Filler-Corn, Hazel, Jackson, Keam, Leichtman, Linder, Morrissey, Newman, Patrick, Ripley, Rothenberger; Nays: None*).

## OVN PRESENTATION

Fletcher Linder presented on the overall programs provided by OVN partner institutions. There are 10 partner institutions with 200 online programs. Of those, there are 145 unique programs at the associate and bachelor's degree levels. Some are offered at one institution only. There are 53 science and technology programs with 45 offered at only one institution. 45 percent of our programs are offered at the associate degree level, 25 percent are certificate programs, and 30 percent are at the bachelor's degree level.

Linder highlighted the top 10 industries for projected work force growth in Virginia. OVN covers all of the fastest growing or largest projected growth areas in the Commonwealth with at least one program. OVN covers all the areas with the exception of biology, biological sciences and economics. OVN identifies this as an area of potential growth. Filler Corn inquired if there was a breakdown based on institution. Fletcher noted that additional details are forthcoming. Delegate Keam inquired about students who graduated with a two-year degree and how many continue on to 4-year programs?

Linder noted that the liberal arts and sciences program is an associate degree that prepares students to pursue multiple four-year pathways. Van Wilson noted that students who earn the liberal arts degree will transfer to their subsequent major at the four-year levels. Information regarding some of the transfer pathways will be provided at the next meeting.

Linder presented the fastest growing programs at Virginia public institutions. OVN covers nine out of the 10 programs. Ripley inquired about avoiding course duplication in the future. Linder noted that duplication can be beneficial as some courses are not provided at the same time. Linder mentioned that the institutions will give consideration to duplication on future programs. Wilson noted that VCCS is intentional on which online programs and courses are added to the existing portfolio.

Delegate Cox inquired about offering a singular course price particularly with overlapping courses. There have been multiple conversations around this topic. Linder noted that there are numerous challenges associated with a single price per course. A consortium model is being considered for the future.

Burge noted that institutions are experiencing significant pressure with the move to virtual instruction. OVN institutions have been exceeding the target enrollment goals in the past two years, and much of the enrollment this year has been fully online due to the pandemic. The pandemic has been one of the most significant disruptions to enrollment operations at our institutions. There has been a national increase in part time enrollment at private for-profit institutions, and fully online institutions have increased the most in enrollment.

Ripley inquired about the National Clearinghouse enrollment chart on private institutions. These institutions act more like a business and are able to track marketing better. How can we have a better administrative process? Burge noted that the for-profit space tends to over-invest in onboarding especially in marketing. That process is inverted for us. It would be very challenging to keep up with their rate of expenditures. The organizational aspects could provide some efficiencies of scale. Ripley commented that there could be some benefit to investing in additional marketing.

Wilson presented the approved budget from the May 14 meeting. He thanked the General Assembly for their work in allocating an additional million dollars. This budget revision consists of an additional \$210,000 for the technology to support the infrastructure, and \$180,000 for marketing and outreach. \$460,000 is allocated for course creation and capacity. Additionally, there is \$150,000 for student support.

Blake inquired about the VCCS portfolio development and the expense allocation. Wilson noted that each participating VCCS institution will receive an allocation to run the programming through Quality Matters. The organization assesses the quality and rigor of the programs. It will also be spent to build out and offer UCSG. It will ensure that institutions are prepared and able to deliver the passport courses in a way that is consistent. Also, it will fund instructional designers to help work with faculty on course content. Burge noted that the budget aligns with each institutions' priorities. George Mason is focusing on catching up in relation to placing courses and content online. Casiello mentioned that ODU is focusing on faculty to scale up the existing sections and seats.

Ripley asked if the budget includes hiring an Executive Director or manager. In response, Casiello presented on the future needs of OVN. OVN continues to focus on serving Virginians who started a degree but didn't complete one. Additionally, OVN is focused on providing accessible and affordable online education. The network infrastructure needs to be improved. Partner institutions have separate scheduling systems, student management systems, and policies. OVN is progressing towards a centralized administration. We will continue investing in marketing and outreach efforts.

An additional 1.5 million budget would allow for administrative, technological and outreach needs.

Morrissey thanked the team for their great work over the past few years. As this process is built out in the future, it is important to focus on the student perspective. Senator Newman commented on the future of OVN and where it will lead. Will there be a focus on tech degrees, or will it be based on where students lead us such as general studies. Some institutions are facing challenges with providing laboratory courses online. Is there a model to explore that further?

Casiello commented that there is a focus on the needs within the Commonwealth regarding programs and job opportunities. Filler-Corn commented that OVN is steering towards those areas of focus. Ripley agreed that each university has their own program and responsibilities and noted it has been an OVN vision since the beginning to create some centralized leadership. Filler-Corn commented that she looks forward to future discussions on enrollment after this past semester and review the lessons learned.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:11 a.m.