

**MINUTES**  
**ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR MATHEMATICS, SCIENCES AND THE ARTS**  
**BOARD OF VISITORS REGULAR MEETING**  
**September 24, 2018**  
**5:00 p.m.**

The Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences and the Arts (ASMSA) Board of Visitors met in the Boardroom on the first floor at 200 Whittington Avenue, Hot Springs, Arkansas.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Battle, Chair convened the Board of Visitors regular meeting into open session at 5:00 p.m. and welcomed all Board members.

**II. ESTABLISH QUORUM**

**Members Present**

Mr. Hayward Battle, Chair  
 Mr. Steve Faris, Vice Chair  
 Mr. Timothy Barnes, Secretary  
 Mr. Gary Dowdy (via Zoom)  
 Mr. Todd West

**Members Absent**

Ms. Ann Xu  
 Mr. Brian Reed

**Ex-Officio Members Present**

Mr. Tom Chilton, Director, Arkansas  
 Economic Development Commission,  
 Division of Science and Technology  
 Mr. Patrick Ralston, designee for Stacy  
 Hurst, Director, Department of Arkansas Heritage  
 Mrs. Stephanie Bradish, Parents Advisory Council  
 Mr. Alex Kaye, President, Student Government  
 Association

**Ex-Officio Members Absent**

Maria Markham, Ph.D., Director,  
 Arkansas Department of Higher Education  
 Mary Kathryn Stein, Ed.D., designee for  
 Johnny Key, Commissioner, Arkansas  
 Department of Education

**Administrative Members Present**

Mr. Corey Alderdice, Director  
 Mr. Bob Gregory, Dean of Academic Affairs  
 Rheo Morris, Ph.D., Dean of Students  
 Ms. Valerie Carpenter, Director of Admissions  
 Mrs. Ashley Smith, Director of Finance  
 Mrs. Marta Collier-Youngblood, ASMSA Foundation  
 Executive Director  
 Mrs. Lorraine Munroe, Administrative Assistant

**Administrative Members Absent**

Mrs. Munroe called the role of Board members who were present, and a quorum was established.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. West and seconded by Mr. Barnes to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2018. Motion passed unanimously.

#### IV. CONSENT AGENDA

##### 1. Director's Comments – Corey Alderdice

Director Alderdice reported that much of his time and attention since the start of the year has been focused on the final stages of the Creativity and Innovation Complex as well as the next steps that need to be taken to successfully vacate the hospital and move forward with the campus master plan. Director Alderdice reported that the project remains on time and on budget at \$4.7 million and is expected to have the completed building at the end of November. He stated that teams at Harris Architects and Seale Construction have been very responsive to questions, and are excited to be in the end stages of the construction.

Director Alderdice reported that the purchase of the former medical office property complex on Pine Terrace has closed and envisions the 15,000 square foot building as a visual arts academic building that will replace spaces that are presently in the old hospital complex.

Director Alderdice stated that he has requested a quote for a preliminary cost estimate on renovations for the Chapel and Convent. He reported that he also visited with the City of Hot Springs about the potential timeline for vacating the building. Director Alderdice said he believes that if proactive work is not done at this time, the deterioration that is now visible of the Chapel and Convent will take hold and accelerate in those buildings. He stated that of the old structures that remain in the former RLB, the Convent and Chapel represent the two pieces that are of greatest historic significance. Director Alderdice reported that there was a fair amount of renovation work that was done during the previous decade, and there should not be prohibitive amount of work that needs to be done to sustain the two buildings. Restoring these buildings could be a pathway to grow enrollment at ASMSA. The Convent was a housing facility and would allow for the addition of approximately two dozen residential students to the school. Director Alderdice stated that 300 students was the number that the school was proposed to have at its creation and has never reached 300 students. Director Alderdice stated that there is a compelling case to be made for seeing that growth but it is dependent on beds. He stated that a discussion has been started with a foundation that has done previous work with ASMSA about a program-related investment (PRI) loan. Director Alderdice stated that PRIs are new models of support that large foundations are using to meet their required annual 5% spend. Where most foundations give grants they are sent out and with no expectation of return, PRIs take the form of loan guarantees. Director Alderdice reported that this foundation is now considering a potential \$3 million loan as well as a potential loan guarantee, but their preference is to look at the loan that would provide ASMSA with the upfront capital necessary to undertake the project. If approved, the loan would then be repaid over a ten-year period at a low interest rate.

Director Alderdice reported that he is looking at properties for the location of the maintenance shop. He stated that the maintenance shop is currently located in the basement level of the Cedar Street building that is on the opposite side of the campus. Director Alderdice stated that the properties that are located along Pine Street (between Pine and Wahoo Streets) would be more centrally located to campus. Prioritizing projects, completing the CIC, securing a location, constructing a maintenance shop, and then looking at the Chapel and Convent are the immediate items going forward. Director Alderdice stated that he continues to cultivate the relationship with the organization that is interested in the arts mission at ASMSA for potential support. He also reported that that he is interested that if the PRI loan becomes a pathway, that it may be something to present to the group for their support for the arts. Director

Alderdice stated that there are many moving pieces that need to be completed before he feels comfortable separating from the hospital complex.

Mr. Battle asked Director Alderdice if he still believes the key to the new facility will be turned over in November.

Director Alderdice stated that his most recent meeting with Harris Architects and Seale Construction is that they expect the project to be complete in mid-November. He stated that he expects to do final furniture and installs and test all systems to ensure that the network is successfully transitioned from Pine Street to the new building. He is anticipating that the first actual use will be January 7, 2019 when spring semester begins.

Mr. West asked if Director Alderdice received a preliminary estimate to bring the Visual Arts Building up to standard.

Director Alderdice stated that the renovation for the Visual Arts Building is just about \$3 million, which equates to approximately \$200/sq. ft. That is a sufficient budget that leaves some room for inflationary growth. Director Alderdice stated that he has started to have a conversation with a local architect regarding the Convent and Chapel to obtain a preliminary cost assessment.

Responding to Mr. Barnes' question about there being any major change orders on the CIC building, Mrs. Smith stated that the largest change order received was approximately \$20,000 that addressed some site drainage issues the City had concerns about. Other change orders were new dirt fill that had to be purchased, and some additional electrical wiring was added to add shades for the large windows.

Vice Chairman Faris referred to an article in the paper about an email that was sent to the school about a meeting the Democratic Party of Arkansas was holding at the coffee shop across the street.

Director Alderdice discussed this email with the Board stating that the Democratic Party of Arkansas was having a meeting at Kollektive Coffee that was shared by a student club leader through the Residential Life office. The assistant that received the message mistook the message as a student activity and shared the email with the student listserve. Director Alderdice reported that he was off campus when the email went out and immediately contacted those involved to clarify that it was likely a violation of Board policy as well as state law. He restated that, in any future cases, emails that has political context should be shared with him prior to any potential distribution. The Registrar was not informed of that correction and it was distributed to the parent list the following day. It was there that the concern by a parent was articulated to some of the local legislators. He made it clear that it was a student who initiated the message and was not an event that was taking place on campus. Director Alderdice stated that he has been in contact with the local legislators to provide clarity on the situation.

## 2. Academic Affairs Board Report – Bob Gregory

Mr. Gregory reported that the year started with 234 students.

Mr. Gregory stated Sarah Henry, a new visual artist has been hired, along with a new music instructor, Dr. Thomas Dempster. He reported that his department is ahead of recruiting for arts students and is looking forward to beefing up the program.

Mr. Gregory also reported that a new Computer Science Specialist has been hired within Outreach, as well as an adjunct film instructor.

Mr. Gregory reported that the July Biomedical Sciences Institute was sponsored through an AEGIS Grant from ADE, who provided the funding for the program. He stated that the summer camps were wonderful and have become a funnel for the institution's recruiting. Mr. Gregory reported that there are quite a number of students who came through the previous camps that are in this year's junior class.

Mr. Gregory stated that a transition has been made from where much of the student research projects were done in the senior year. He reported that work was done with the Research In The Park and Entrepreneurship courses that were offered in the junior year and now all the Capstone experiences are now offered in the junior year. Mr. Gregory reported that there is a wide-range of capstone experiences that are focused on science, arts and humanities. They are Research in the Park (RiP), Creative Writing, Introduction to Engineering Design, Math Modeling, Entrepreneurship, Fine Art Design, Music and Humanities as a Discipline, Music, Physical Science Seminar, film.

Mr. Gregory stated that he is pleased with the start of the year. He reported that the College Algebra Readiness Camp (CARC) is in its sixth iteration this year, with twenty-seven incoming juniors who were on campus for two weeks in July. CARC was taught by ASMSA Mathematics and Computer Science chair, Walt Levissee.

### 3. Residential Affairs Report – Dr. Rheo Morris

Dr. Morris reviewed her report to the Board.

Dr. Morris stated that the school year has started off fully staffed, and a new position of Residence Life Assistant has been added.

Dr. Morris also stated that both a new Food Service Director and a head chef, have been hired by our contract provider to give the school better customer service. She stated that the layout of the cafeteria has been changed to give better service to the students and staff.

Responding to Chairman Battle's question if the school had to pay more by renewing the contract, Mrs. Smith responded stating that the price per meal actually decreased with the new contract.

### 4. Admissions – Valerie Carpenter

Miss Carpenter gave an updated report on the Class of 2020. She reported that the average ACT score was 27.03; 123 students have matriculated in the class with an average GPA of 3.91. Miss Carpenter also stated that 32% of the students identified as low income.

Miss Carpenter also stated that Charlene Feick has been hired as a new addition to the Admissions team. Ms. Feick received her Masters of Education in Learning and Teaching from Harvard University.

Miss Carpenter reviewed the upcoming events for the following year in her report.

Miss Carpenter stated that there were 39 counties that are represented this year. She reported that in Mississippi County, there were 3 students from Blytheville, and approximately 5-9 students from Craighead County.

5. Institutional Advancement – Marta Collier-Youngblood

Mrs. Collier-Youngblood reported that the ASMSA Fall Golf Classic took place on this day and stated that the donations were well over \$35,000. She stated that it was a great day with grand support from the staff members. Mrs. Collier-Youngblood thanked the Greater Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce for helping with the event.

Mrs. Collier-Youngblood urged the Board to save the date of Wednesday, March 27, 2019 to celebrate ASMSA's 25<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary Gala. She reported that invitations will be forthcoming for the Gala.

Mrs. Collier-Youngblood reviewed the 2019 grant road map of foundations that will be sent a proposal in the coming year.

Mrs. Collier-Youngblood stated that the Foundation is doing very good work with alumni engagement. She reported that the Foundation has had several events that have taken place with the first one being held in Fayetteville, and the second one being held in Little Rock. She reported that approximately 50 alums have attended both events. Two additional events are scheduled with one being held in northwest Arkansas and the second in northeast Arkansas.

6. Finance Report – Ashley Smith

Mrs. Smith stated that the Finance Department is wrapping up the reporting season, and the auditor will be arriving on campus the next day. She stated that the 2018 Financial Statements were submitted to the UofA System office. Also included is the Budget Summary for the current school year. Mrs. Smith stated that she received the final forecast and it remained unchanged from the preliminary forecast. She reported that this is a biannual year that requires extra reporting. Mrs. Smith stated that budget hearings will be held in October.

Mr. Alderdice interjected stating that a new report was implemented by the Audit Office and ASMSA was asked to complete this year that identifies the overall top five risks for the campus. The five risks reported were: Financial Position, Capital Assets and Preferred Maintenance; Safety and Security; External Funding Environment State Appropriations; Overall Financial Position Compensation and Benefits and External Funding Environment Federal Appropriations. Director Alderdice reported that the worst campus event that took place was a break-in at the former Residential Life Building last fall, but there have been no further issues.

Chairman Battle asked what type of security is present on campus. Dr. Morris reported that Allied Universal has been retained as the security company on campus. The company monitors the campus 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. She stated that security personnel work a 2-person shift so one is always observing the monitors while the other is making rounds. She reported that they are not armed.

7. Student Government Association – Alex Kaye

Mr. Kaye introduced himself to the Board. He reported that the SGA started off the year by holding the annual State of the School address where the E-Board members for the 2018-2019 school year were introduced. Mr. Kaye reported that the Floor Representative elections were

held, and the new representatives attended a leadership retreat on September 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. Team building exercises also took place. He stated that positive feedback was received from the leadership retreat with students responding that it was more successful than the prior year's retreat. He reported that the SGA website was created over the summer that includes information on student government as well as ways for students to submit feedback to the committees.

Mr. Kaye reported that the juniors and seniors voted on the design for their respective class t-shirts.

Mr. Kaye stated that SGA held their first committee meeting on September 17<sup>th</sup>. Faculty members met with the SGA Committee and newly elected Floor Representatives to discuss the committee goals for the school year.

#### 8. Parents Association – Stephanie Bradish

Mrs. Bradish, from Corning, introduced herself to the Board and stated that her son is a current senior. Mrs. Bradish stated that she appreciated the institution since she lives in a small school district that does not give the students the same opportunities that are given at ASMSA. She gave her personal timeline of how her son got interested in ASMSA and her struggles on letting her son attend since she lives far from the school. Mrs. Bradish reported that her son attended the CARC program which cemented his decision to want to attend.

Mrs. Bradish distributed the new Parent Association By-Laws to the Board.

Director Alderdice stated that historically, the Parents Association (PA) has been handed from person-to-person as the PA Chair. He reported the main thing that he wanted to accomplish was to provide additional institutional support and structure to the process and to share the responsibilities beyond just the single PA President while also creating a pipeline for handover from year to year. He stated that the new Parents Advisory Council (PAC) has a nice geographic representation of parents across the state. Director Alderdice reported that some of the sub-committees have a list that they will carry that will require having a presence at the Board meetings and on campus (i.e. Preview Weekends, Admissions, Prom, etc.) He stated that the on-line PA Facebook Group is the hub of the on-going discussion between ASMSA's parents and the community of learning on campus. He reported that to have a focused group of parents who can directly engage in activities and dialogue with the institution is what he was wanting with the new iteration of PAC. In looking at other models of institutions Director Alderdice stated that this format made the most sense in what he was hoping to achieve. He stated that he is grateful to Stephanie to commute from Corning for the Board meetings.

### V. OLD BUSINESS

No old business to report.

### VI. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Battle directed his statement to Director Alderdice stating that within the past couple of years, he has had approximately four or five staff members who have reached out to him because they have had grievances specifically with him. Chairman Battle asked Director Alderdice what employee grievance procedures were in place. Chairman Battle stated that Vice Chairman Faris also brought a grievance to Chairman Battle's attention.

At this time, Vice Chairman Faris interjected stating that if there is a grievance procedure in place, he would like to encourage those staff members to talk to someone else besides himself because it is very difficult to help in the situation. Vice Chairman Faris stated that if someone was going to bring a complaint it needs to be legitimized through a process and the person needs to put their name on the document to show that they are serious. Vice Chairman Faris reported that he feels less confident bringing things up without some sort of a grievance process. He stated that if there is a grievance process, it would eliminate the Chair, himself or any other member of the Board, from addressing these concerns.

Vice Chairman Faris stated that the Board does not have the policy-making authority that the former ASMS Board of Trustees had in the past, and the people at the institution who have a problem need a normal process to go through to take the Board out of the picture. He stated that he is not opposed in helping anyone, but the staff needs to help him to help them. Vice Chairman Faris reiterated that he is happy to help anyone who needs help. He stated that no one needs to be mistreated but also no one needs to be accused of mistreating someone either without having a chance to air both sides of the issue.

Vice Chairman Faris asked Chairman Battle how he felt about what he said and Chairman Battle stated that it was exactly how he felt. Vice Chairman Faris stated that he echoed what the Chairman stated.

Director Alderdice stated that the grievance procedures, whether formal or informal, are articulated in the Employee Handbook. He reported that all members of the faculty and staff are provided with a copy of the Employee Handbook and sign at the start of each year that they have received a copy and that they have access to all campus policies. Director Alderdice reported that the grievance procedures were on pages 43-45 of the Employee Handbook, which outlines the formal administrative review and dispute resolution processes.

Chairman Battle asked Director Alderdice to give him a synopsis of how the policy works. Director Alderdice stated that the grievance goes through the employee supervisory reporting structure. Ultimately, decisions regarding grievances are resolved by himself. He continued stating that - if there is a grievance directly against him - an appeal can be made to the System office of which then the President of the UofA System appoints a designee to review the grievance case. Vice Chairman Faris interjected stating that Director Alderdice's review of the grievance system is how it is done at every satellite school of the UofA System and that is the way it should be done at ASMSA.

Secretary Barnes stated that if he gets a call, it is always referred back to the first level that it needs to go to. He continued to say that employees - whether they are in a public school or they work in municipal government or even at ASMSA - still need some professional development in the grievance area. Secretary Barnes reported that if Director Alderdice feels that it is part of a trend, perhaps the Human Resource department needs to do some professional development in the area of grievance procedures. He proceeded to say that it really hurts both sides of the coin when one goes outside of that policy or procedure. He stated that usually there is not going to be a resolution that both sides could deal with because, ultimately, it is going to have to be decided by someone else. Secretary Barnes asked Director Alderdice if he had thought about an internal leadership team addressing the issue in the future so it does not become a trend.

Chairman Battle stated that he would not go to the President and discuss something of this nature without bringing it to the Director so that he could be aware of the situation and that these issues are out there. Chairman Battle reported that, in order to provide something helpful, there might be

a need to have a university representative - maybe from the General Counsel's office - to come to the school and have a session with employees about the grievance process of the campus. Chairman Battle stated that he thought it was a good idea, though the Board cannot mandate it or make it happen; however, if someone wanted to put in a formal motion as passed, he thought that it would give him the ability to approach the university office of the President or the General Counsel's office to come to the school.

Vice Chairman Faris suggested perhaps, Melissa Rust, to come down and have a roundtable discussion on how to file a grievance. He also directed his comments to Director Alderdice stating the severity of filing a grievance. Vice Chairman Faris stated that he would go out of his way for someone who is being unjustly mistreated. However, he did report that the Board does not need to be a complaint box and to explain to them that this Board acts in an advisory capacity. He continued that he is there to help and listen, and if someone is being mistreated and he needs to help cut through some of the red tape, he will help but no one has made that specific request of him as yet. Vice Chairman Faris stated that as long as they have a specifically designated listening device, that is what they need. He continued to direct his statement to Director Alderdice to have the legal counsel to come down to give an overview about retribution. He stated that he doesn't believe that if someone files a grievance that they should be scared that they would lose their job so they won't file one. Vice Chairman Faris stated that there needs to be an appropriate way for people to be safe in mind if something legitimate comes up. Vice Chairman Faris reported that if it gets that far, then there is enough of a problem to where a retribution discussion needs to be held.

Chairman Battle stated that if someone went to the EEOC, it would be a federal mandate that you cannot retaliate. He continued saying that those who have approached him are not all black people, because they are not – it is not a racial problem. It is obviously about an employee/employer relationship issue. Chairman Battle told Director Alderdice that he knew that the Director was aware of one of the grievances because an attorney wrote Director Alderdice a letter and copied Chairman Battle on the letter. He said that it was one of the previous claims that he made reference to. Chairman Battle stated that someone (from the System office) needs to come to the school to let the employees know that there is a process in place without retaliation.

Mr. West asked if the policy in place is consistent with the UofA system. Director Alderdice responded that it was.

Mr. Ralston said that it sounded to him that the main concern of the Board is to make it clear that they are not part of the chain of the grievance procedure and do not have a function in the process. He stated that he agrees with Vice Chairman Faris that the UofA System would be the logical step to take since the school is following their policy.

Chairman Battle asked Director Alderdice what his thoughts were on what he heard. Director Alderdice stated that he would see greater value in ASMSA's HR officer presenting an overview of the policy instead of someone at the System office; however, he is certainly willing to discuss that with Dr. Bobbitt in his visit with him next month. He reported that he believes that employees have adequate information regarding the grievance procedure and that those who have brought formal grievances have been provided counsel, structure and support through the HR office to go through that process and have been advised of their rights.

Director Alderdice stated that both he and his senior staff receive anonymous letters from time to time and is concerned about the level of conviction, or lack thereof, that someone has in writing an anonymous letter. Letters that are written anonymously very rarely have any grounding in truth as



to the claims that they bring forward in them. Director Alderdice echoed Mr. Ralston's comments, that he does appreciate the observation that the best strategy that the Board can offer is to direct them to the actual processes and procedures that are clearly articulated in the Handbook and is available. Vice Chairman Faris agreed with Director Alderdice and stated that it would be a good idea for the Board to make it clear, in a motion or whatever the Board needs to do, that the Board has asked that the legal counsel of the System office come down with the assistance of the institution's HR department. Vice Chairman Faris stated again that the Board is not a conduit for complaints.

Chairman Battle stated that he was not sure of the in-house people are the ones to make the presentation – he gravitates to Vice Chairman Faris' idea of having someone from the System office conduct it. Vice Chairman Faris stated that it's not only a neutral third party, it is the top of the heap – it is where every other school that is part of the UofA System has to go, and it needs to be crystal clear that if anyone has a grievance that they must come forward and put their name on a form. He continued to state that by legal counsel coming down to make the presentation, it gives Director Alderdice cover as well.

Mr. Barnes made a motion as the Board of Visitors to direct the Administration to contact the UofA System, General Counsel or Human Relations (the best option) to provide training in the area of grievance procedures. Vice Chairman Faris asked to add to the motion that it be legal counsel and/or human resources department. Vice Chairman Faris stated that he would like the legal counsel to explain what the liabilities of the people making a grievance are as well. Vice Chairman Faris seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Battle asked if Director Alderdice was comfortable about the letter that will be sent to the UofA System Office be sent by him or by the Board requesting the grievance assistance. Director Alderdice stated that it is the recommendation of the Board and he will visit Dr. Bobbitt regarding the issue. Chairman Battle directed Director Alderdice to do the letter and copy him on it. Chairman Battle stated that hopefully, he will have a status report for the Board regarding this issue at the next meeting.

Chairman Battle stated that at the next meeting under New Business, Officers of the Board will need to be elected since his term is ending on January 14, 2019 but will continue to serve until his replacement is appointed.

## **VII. AUDIENCE WITH INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS**

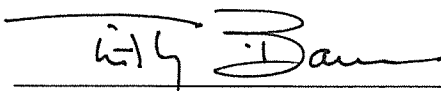
No request or comment from an individual or group.

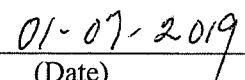
## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to conduct, a motion was made by Mr. West and seconded by Mr. Barnes to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Approved as written \_\_\_\_\_

Approved as amended \_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Timothy Barnes, Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)