

DRAFT-SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL

ONLINE VIRGINIA NETWORK AUTHORITY BOARD

July 26, 2022

MINUTES

The Online Virginia Network (OVN) Authority Board met on Tuesday, July 26, 2022 at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA.

Present from the Board:

Peter Blake
Jane H. Dané
Senator Adam Ebbin
Speaker Eileen Filler-Corn
James Hazel
Delegate Mark Keam
Fletcher Linder
Sharon Morrissey
Susan Moyer
Susan Patrick

Absent:

Senator Ghazala Hashmi
Karen Jackson
David Leichtman
Senator Steven Newman
Murry Pitts
John Rothenberger

Also present:

David Burge
Audrey Burnett
Tom Butler
Andy Casiello
Ellen Davenport
Jessica Dodson
Anne Gentry
Annie Gibson

Wendy Kang
Kaithlyn Kayer
Charles Kreitzer
Tara Kuhn
Jason McClain
Sharon Morrissey
Brian Payne
Sheri Prupis

Sheri Robertson
Caitlin Shear
Ahmad Taheri
Holly Whistler
Van Wilson

WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

Speaker Filler-Corn thanked President Washington and George Mason University for hosting the meeting. Filler-Corn recognized the COVID health crisis and the importance of affordable pathways to higher education and skills training. She mentioned how the Online Virginia Network (OVN) has created pathways and opportunities for Virginians to complete their degrees. In the 2021 General Assembly session, new funding was provided to expand access to broadband in Virginia and close the digital divide in the next three years. Filler-Corn recognized the OVN team for developing support systems, structures and infrastructure for online students in Virginia, using the APRA funds.

President Washington welcomed board members to GMU and thanked them for joining, especially during Mason's 50th anniversary. He highlighted the power and value of online education and how online education supports Mason's core mission as an institution that produces success. Washington recognized the Mason Virginia Promise, which helps Virginians get an advanced degree by creating a pathway for those students that meet them where they are and take them where they want to go. Working with other Virginia institutions is important to help all of our institutions become more efficient and to help students of all backgrounds and life circumstances achieve their academic goals. We are excited about the future and honored to be a part of OVN.

APPROVAL OF September 21, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

Upon a motion by James Hazel and seconded by Senator Ebbin, the minutes were approved by all members present and voting.

OVN PRESENTATION

Burge presented on the history and mission of OVN and the strategies that the OVN team has implemented to honor the mission and achieve the goals. Burge introduced the project updates from the past year, funded by the additional ARPA funds approved in 2021, and provided details on the OVN director search.

Casiello presented on the onlinevirginia.net website updates and the increased marketing and website traffic of OVN. The ARPA funds provided a significant increase in marketing activity and strategies which led to a 172.7% year-over-year increase in inquiries from prospective students. Hazel inquired about the improved website target launch date and Casiello responded that the launch is planned for Fall 2022.

Burnett presented on the SERL survey and marketing project that will go out to 90,000 Virginians. OVN is working with SCHEV and the Survey & Evaluation Research Library (SERL) team at VCU to conduct this survey mailing. Burnett also spoke about the experiential learning opportunities that the OVN institutions identified and offered to online students, including design thinking, undergraduate research, study abroad and service learning. Keam inquired about the stipends provided to the students that were studying abroad and Linder explained that tuition credits and travel (\$4,000 per student) were covered by the stipend for the 10 students in the current program.

Whistler presented on the partnership between OVN and TransferVirginia and spoke about how the partnership has led to the creation of multiple online pathways between community colleges and universities. The partnership will also allow for increased reporting and data about students' academic interests and how many students are taking advantage of the OVN and TransferVA resources.

Hazel asked if we are able to quantify how many more students we're impacting by working with TransferVA and Blake inquired if we will see the TransferVA account numbers in the dashboard. Whistler responded that these are both data points that we hope to receive from the dashboard. Morrissey mentioned that pulling the OVN and TransferVA platforms together is what should happen since both receive funding from the Commonwealth and she wanted to congratulate Holly and her team for the work being done. Moyer inquired about the connection with the VA Wizard and Whistler responded that there is interest in that space and the next step is to create more high school-friendly graphics.

Whistler presented the FY 23 budget proposal, which is a continuation from the FY 22 budget proposal. The remaining \$5 million ARPA funding is included in this proposal, as well as the base \$4 million funding. Investments will be made in hiring staff and building a shared administrative structure, increased marketing and outreach, technical solutions, course creation and student support services and resources.

Hazel asked if we are looking for replacement funds for ARPA for the future and Dane responded that the team has been looking for ways to enhance the support and services that would be finite and that we will need to adjust the base funds to continue the OVN Director funding once the ARPA funds end. One place that will take a hit without ARPA funding is the marketing and outreach since we have been able to do so much more there with this additional funding. Blake wanted confirmation that we are asking to approve the same budget for FY23 as FY22 and this was confirmed.

APPROVAL OF BUDGET

Upon a motion by Sharon Morrissey and seconded by Senator Adam Ebbin, the budget was approved by all members present and voting.

DISCUSSION ABOUT VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Filler-Corn began the discussion by explaining the option to create a policy to allow board members and participants to attend future meetings remotely. The remote board member attendees would not count towards quorum but could vote. Keam asked if remote attendees would need to announce where they are currently located and Gentry responded that this requirement had been modified and the locations would only need to be noted in the minutes. Linder inquired who would draft a policy around virtual attendance and Filler-Corn responded that they would be in touch about that.

APPROVAL OF VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE

Upon a motion by Senator Adam Ebbin and seconded by Peter Blake, the request for a virtual attendance policy was approved by all members present and voting.

DISCUSSION ABOUT OVN DIRECTOR HIRING PROCESS

Burge returned to the topic of the OVN Director hiring process and asked the Board if anyone was interested in being a part of this hiring process once the search committee narrows down the candidates to finalists. Hazel, Blake, Moyer, Morrissey, Linder and Dane expressed interest in serving during the hiring process.

Morrissey asked how would this position report and where would it reside. Burge responded that Mason is the home for the position but the person will report to the OVN Leadership Group and have accountability to the Board. Moyer inquired about what we are looking for in the OVN Director role and Burge offered to share the position posting with the Board for reference. Morrissey asked if the Leadership Group will measure performance and that will get reporting to this Board and Burge responded that is correct and that the annual goals of the Director will be available to the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.