

University Athletics Committee Minutes

December 17, 2020

Via Zoom, 3:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Susan Short, Chair.

Members Present: Whit Babcock, Katie Boes, Allison Bowersock, Tom Burbey, Bob Denton, Patrick Finley, Rachel Holloway, Joseph Kozak, Mike Madigan, Joe Marcy, David Crotts (for Ken Miller), Sally Morton, Michael Nappier, Bridget Ryan-Berman, Susan Short, Becki Smith, Kenneth Stiles, Ester Talamazzi, Eric Wiseman, Brad Wurthman

Absent: Tom Crow, Art Keown, Jay Poole, Chris Wise (for Frank Shushok), Joseph Tront

Guests: Sarah Armstrong, Danny White

Recorder: Anna Taylor, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

1. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made to approve the agenda and was passed unanimously.

2. Electronic Approval of November 19, 2020 Meeting Minutes

The minutes of November 19 were approved electronically and sent to the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies (CUSP) for voting, then will go to University Council for web posting.

3. Athletic Director Update – Whit Babcock (PowerPoint presentation in Google drive)

Whit spoke with the group about the many challenges the department has faced. The department will continue to work hard. The primary issue is to focus on the student-athlete experience. After pay cuts, budget cuts, and some position cuts, the department has trimmed the nearly 24 million deficit to below 20 million. The department chose not to take from student fees or from academics in order to cover deficit funding. This deficit will impact the department for the next three years. Whit expressed his appreciation to the committee and campus. In addition, Whit responded to the following questions presented by committee members:

How will bowl revenues will be distributed across the conference?

- A bowl payout actually goes to the conference, not to participating institutions.

How did the team go about deciding whether or not to play in a bowl game?

- The players decided whether or not to play the bowl game.
- Not all players would be able to play in it. Some student athletes do not want to risk

- injury in case they have a chance to go professional.
- Bowl games do not seem to have the luster they used to, a lot of athletes opt out.

What are key issues for NCAA legislation?

- NIL (Name, Image, Likeness), Transfers
- National cases: Alston Case & Supreme Court, Bill of Rights (Senator Booker)

What has been the initial impact/success of the ACC network?

Financials will be made public in the near future. Revenue should be in the mid-7 figures in and exceed initial expectations. The Comcast deal, is the biggest deal in the country. Comcast does not currently carry the ACC Network. Individuals in Virginia who have Comcast are paying money each month to have access to the SEC and Big 10 networks.

4. Sports Nutrition/Student-Athlete Performance Center (PowerPoint presentation in Google drive)

Alyson Onyon, Director, Sports Nutrition

Tom Gabbard, Senior Associate Athletics Director, Facilities and Operations

Tom Gabbard and Aly Onyon provided a PowerPoint presentation of the new Student-Athlete Performance Center and discussed the importance of establishing a central location to provide meals/nutrition needs for student athletes within the athletic complex.

- Close proximity to training and performance spaces
- Meal offerings towards individual nutrition needs
- More flexibility in accommodating schedules of student athletes
- Facilities remain a major component of recruiting. Most competitive Division 1 programs have similar facilities.

Steps taken:

- Visited multiple campuses and their athletic dining service areas.
- In 2016, Hanbury was retained to conduct a feasibility study.
- The Bowman Room was chosen as the best location for the Center.
- The Hanbury team worked closely with Rick Johnson, consultant (formerly in charge of Virginia Tech Dining Services) and campus representatives. The campus group included extensive assistance from Ted Faulkner, members of the campus dining staff, sports nutrition staff, representatives from campus facilities and operations, and campus capital design and construction representatives.
- Construction began in the summer of 2019.
- The certificate of occupancy was received in November 2020.

Hokie Fuel Staff

- 30 workers and volunteers, works with HNFE
 - Counsel one-on-one, teams, cooking classes, grocery shopping
 - Game changer for all student athletes
 - Dietitians work directly with student athletes
 - Centrally located space
 - Athletes will be able to eat with one another, not just with their team.
 - Serves as a major highlight for recruiting
 - Current status – in the process of hiring executive chef
 - Currently using the space for catering
- Susan Short asked if the space would be available for university and general public rentals. Tom indicated that the group will be open to those possibilities.
 - David Crotts asked if this will only be available for athletes while in season. Aly indicated that all athletes will be eating there and will essentially be a year-round operation for all athletes.

5. Committee Member Comments

Susan Short shared with the group potential topics for spring meeting agendas. These included:

- Learning from the University of Florida basketball player collapse situation that occurred this past weekend. Can we learn more from our sports medicine leaders about lessons learned and current protocols? We should invite Mike Goforth and Dr. Mark Rogers to a future UAC meeting.
- Transcript evaluation process and admissions. Perhaps Rick Sparks can join us to address the transcript evaluation process.
- Ken Stiles suggested we add a topic to a future agenda surrounding social justice.

David Crotts asked about how scholarships were being impacted by the pandemic. Danny White replied that scholarship limits are increased based on the number of team members. Few sports at Virginia Tech utilize full scholarships. As an example, football currently has 85 scholarships. If there were 10 on scholarship that decided to return, the university would have 95 next year, then return to 85 the following year.

Danny White reminded the committee that Name/Image/and Likeness is being voted on by the NCAA in January. We are the only country in the world that merges athletes and academics.

Sarah Armstrong shared that 25 student athletes were slated to graduate in the fall. Last week, her group did something new – a drive by parade for graduates. A small group of student-athletes participated and were joined by the Hokie bird, cheerleaders, and a photographer. In addition, some goodies were distributed during this special event.

6. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

MEETING DATES FOR 2021

(All meetings will be from 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. and will be conducted via Zoom):

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Thursday, February 11, 2021

Thursday, March 11, 2021

Thursday, April 8, 2021

Tentative: Thursday, May 13, 2021