

## **Update: Board of Visitors accepts President Sullivan's resignation**

**Rector, Sullivan cite "philosophical difference" as reason for departure**

By Krista Pedersen | Jun 10

The Executive Committee of the Board of Visitors officially accepted the resignation of University President Teresa A. Sullivan Sunday afternoon, a decision which was announced to the community via a University-wide email that morning.

Rector Helen Dragas, in a press conference with Vice Rector Mark Kington Sunday afternoon, called Sullivan's resignation a "difficult decision that was mutually reached by President Sullivan and the Board of Visitors." She declined to comment on any further details of the agreement.

Dragas cited a "philosophical difference" between Sullivan and the Board about the "vision of the future of the University," mentioning quickly changing environments in the fields of academia and health care.

"That environment we believe calls for a different approach to leadership," Dragas said. "We know that the University has exceptional potential and the Board of Visitors believes we need a bold, strategic, visionary leader to take us to the next level."

Although Dragas declined to comment on when the agreement was reached, she said it was something that has "been evolving over a period of time." Fourth-year College student Hillary Hurd, the student representative to the Board, said she had spoken at length with Dragas in the week prior to the announcement and had been informed of the decision several days prior.

Sullivan called her time at the University a "privilege" in the University-wide email Dragas sent out announcing her resignation.

"Although the board and I have a philosophical difference of opinion, I will always treasure having had the opportunity to work with so many gifted faculty and staff, talented students, and loyal alumni," Sullivan said in the email. "I am also grateful for the privilege to have worked with our extraordinary vice presidents and deans."

The Board will seek to name an interim President "over the next week or two," said University Spokesperson Carol Wood, and will begin the search for a new President by the end of the summer. Dragas and the Board will oversee the selection of a search committee.

Wood said the past search committee which hired Sullivan had "wide representation from the University community," including representatives from students, faculty, staff and alumni. Former University Rector John Wynne, whom Dragas replaced in July 2011, led the committee.

Sullivan, the University's eighth President, arrived in Charlottesville in 2010, following the resignation of John T. Casteen III after 20 years. In her two-year tenure she dealt with competing demands from many sources in tight financial times, including pressures to raise faculty and staff salaries, maintain low tuition prices and implement renovation and construction projects across Grounds.

Student Council President Johnny Vroom called Sullivan's resignation a "shock," but said he did not have an opinion on whether the decision was warranted or not.

"I think the [Board] has a vision," Vroom said. "I think they're trying to do whatever it takes to do what's best for U.Va. [and] if they think this is the right thing to do then it might've been the right thing to do."

Sullivan, who was in the second year of a five-year contract, will serve her last day on Aug. 15. Her husband, Law Prof. Douglas Laycock, has not yet announced whether or not he will be remaining on the Law faculty.

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