

# INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

November 5, 2021

## Members Present

### **House of Delegate Members:**

The Honorable Luke E. Torian  
The Honorable Betsy B. Carr  
The Honorable Delores L. McQuinn  
The Honorable Matthew C. Fariss

### **Senate of Virginia Members:**

The Honorable Richard L. Saslaw  
The Honorable Jill Holtzman Vogel  
The Honorable R. Creigh Deeds

### **Ex-Officio Members:**

The Honorable K. Joseph Flores, Secretary of Finance  
The Honorable Atif Qarni, Secretary of Education  
Staci Henshaw, Auditor of Public Accounts  
Peter A. Blake, Executive Director, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

### **Staff in Attendance:**

Anne Oman, Director, House Appropriations Committee  
April Kees, Director, Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee  
Connor Garstka, Attorney, Division of Legislative Services  
Tyler Williams, Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee  
Tony Maggio, House Appropriations Committee

James Madison University:

Jonathan R. Alger, President  
Charles W. King, Vice President for Administration and Finance  
Jeff Bourne, Athletics Director

Delegate Torian called the meeting to order.

Upon a motion of Delegate Carr, seconded by Senator Vogel, the Commission unanimously elected Delegate Torian as Chair.

Upon a motion of Senator Deeds, seconded by Delegate McQuinn, the Commission unanimously elected Senator Saslaw as Vice-Chair.

Chairman Torian made opening remarks where he indicated that the Commission was convening in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 704 of the 2015 Session to review the request from James Madison University to move its football program to the Division I-A (FBS) level by joining the Sun Belt Conference.

Chairman Torian recognized President Alger who presented the official request from James Madison University that was unanimously adopted by its Board of Visitors. President Alger was followed by Charlie King who presented and discussed the financial plan and assumptions associated with the proposed move to the Sun Belt Conference. Mr. King also addressed questions from Commission members. Senator Deeds asked about the football stadium capacity and Mr. King indicated that it was 25,000 seats which was greater than the FBS minimum requirement of 15,000. Mr. King indicated that it could be expanded but did not foresee the need for that in the near future. Delegate Fariss asked about the assumptions on expenses. Mr. King indicated that the amounts proposed were in line with other Sun Belt Conference schools.

Following Mr. King's presentation, Chairman Torian asked for any public comment on the proposal. Dr. Brian Hemphill, President of Old Dominion University, spoke in support of the proposed move to Division I-A. No one spoke in opposition.

Before any motions were entertained, Chairman Torian indicated that it was important to make sure that JMU was mindful of the cost of education and that this move to Division I-A football does not create a burden on the students and families.

Delegate Carr requested that the motion to approve include the following:

1. That the Auditor of Public Accounts, when performing its annual evaluation under Code § 23.1-1309, take into consideration that JMU will be under an initial probationary two-year period with the Sun Belt and adjust its review accordingly;
2. That the General Assembly include language in the upcoming budget to provide JMU the same transition period as ODU in the enabling legislation (Chapter 704 of the 2015 Session) when it moved to Division I-A football; and
3. That JMU focus on minimizing the impact on student fees that could result from this move.

The three amendments were adopted by voice vote.

There was a motion by Delegate Carr, seconded by Senator Vogel, to approve JMU's request with the three previously noted amendments.

Chair Torian then conducted a roll call voice vote:

Voting Aye:

Torian, Saslaw, Vogel, Deeds, Carr, McQuinn, Fariss

| There were no Nay votes.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.