



External Engagement Committee
2:15 p.m.
June 5, 2025
Kyle Hall, Room 340, Radford, VA

DRAFT
MINUTES

Committee Members Present

Ms. Lisa W. Pompa, Chair
Ms. Joann S. Craig, Vice Chair
Mr. Dale S. Ardizzone
Dr. Betty Jo Foster
Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert

Board Members Present

Mr. Marquett Smith, Rector
Mr. Tyler W. Lester, Vice Rector
Ms. Betsy D. Beamer
Ms. Callie M. Dalton
Mr. William C. Davis
Mr. George Mendiola Jr.
Mr. David A. Smith
Mr. Jonathan Sweet
Mr. James C. Turk

Others Present

Ms. Penny Helms White, Vice President for Advancement and Alumni Relations
Dr. Angela Joyner, Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education
Dr. Robert Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration
Dr. Dannette Beane, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications
Dr. Bethany Usher, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Ms. Lisa Ghidotti, Executive Director for Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives
Ms. Karen Castele, Secretary to the Board of Visitors and Special Assistant to the President
Ms. Susan Richardson, University Counsel
Dr. Matt Close, Faculty Representative
Mr. Onajae Edmund, Student Representative

Call to Order

Ms. Lisa W. Pompa, Chair, formally called the External Engagement Committee meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. in Kyle Hall Room 340, Radford, Va.

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Lisa W. Pompa asked for a motion to approve of the June 5, 2025 agenda, as published. Ms. Joann S. Craig made the motion, Dr. Betty Jo Foster seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Lisa W. Pompa asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2025 meeting of the External Engagement Committee meeting, as published. Dr. Betty Jo Foster made the motion. Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Economic Development and Corporate Education Report

IMPACT Lab

Vice President Angela Joyner shared how IMPACT is committed to delivering its grant obligations to the U.S. Department of Education and the Commonwealth Cyber Initiative during the transition of the credit bearing offerings to Academic Affairs.

- Radford University will participate in the Roanoke Blacksburg Technology's (RBTC) 2025 Emerging Technology Conference. The team will be highlighting the Professional Accelerated Cyber Education (PACE) program.
- As part of the U.S. Department of Education Rural Post Secondary Education (RPED) grant, which was awarded in 2023, IMPACT is conducting research in K-12 cybersecurity education. The research aims to create sustainable pathways from K-12 through higher education and into cybersecurity careers.
- Radford University has established a strategic collaboration with VDOE that successfully enrolled 334 early childhood educators in non-credit education offerings.

Economic Development

Vice President Joyner also shared an overview of events happening in Economic Development.

- CoWorks @THE HUB recently celebrated its grand opening, which generated significant media attention. This event represents a major milestone for entrepreneurial development in Radford, Virginia.
- The Talent Connect Summit was held on April 24, 2025 at Radford University with the primary purpose of connecting students with employers, particularly those receiving IT certifications. Participating institutions included Radford University, Virginia Tech, and New River Community College. The summit successfully provided direct networking opportunities with industry professionals and facilitated connections for internships and employment opportunities.
- Vice President Joyner presented a collaborative storefront revitalization project that supports the broader downtown revitalization initiative. This project is part of a larger economic development strategy for the area.
- Vice President Joyner shared details about the riverfront amphitheater proposal currently underway. The project objectives include creating a versatile outdoor venue for programming, boosting economic impact in the region, providing hands-on learning experience for students, and increasing opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs. A joint work between the university, the city of Radford, regional economic development groups and tourism organizations are currently working through the proposal details for the next phase of the project. The next steps include refining venue design, developing proforma assumptions, and finalizing programming inputs to proceed to the next.

Advancement and Alumni Relations Report

Vice President Penny Helms White provided an update on the Athletic Feasibility Study. A comprehensive assessment of Athletics has been completed, including a thorough evaluation of the prospect pool and identification of priority needs. Follow-up interviews are currently underway.

Additionally, an interest survey was distributed this week. The final report, prepared by Huron | GG+A, is anticipated this fall and will serve as a guide for the next steps in the university's fundraising strategy.

Vice President White shared that, as of April 30th, Radford University has secured a total of \$8.9 million in fundraising for FY25. Notably, there is a positive trend in both documented planned gifts and cash contributions, reflecting strong donor confidence and increased engagement.

In support of efforts to engage students prior to graduation, the university introduced a new event this year: Tartan Toast & Tailgate. Held during a baseball game at Sherman Carter Memorial Baseball Stadium, the event featured BBQ, lawn games, and a celebratory toast led by President Danilowicz, welcoming graduating seniors into the alumni community. Additional senior celebrations included the Senior Block Party, part of Traditions Week. The Alumni Relations team conducted 498 exit interviews and distributed 155 legacy stoles in recognition of graduating students and their achievements.

This spring, the University launched The Wayfinder, a new electronic newsletter. Distributed monthly on the third Tuesday, it is designed to strengthen engagement and build deeper connections with alumni, donors, faculty, staff, stakeholders, and friends of Radford University.

A new Gift Planning Website has been launched to support alumni and donors in exploring estate planning options. The site offers clear, accessible information on tools such as bequests, charitable trusts, and beneficiary designations, while also highlighting the tax benefits of planned giving.

To enhance the donor pipeline, the university has begun reimagining its Annual Giving program to align with industry best practices. Carolyn Clayton, Director of Annual Giving, provided an overview of the restructuring efforts aimed at increasing donor participation, retention, and impact.

The target for FY25 is to raise \$1 million and engage 3,000 unduplicated donors, with an emphasis on alumni donor retention.

Annual Giving Metrics (per Huron | GG+A year-end cash transaction reports):

- Only individual donors counted (no entities)
- Constituents included: alumni, employees, parents, students, and friends
- Only cash gifts included (excluding pledges, in-kind, and matching gifts)
- Gift size range: \$1–\$4,999
- Event-related gifts were excluded

Adjournment

With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon R. Ratcliffe
Executive Assistant to the
Vice President for Advancement and Alumni Relations

Sharon B. Webb
Executive Assistant to the
Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education

End of Board of Visitors Materials

