

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

OF THE

BOARD OF VISITORS

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY

23-24 July 2010

USAFA BOARD OF VISITORS

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**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF VISITORS (BoV)**

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY (USAFA)

The chairman opened the USAFA Board of Visitors meeting at 1330 on Friday, 23 July 2010 and the meeting continued on Saturday, 24 July 2010 , concluding at 1520.

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Charles García (Chair)
Mr. A.J. Scribante (Vice Chair)
Honorable Robin Hayes
Representative Doug Lamborn (R-CO)
Ambassador Susan Schwab
Mr. Terry Isaacson
Ms. Susan Ross
Representative Jared Polis (D-CO)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Loretta Sanchez (D-CA)
Senator Ben Nelson (D-NE)
Representative Niki Tsongas (D-MA)
Senator Bob Bennett (R-UT)
Senator James Inhofe (R-OK)

AIR FORCE SENIOR STAFF:

Honorable Daniel Ginsberg, Assist Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs
General Carroll Chandler, Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force
Ms. Barbara Barger, SES, Deputy Director, Force Development DCS, Manpower, Personnel and Services
Mr. Dave French, USAFA BoV, Designated Federal Official (DFO)

USAFA SENIOR STAFF:

Lt Gen Michael Gould, Superintendent
Brig Gen Dana Born, Dean of the Faculty
Dr. Hans Meuh, Athletic Director
Col Rick LoCastro, 10th Air Base Wing Commander
Col Bart Weiss, Commander of the Prep School
Col Joe Sanders, Director of the Center for Character and Leadership Development
Col Carolyn Benyshek, Director of Admissions
Col Scott Dierlam, United States Air Force Academy Liaison

BoV EXECUTIVE SECRETARY:

Col William Hampton (AF/A1DO)

Lt Col Shawn Mann (AF/A1DO)

23 July 2010**Opening Comments**

Mr. Garcia, the chairman, opened the meeting and introduced the attendees.

Subcommittee Meetings

Members were released to meet in their subcommittee groups. The meeting reconvened at 1600 hrs for the first briefing.

Wing Honor Board Sanction Review Committee Process Overview

Lt Col Chuck Boyd, Chief of the Honor Division, presented an overview of the Honor Board sanction process. He framed his presentation around the code, the minimum standard for conduct and the oath, the foundation for officership and service. He concluded that it was the cadets who own the honor system. Therefore, the Honor Division educates and trains as well as coordinates functions between the Honor Division and mission elements. The overarching mission is to support cadet implementation of the honor system and help facilitate the cadet Wing Honor Boards as well as the recommendation process. The first review and determination focuses on whether an honor violation occurred. If the allegation has sufficient evidence, the case will go forward. Admission of the stated facts goes directly to the Cadet Sanction Recommendation Panel. Weighted factors that are considered are time under the code, the egregiousness of the offense, the forthrightness of the cadet, and the type of report. Following a finding of violation, the Cadet Honor Committee recommends a sanction to the Commandant and Superintendent that could result in a proposed disenrollment or probation. The goal is to provide the Commandant and Superintendent a structured recommendation that has been vetted through a process that weighs the validity of the offense and the circumstances to determine the best course of action. Probation is structured to have specific goals and measures and produces real results. Ultimately, it is the Honor Review Committee that guides the decision process, but the Superintendent is the only person who has the authority to disenroll a cadet.

Character Update (Closed)

This session discussed cadet status of discipline, as well as a character update; both involved protected personal information on individual cadet cases, the disclosure of which would constitute a clear unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Cadet Focus Group (Closed)

This portion of the meeting consisted of interviews with select USAFA cadets from a variety of disciplines. The purpose of the meeting was to inquire about their personal experiences with the honor code, the cadet culture, leadership, safety, and other cadet life issues. The meeting required cadets to speak candidly about their superiors, peers, and the Academy. It also solicited

personal information, opinions and experiences. Requiring cadets to publicly participate in this focus group would constitute a clear unwarranted invasion of personal privacy and serve to limit the Board's ability to obtain necessary information.

24 July 2010

Opening Comments

Mr. Garcia, the chairman, introduced the attendees. Senior members were allowed to address the board. Upon conclusion, the subcommittees gave their reports.

SUBCOMMITTEE OUTBIREFS

Academic and Course of Instruction

As the chairperson, Ms. Ross presented for the committee. The discussion focused on a summation of activities associated with long term issues. The Graduate Studies Program (GPS) and faculty manning achieved significant gains. Ninety-six graduates from the class of 2010 are projected to attend graduate school. Participation was funded by Air Force programs and other scholarship programs. In addition, sixty-five members will attend a terminal Masters program that results in certification and/or vocational skills.

Another point of interest was the RAND study that addresses advanced academic degrees as they pertain to requirements and strategic plans. The preliminary results are due to be released soon.

Civilian faculty is still under review. Efforts are focused on defining value and intent. Questions that need answers include what constitutes a civilian professor and what experiences are valued. The Dean is working to quantify these questions and provide an answer for the HASC report.

Other items that were discussed included summer activities and Permanent Professors being able to hold command positions during deployments and/or sabbaticals. Previous discussions about Permanent Professors and command positions resulted in a letter being sent from the BoV board that proposed a change in legislation. It was reported that this verbiage is in the NDAA and is expected to pass.

Finally, the chairperson proposed that information technology be added to the agenda for November 2010. It had been discussed in the past during the .edu migration. It is valued because of how information technology is linked to many of the issues presented earlier.

Admissions and Graduation

In the absence of Mr. Dean Wilson, the graduation Report was presented by Mr. Scribante. He updated the subcommittee members on cadet attrition for the class of 2010, broken out by diversity groups. The good news is that the same percentage of cadets graduated that was initially admitted to USAFA for the class of 2010 for each diversity group. The totals were: 999 cadets graduated out of an entering class of 1,325. Over four years, 326 attritted for a total of 25%, of whom 77 were women and 249 were men. The chair asked the following questions:

“What is the cost to recruit a candidate for USAFA?” and “What is the cost to lose a cadet?” The Director of Admissions, Col Benyshek, took an action item to try to answer those questions.

Col Benyshek presented a report on the in-coming Class of 2014. She stated that it is the most talented class to enter USAFA in the past decade. The Chairman asked her what metric measurements were used to allow her to support that statement. She replied that the academic grades were the highest ever, the physical fitness scores were the highest and the Character and Leadership grades were also very high. The Chair asked Col Benyshek to explain the percentage of weight given to each element of the selection criteria, i.e. 20% for physical fitness, 60% for academics and 20% for Character and Leadership. His concern was that Character and Leadership may be weighted too lightly given the stated mission of the USAFA is to produce Officers of Character for the USAF. Col. Benyshek stated her hesitancy to change the current weighting system that has served USAFA so well without hard scientific evidence that a different weighting would result in better cadets. She will review this area and report their findings to the subcommittee at a later meeting. There was a discussion about the effectiveness of the ALOs, specifically their ability to determine an applicant's character during an interview or two. The Director of Admissions will conduct a review to determine which ones do the very best at delivering top candidates and which ALOs need additional training or need to be considered for replacement.

Mr. Garcia, the Chair of the BoV, requested that the Chair of this subcommittee report on the Letter of Resignation received from the former BoV member and also the former member of this subcommittee, Dr. Dick Tubb. Mr. Scribante summarized the main points that Dr. Tubb has included in his letter for the Board. Basically, his resignation was prompted by his frustration over the lack of progress made in USAFA's attempt to validate the Character Assessment Tool (CAT). Dr. Tubb was not convinced that the questions that needed to be answered were being addressed by an objective pursuit and statistical analysis of the data. He cited what he felt was “an appearance of a failure to act in good faith.” Dr. Tubb stated in his letter, that his resignation is not based upon his lack of support of the CAT because he supports the concept of exploring a tool to assess character with a scientific and consistent method, but rather his disappointment with the process of validation. This report prompted a discussion on the need to bring forth an ability to recognize and assess Character and Leadership in the candidates.

Character and Leadership

As the chairperson, Mr. Isaacson presented for the committee. He reported that there were three items to discuss. The first two were categorized as good news stories.

First, the letter approving the creation of the Air Force Academy Athletic Association 501(c)3 which will be called the Air Force Academy Athletic Corporation (AFAAC), was signed by the Secretary of the Air Force (SECAF). As a result, efforts are moving forward to file the Articles of Incorporation as well as the Bylaws with the State of Colorado. When formally organized, the Board of Directors will be vetted through the SECAF for approval. The benefits associated with the AFAAC is a move toward fair equity in the conference which will allow the Academy to provide direct contracts, competitive salaries, and perform fund raising.

Second, information was presented on diversity in the Athletic Department. The Superintendent and the Athletic Director agree that diversity amongst the coaching staff at the Academy needs work. However, the good news is that the Academy hired a minority candidate for the new women's basketball position. Dr. Meuh conveyed she has excellent credentials and a great attitude. This represents a step in the right direction.

Finally, the committee wanted to refocus and get back to some basic issues. They determined that the Honor Code and the remediation process need a closer look. They were concerned about the new step added to honor code remediation and review. Although it supports cadet ownership of the Honor Code by vetting recommendations through cadet Wing Honor Boards, it may have potential unintended consequences. As a result, the subcommittee made some specific requests. Each was weighed and discussed. Dr. Meuh offered to have a subcommittee member sit-in on the next Honor Review Committee (HRC) meeting. The committee also considered inviting an Honor representative to the next subcommittee meeting. However, the request to review case files was challenged by the Designated Federal Officer (DFO). The DFO recommended voicing specific concerns from the subcommittee through the Academy leadership; thereby, allowing the Academy to assess the issues and/or concerns and report back to the BoV rather than having BoV members accomplish an investigation.

Infrastructure and Resources

The Honorable Robin Hayes reported for Infrastructure and Resources. First, he informed the board he has a detailed explanation of the things that need to be done to the Academy's infrastructure to serve the needs of the cadets. Second, his subcommittee has accepted the challenge to educate others to ensure that the changes, repairs, and additions are long term solutions. He praised Col LoCastro and Col Robison for doing a great job of keeping the USAFA BoV board informed on Vandenberg Hall and the new facility. In conclusion, Mr. Hayes suggested the new in-door facility be added to the agenda for November 2010.

Transition

The reports were followed by a welcome message from Lt General Gould. Upon conclusion, he transitioned into the Superintendent's Update which was followed by the Congressional Nomination Briefing.

Superintendent's Update

Lt General Gould announced that 1,001 cadets graduated this year. He emphasized institutional pride and qualified the statement with "for all the right reasons". A number of issues were discussed as he presented the slides. Key points of discussion included 96 cadets participating in the Graduate Studies Program (GSP) and tackling Diversity as a "journey" where the Academy has made progress. He emphasized finding the best qualified youth and developing them has yielded higher retention rates.

He identified class assignments and distributions amongst the career fields. The highest category is pilot (a rated category), but that inclusive of more than just pilots. Some of those candidates are directed to the Nuclear Enterprise, others will support the Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA), and a few cadets will support Special Operations.

The new class of cadets will have the highest rate of diversification and USAFA is finding well qualified candidates. This was also emphasized by touching briefly on the Summer Programs and Jack's Valley, cadets becoming leaders and learning to lead. Lt General Gould's final point focused on the Athletic Corporation. This represents a significant change to strengthen the athletic program at the Academy. Lt General Gould expressed his appreciation to USAFA Board members and senior leaders who helped make this possible.

Congressional & Diversity Outreach

Col Benyshek addressed how to leverage information to spur motivation and higher rates of participation in the congressional districts. She emphasized not recreating the wheel, but improving existing programs/processes. The meeting in May yielded some important insights. The "Dear Colleague" letters increased visibility and ultimately resulted in higher rates of participation. The participants really benefited from the testimonials and the group gained information about barriers. Another success associated with the meeting was information about website links and content, moving toward a standardized product. The single most effective tool was the Nomination Smart book which outlined the process and included templates. The schedule already outlines future events and meetings. Mr. Garcia mentioned a more aggressive approach with low nomination districts might be effective. He encouraged tracking data and contacting those districts to identify needs and establish contact with a specific person. He offered that it might be helpful to have Congresswoman Sanchez involved in the contact process. Ms. Salazar offered using channel 8 (public access channel) to promote service academies and direct members to their local Congressional representatives. Therefore, the presentation focused on using existing programs, streamlining the process, and increasing visibility through personal contact.

The formal proceedings were Adjourned at 0935 and the USAFA Board of Visitors went to the airfield for the Airmanship program field immersions. Activities concluded at 1520 hours.

Summary of Follow-on Actions

No formal motions were offered for a vote.



WILLIAM E HAMPTON, Col., USAF
Executive Secretary



CHARLES P. GARCIA
Chairman, USAFA Academy Board of Visitors