

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
NEW BOARD ORIENTATION & ANNUAL RETREAT
Virginia War Museum Foundation
621 S. Belvidere Street, Richmond, VA 23220
August 7, 2026
DRAFT AGENDA**

Theme: “Aligning Strategy, Leadership, and Board Action”

Presiding: Mr. Victor K. Branch, Rector

8:00 – 8:45 AM Breakfast served

9:00 – 9:15 AM OpeningMr. Victor K. Branch, Rector
Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President

9:15 – 9:45 AM Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)Mr. Nathan Moberley
Senior Assistant State Attorney/Section Chief, Education
Office of the State Attorney General

9:45 – 10:00 AM Instructions/Charge to the Board re: Group Discussions

Board – Administration Partnership

10:00 – 10:50 AM Session 1:

Enrollment (Headcount & FTIC) / Retention/Graduation– Facilitator: BOV Thomas Cosgrove

- o Dr. Tia A. Minnis, Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
- o Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walter, Chief Operating Officer/Senior Vice President for Student Success & Administration

Annual Giving/Engagement of Donors –

Facilitator, BOV Robert Thompson

- o Dr. Willis Walter, Vice President for External Relations & Advancement
- o Ms. Joyce Wilkins, Interim Chief Financial Officer/Associate VP for Budget & Finance

11:10 – 12:00 PM Session 2:

Enrollment (Headcount & FTIC) / Retention–

Facilitator: BOV Thomas Cosgrove (to be confirmed)

- o Dr. Tia Minnis, Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
- o Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walter, Chief Operating Officer/Senior Vice President for Student Success & Administration

Office of the President, 8.3.2026

Virginia State University
Board of Visitors Annual Retreat
August 6-7, 2026
Theme: Aligning Strategy, Leadership, and Board Action

Presiding: Mr. Victor K. Branch, Rector

Annual Giving/Engagement of Donors –

Facilitator: BOV Robert Thompson (to be confirmed)

- o Dr. Willis Walter, Vice President for External Relations & Advancement
- o Ms. Joyce Wilkins, Interim Chief Financial Officer/Associate VP for Budget & Finance

12:00 PM Break (Lunch Boxes to Go will be available)

12:15 – 12:45 PM Wrap-Up & Closing Remarks

- o Board Member Commitment Moment/Reflections

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
NEW BOARD ORIENTATION & ANNUAL RETREAT
9:00 A.M.; FRIDAY, August 7, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Victor K. Branch, Rector, called the meeting of the Virginia State University (VSU) Board of Visitors to order in the Virginia War Memorial Foundation, 621 S. Belvidere Street, Richmond, VA 23220, at approximately 9:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was present.

Board Members Present:

Mr. Victor K. Branch, Rector
Mrs. Verndell Robinson (Secretary)
Mr. Thomas Cosgrove
Dr. Robert Denton, Jr.
Mr. M. Peter McPherson
Mrs. Morenike Miles
Mr. Robert Thompson
Mr. Kishore Thota
Mr. Jon Moore
Mr. Baron Braswell
Mrs. Clarice Torian
Dr. William Murray
Dr. Joseph A.F. Chase, Jr.

Board Members Absent:

General Dennis Via, Vice Rector
Ms. Daphne Meeks

Board Appointees:

Dr. Kenneth Lewis, Faculty Representative
Mr. Zin Cambridge, Student Representative

Legal Counsel:

Mr. Nathan Moberley

Administration Present:

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President
Dr. Tia A. Minnis, Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Ms. Joyce Wilkins, Interim CFO/Associate VP Budget & Finance
Dr. Willis Walter, Vice President for External Relations / Institutional Advancement
Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walter, COO/ Senior VP for Student Success & Administration
Dr. Annie C. Redd, Chief of Staff/Director, Board of Operations & Relations

NEW BOARD ORIENTATION & ANNUAL RETREAT SESSION II

PAGE 2

WELCOME

Rector Branch welcomed all attendees and expressed appreciation for their participation in the Board of Visitors (BOV) orientation and retreat. Rector Branch welcomed the Board of Visitors and other retreat participants back for the second day of the retreat. He expressed his appreciation to those who attended the dinner the previous evening, noting that it provided a valuable opportunity for participants to connect and engage with one another outside of the formal meeting setting.

Rector Branch emphasized the importance of fellowship and relationship-building among board members and participants. Echoing Bishop's earlier remarks, he noted that spending time together in a more informal environment helps strengthen relationships and fosters a greater sense of collaboration and community among the group.

President Abdullah

President Makola Abdullah provided a recap of the previous day's meeting. He also introduced Ms. Kendra White, Liaison to the Audit and Compliance Committee, and Ms. Nannette Williams, Internal Auditor.

INVOCATION

Rector Branch invited Dr. Joseph A.F. Bishop, Jr. to offer the invocation.

FOIA

Mr. Nathan Moberly, Legal Counsel, explained that the Attorney General appoints the University Counsel and serves as legal advisor to the university and its Board of Visitors. The Board, as a collective entity, is considered the client—not any individual member. Legal Counsel provides legal guidance during closed sessions and other official matters. Communications with Counsel are protected under the attorney-client privilege, which belongs to the institution and ensures confidentiality in legal discussions.

Mr. Moberly provided an overview of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), emphasizing its role in ensuring transparency in the conduct of public business. He noted that one of the most significant aspects of FOIA is its requirement for open meetings. Compliance with FOIA is essential, as failure to adhere to its provisions may result in actions taken by the board being deemed null and void.

The Board acknowledged its responsibility to comply with FOIA requirements regarding open meetings, public records, notice procedures, meeting minutes, and the lawful use of closed sessions when permitted under the Act.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Dr. Tia Minnis, Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walter, Dr. Willis Walter, and Ms. Joyce Wilkins shared information aligned with the Board's 2026-2027 goals in two breakout discussion groups. The discussions were designed to give Board members an opportunity to hear directly from University leadership, ask questions, share perspectives, and consider meaningful ways they can help advance institutional priorities.

NEW BOARD ORIENTATION & ANNUAL RETREAT II
PAGE 3

CLOSING REMARKS/WRAP UP

President Abdullah expressed enthusiasm about working collaboratively with the Board throughout the coming year. He noted his appreciation for the discussion, emphasizing the importance of focusing not only on today's challenges but also on the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. He encouraged maintaining a forward-looking perspective as the University continues its progress. President Abdullah concluded by expressing confidence that the year ahead will be productive and successful, and he thanked Mr. Rector for his leadership, service, and continued dedication to the Board and the University.

Rector Branch made closing remarks and commended the VSU leadership team for the presentations and the information shared with Board members during the Orientation Sessions.

Rector Branch expressed appreciation to Visitor Torian, Visitor Braswell, and Visitor Murray, and all Board members for their service and commitment to the University. Special recognition was given to Visitor Murray for accepting the opportunity to serve once again this year and for demonstrating a continued dedication to the Board's work. Rector Branch also thanked all members who have served over the past several years for their time, contributions, and willingness to support the University's mission.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Rector Branch called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was received, properly seconded. The Rector adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:14 pm.

APPROVED:

Mr. Victor K. Branch, Rector

Date