



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF ADVISORS MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY, July 22, 2025, AT 5:00 PM  
USMSM, TELECONFERENCE

**BOA In Attendance:** Dr. Yolanda Wilson, Dr. Evalyne Bryant-Ward, Kaprice James, Dr. J. Scott Smith, Dr. Maria Navarro, Dr. Rhonda Phillips, Dr. Christine Bergmark, Dr. Theresa Shafer, Bonnie Green, Julie Oberg, Philip Melton and George Hurlburt.

**USM:** Dr. Jay Perman, Chancellor, Ellen Herbst, Dr. Alison Wrynn, Kathleen Perry, Deputy Chief of Staff and Elizabeth Johnson, Director of Early College Education, Dr. Anthony Foster, and Brad Stover (Office of the Attorney General).

**USMSM:** Dr. Dale Nesbary, Dr. Jamison Watson, Jean Combs

**BoA Not in Attendance:** Senator Jack Bailey, Joe Anderson, Glen Ives, Gary Kessler, and Kathy Maney

**Call to Order:** George Hurlburt, chair, welcomed and called the Board of Advisors (BoA) to order at 5:09 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes of the April 1, 2025, meeting were distributed for approval prior to the meeting. Bonnie Green made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Dr. Christine Bergmark. The motion carried.

**Note of Appreciation:**

Dr. Jay Perman, Chancellor of USM, expressed appreciation for the board's guidance and shared highlights from his visit to Southern Maryland, where he engaged with local officials and students. He emphasized the value of partnerships among public higher education institutions, school systems, and community colleges. Notable developments included the opening of a new environmental science research facility at the Chesapeake Biologic Lab and progress in the autonomous systems program involving students from both College Park and the College of Southern Maryland.

**Chair Remarks:**

George Hurlburt covered several key updates and introductions. Three board members, Chris Kaselemis, Dr. Andre Townsel, and Dr. Johnnie Taylor have left the board of advisors for various reasons. Joe Anderson will lead the nominating committee joined by Glenn Ives and Dr. Evalyne Bryant-Ward. Bonnie Green has agreed to lead the Work-Based Learning (WBL) Working Group with focus on internships, apprenticeships and scholarships building on the findings of the Workforce Working Group. Senator Jack Bailey has agreed to create a Legislative Working Group to focus on regional matters. Foundation and Communications Working Groups are anticipated to be stood up as momentum increases.

Mr. Hurlburt welcomed Dr. Dale Nesbary as the new interim executive director.

### **Executive Director Introduction:**

Dr. Dale Nesbary discussed the search for a leadership position that required a candidate with both academic and practical experience, as well as the ability to represent the institution at various levels. He highlighted his own background, which includes experience in academia, law enforcement, and public policy, emphasizing his research and practical contributions. Dr. Nesbary also mentioned his work in various institutions and his role as a professor and college president, showcasing his diverse experience in higher education and public service.

Dr. Nesbary shared his extensive experience in education and infrastructure development, highlighting his work in building a 100,000-square-foot facility in Muskegon, Michigan, which included agile manufacturing and AI programs. He discussed his background in international education, including recruiting students from various countries, and his experience as a board chair for Trinity Health System, where he served on the Compliance Committee. Dr. Nesbary expressed his enthusiasm for contributing to the region's progress and emphasized his vision of recognizing and nurturing talent, particularly among students.

### **MATRIX Update:**

Dr. Jamison Watson, the new research MATRIX Laboratory development representative, introduced himself, highlighting his background in chemical and biological engineering and his work at both the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy.

Dr. Watson highlighted the University of Maryland's MATRIX Lab as a multifaceted platform for education, partnerships, and research in autonomy. He discussed recent successes, including funding from the Office of Naval Research, (\$185K for 3 Years) TEDCO, (\$115k for 9 Months) Lockheed Martin (\$100K for 3 years), and TEDCO seed grant finalists for projects in Southern Maryland. He also emphasized education initiatives, including boot camps, AI summer camps, short courses, Evenings at SMART, internships, NAWCAD sponsored 2026 capstone projects, and a planned two-day Development, Test, Evaluation, Verification & Validation (DTEVV) Workshop in November 2025. Dr. Watson outlined plans for a graduate degree program in autonomous systems. He mentioned ongoing visiting Federal Legislative and State leader delegations, key partnerships with industry and government entities, and a potential collaboration

with Hughes Network for a 5G test site. He concluded his remarks with a promotional video highlighting the value of the MATRIX Lab.

### **Board of Advisors' Business:**

Absent some of the vacationing members, George Hurlburt presented the findings of the Workforce Working Group, which focused on identifying key programs of study and specialization needed within the Tri-County area. The working group was organized to focus on STEM, education, business and healthcare. It was composed of functioning subject matter leaders in these four venues from Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's Counties. Each group was asked to offer leading programs of study along with specializations to satisfy regional needs.

The STEM group offered computer science including artificial intelligence and cyber security as first choice. Electrical engineering with a specialty in Electronic Warfare (EW) and mechanical engineering with a specialty in additive manufacturing followed. Computer engineering with a specialty in Model Based System Engineering (MBSE) was the fourth most important STEM undergraduate subject.

As early education is formative for success in higher education, it is perhaps the most important area of regional workforce focus. The two participating superintendents of schools highlighted Elementary Education as a foundational undergraduate program of study, especially for conditional teachers. This was followed by subject matter concentrations in physics, mathematics and Information Technology (IT). The primary education degree paves the way for advanced education degrees, including Special Education which represents cortical regional shortfall.

The small business group focused on healthcare, including healthcare IT, clinical psychology, healthcare administration, medical technology, and nursing, each with defined regional specialties. This group also stressed program management. An ad hoc Federal business group identified business management with emphasis on federal contracting, program management, and finance as key undergraduate programs of study as important for the federal and contracting components of the regional ecosystem.

The healthcare group deemed healthcare Management Information Systems (MIS) and mechanical engineering with a focus on health systems and IT as key undergraduate needs. Their third choice was social work with a focus on emergency case management

Each group also identified potential graduate courses and certification programs to further address these needs. Details are in the presentation materials and will be published in a final report. Follow on work will involve identifying cohort size and potential qualified adjuncts.

Mr. Hurlburt noted that many of the stated undergraduate and graduate requirements were being met by existing offerings. He also noted that there were numerous topical overlaps among the four groups. For example, mechanical engineering was in both the STEM and healthcare portfolios. These important factors present some significant marketing opportunities. Mr. Hurlburt noted that existing courses would benefit from tailoring to satisfy regional specialty needs. He suggested that local adjuncts may be a means to lend specialization insight to hybrid

classroom specialty instruction augmenting online presentation from afar. Finally, he praised the insightful assessment offered by key regional stakeholders and stressed that the forthcoming detailed report aims to provide advice to Dr. Nesbary rather than specific guidance

The group discussed the need to clarify and update data on existing USMSM course offerings, including whether programs are offered in-person, hybrid, or online, and their enrollment numbers. They emphasized the importance of marketing specific branded university partnerships, such as Towson University at USMSM, rather than USMSM as a standalone. As a means to attract students through identification with the offering institution. The discussion highlighted the need to receive regular update enrollment and program viability updates, and to continue to focus on strengthening dual enrollment and transfer pathways between high schools, CSM, and USM. There was also a discussion the need to teach ethical aspects of AI, particularly in relation to human interaction with AI systems.

The meeting concluded with a motion for adjournment, which was approved.

The **next BOA Meeting** will be on October 7, 2025, 5:00-6:30 pm.