

**DRAFT - SUBJECT TO COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

**OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF VISITORS ATHLETICS COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, June 16, 2021**

**MINUTES**

A meeting of the Athletics Committee of the Board of Visitors of Old Dominion University was held on Wednesday, June 16, 2021, at 9AM. Pursuant to Executive Amendment 28 to HB29 (2020), the Committee met by electronic communication means, without a quorum of committee members physically assembled at one location, to discuss or transact business statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of the Board and the discharge of its lawful purposes, duties and responsibilities.

Present from the Committee were:

Yvonne Allmond, Chair  
Carlton F. Bennett, Vice Chair  
Kay Kemper, Rector  
R. Bruce Bradley  
Robert Broermann  
Robert Corn  
Unwanna Dabney  
Larry R. Hill  
Ross Mugler  
P. Murry Pitts  
Lisa Smith

Also present were:

Wood Selig  
Alonzo Brandon  
Greg DuBois  
Eileen Graham  
Donna Meeks  
Amanda Skaggs  
R. Earl Nance  
Don Stansberry  
Holly Hutchinson  
Ron Moses  
Jason Chandler  
Carolyn Crutchfield  
Bridget Groble

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Yvonne Allmond called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon a motion made by Ms. Allmond and seconded by Mr. Pitts, the minutes of the Athletics Committee meeting held on December 10, 2020 were approved by roll-call vote (*Aye: Kemper, Allmond, Bradley, Broermann, Corn, Dabney, Hill, Mugler, Pitts, Smith, Nay: None*).

### **I. JERRY DAVIS AD AGENCY PRESENTATION**

Representatives from the Davis Ad Agency presented on the marketing advertising & social media campaign they created to help ODU “BRING BACK THE ROAR” for the return of football in the fall of 2021. The goals of the campaign are to create energy and excitement around the return of ODU football, to leverage the popularity of ODU football legend Taylor Heinicke, to highlight new head coach Ricky Rahne, and to increase season ticket sales for the upcoming season. The campaign kicked off on April 20 via local tv stations and social media with a four week promotion and will have another strong push in late July/August.

Regarding television, the agency partnered with WAVY (NBC), Fox 43, WVEC(ABC), WTKR (CBS), WGNT 27, and COX Media. The stations provided added value in that they were able to offer a schedule at 2-3 times the value of paid spots to highlight the football program, with season ticket giveaways and additional news coverage. The Hampton Roads Show on WAVY and Coastal Live on WTKR each featured an interview with new head coach Ricky Rahne to promote the upcoming football season. WAVY posted on their Facebook page and received almost 356,000 likes with two posts. WVEC had a one day takeover of their homepage which received over 100,000 impressions. The advertisement campaign also appeared on YUR VIEW (Cox Media) and a segment on the Weather Channel. ODU’s Jason Chandler appeared on 757 Live for an interview promoting the upcoming football season.

In total, there were 193 free spots with a \$20,000 investment worth \$74,850 total on the following programs: WAVY 5:30pm News, The Tonight Show, Access Hollywood, Chicago Fire, NBC Nightly News, WAVY 11pm News, Dr. Phil, Blackish, Inside Edition, Judge Judy, WTKR 6am News, Fox Nascar, Sportswrap, and Fox 10pm news.

In social media, the advertising campaign promoted the \$99 season tickets with the Taylor Heinicke Hudson Blue football jersey giveaway on the ODU Football Facebook page. This reached 72,236 Facebook pages, with 355,769 impressions, over 2700 clicks and over 1700 engagements (likes, comments, or shares).

The next television campaign will be in August to market season ticket sales to potential buyers.

The agency then showed bloopers and outtakes from the taping of the commercial featuring ODU football legend Taylor Heinicke and ODU head coach Ricky Rahne. They closed out their presentation playing the final two commercials in their entirety.

Jason Chandler and Carolyn Crutchfield provided an update on ticket sales as 6,500 season tickets have been sold to date with three months left to reach our goal of 10K season ticket holders (1,000 above 2019 season ticket total). We have sold over 530 new season tickets and he attributed this to the successful ad campaign. Mr. Chandler feels we are in a good position to exceed 2019 sales and anticipates August will be a great month.

ODU athletics has never used an outside firm for marketing needs. Wood thanked the Davis Ad Agency for their great work pro bono on behalf of ODU athletics and also the donors who came forward and financially committed \$50K to this advertising campaign. We were also extremely fortunate to have Taylor Heinicke accept our request to help promote season tickets for ODU Football for no charge.

Carolyn Crutchfield reported that Kaufman Mall will be a turnkey tailgating experience for all fans with family friendly activities. The alcohol beverage control has approved the sale of beer to patrons on Kaufman Mall in restricted and designated areas.

## **II. ACADEMIC UPDATE**

Dr. Ron Moses reported that the athletics department had the best academic year since 2009 with the following academic success for the past academic year and particularly the spring 2021 semester:

- 3.31: Highest term GPA in ODU athletics history
- Women's tennis has the highest women's sport GPA @ 3.87
- Men's swimming had the highest men's sport GPA @ 3.53
- 71%: Percentage of student-athletes to achieve above a 3.0 GPA in departmental history (up 21% from spring 2020)
- 17/18 teams achieved above a 3.0 (first time in departmental history)
- 94%: Highest single year Graduation Success Rate (GSR)
- 87%: Highest 4-year GSR
- 3.10: Highest Men's Football GPA in program history
- 888: Number of hours completed in community service by our student-athletes (mostly virtual service efforts). Finished in top 10 Helper Helper rankings for second year in a row.

Dr. Moses then reported on academic-based revenue distribution: Beginning in Spring 2020, a portion of Division I revenue is distributed to member schools based on the academic achievement of student-athletes. The model allows schools with higher graduation rates and academic success to qualify for more funds.

A school earns an academic unit by meeting any ONE of these three standards:

- 1) Single year Graduation Success Rate (GSR) for most recently available year is equal to or greater than 90 percent.
- 2) Difference between student-athlete and student body percentages in the most recently published Federal Graduation Rate (FGR) is equal to or greater than 13 percentage points.
- 3) Academic Progress Rate for previous year is equal to or greater than 985. The average of single-year scores for all teams is used to determine eligibility for this standard.

ODU athletics results:

2019-2020:

87% - Single Year GSR (90% Needed)

12% - FGR vs. Campus (13% Needed)

2020-2021:

93% - Single Year GSR (90% Needed)

22% - FGR vs. Campus (13% Needed)

The revenue ODU athletics receives will be spent on virtual and in person programming on subjects such as financial literacy, resume workshops, Title IX, diversity and inclusion efforts, alumni career fairs, and mental health initiatives.

### **III. THE STUDENT-ATHLETE COVID YEAR EXPERIENCE**

A question and answer session was held between Dr. Wood Selig, Director of Athletics, and Miss Holly Hutchinson, women's tennis student-athlete. Holly was a nationally ranked singles and doubles player this year competing as a graduate student-athlete. The women's tennis team won the conference USA Championship and advanced to the second round of the NCAA Tournament. Holly has won several awards and heavily involved in athletics department committees and initiatives as a member of both the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee(SAAC) and The Racial Equity Task Force.

Holly first commented on this past year's COVID experience as student-athlete:

*This year was very different, especially through athletics. Overall, ODU definitely stepped up to the plate through all of the uncertainty and provided tremendous support. Morale and relationships among teams and athletic administration was strengthened. Two positive takeaways were the scheduling of both the training room and academic advising as it provided structure to the day. The ability to have online classes gave great flexibility, especially when traveling. The coaches and our training staff were phenomenal with COVID testing multiple times a week.*

Wood asked Holly to comment on online vs in person classes. Could online classes be continued in the future to provide that much needed benefit of flexibility?

*Having the opportunity to have one or two online classes could be very beneficial. When you are traveling, you can still hand in work on time. You can access information and communicate with professors from wherever you are competing.*

Wood asked Holly to talk about mental health needs and support for all student-athletes:

*This was an extremely challenging year trying to balance everything. I didn't see my family for over a year. Having the ability to see a sports psychologist would be helpful. The long wait time to see a campus mental health professional can be hurtful in the long run. It would be so helpful to have a psychologist on the athletics staff.*

Travel experience and scheduling philosophy:

*We traveled by bus a lot to competition. In NCAA Division I Tennis, Virginia and North Carolina have a lot of competitive schools so we were fortunate to have a great schedule. We did have the opportunity to fly to Florida to compete against two top 20 schools which was beneficial. Flying and busing are two different experiences especially with COVID protocol. It bonded us because we all went through it together. By the time we got to North Texas to compete, we were very familiar with COVID protocol and flight travel, which made it easier.*

Summary as an ODU student-athlete and what is next:

*Most amazing experience here. Put myself out there and joined a lot of things. The people made the experience great – staff, teammates, other teams, super passionate about our tennis team and where we ended at since I started. Progressing every year and improving.*

*Thank you Wood for the relationship we have built. Your efforts are so appreciated and meaningful.*

*I am starting my professional career in tennis based in England. I will start competing mid-July. Beyond tennis, I would like to pursue a career in tv and broadcasting. I will always be grateful for all the opportunities that were provided to me during my time at ODU.*

Holly also commented how great President Broderick was through his ongoing tremendous support, especially the private graduation ceremony due to missing commencement while competing in the conference championship.

Wood thanked Holly for all she has done for ODU athletics. She is a great representative of all student-athletes.

#### **IV. SPRING 2021 ATHLETIC HIGHLIGHTS**

Dr. Wood Selig reported that ODU athletics produced 111 athletic home events this past spring. There have never been so many events in one semester.

- Women's tennis had success both academically (best overall academic team at ODU) and competitively (advanced to round of 32 in the NCAA Tournament).
- Women's golfer Leah Onosato advanced to the NCAA Tournament.
- Our baseball team also advanced to the NCAA tournament and came close to moving on to the super regionals after spending most of the entire season in the Top 25.

Community support has been tremendous following baseball's successful season. It was unfortunate that we could not host the regional round of the NCCA Tournament due to our baseball facility not being up to the standard of being a host school. A feasibility study will be conducted in the next few months to determine what we would need to do and spend to upgrade our facility to be NCAA and C-USA host worthy. We have already quietly raised over \$1.5M for future baseball renovations.

Overall, it has been an outstanding season academically and athletically.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:04 a.m.