

From: Thomas DePasquale
Sent: Fri Apr 19 17: 12:27 2024
To: Harris, Susan G (sgh4c)
Subject: Private Letter to UVA Board Members
Importance: Normal

April 19, 2024

Dear Fellow UVA Visitors:

It has become clear to me that Bert Ellis has failed and will continue to fail at being a productive and constructive member of the Board of Visitors. He has a private agenda, and he abuses his role to promote that agenda. He arrived on the board with one motivation - to disparage and replace the administration and legacy board members irrespective of the truth. Regardless of claim, he uses The Jefferson Council, which he founded to amplify his voice. Claiming he has little involvement today in the organization. As Mr. Ellis stated in an email to me:

"The Jefferson Council is the loyal opposition to a large number of things that the BO V has been allowing the administration of UV A to do over the past 8-10 years. I have stepped out of the management of T JC to not control in any way what they do or say. But generally, I support what they do.

There are going to be a huge amount of changes coming to the future governance and operations of UV A by this Board starting as soon as July 1, 2024.

We have had to sit back and politely watch/listen to a lot of things we did not like given we did not have the votes to make serious changes. Soon we will. Elections do have consequences. We will be very polite, but we are going to make a lot of changes. I assume you understand."

The following is my response:

Bert there is no reason to assume, my politics have the least impact of what I do in providing oversight for the Commonwealth and assistance to the leadership. Perhaps a key difference I learn from the past, but work in the present, to lead to the future.

Bert, your messages to me raise a number of questions but two in particular demand an answer:

1 Who are the "we" you keep referring to?

2 To whom do you and other owe your duty as a member of this board?

As to the first question, my private conversations with other board members suggest that most of our fellow board members do not share your agenda. Your messages seem to presume that those members who have been and will be appointed by our Governor automatically assume your views and agenda.

I would ask all members of this board to clarify their position with respect to your agenda and the antics you employ to achieve your agenda. None of us want to become embroiled in a public confrontation but silence is complicity and only serves to confirm your voice. All board members should be concerned that silence on their part can be perceived as acceptance of your views and actions.

As to the second issue, you make very clear that the agenda you are promoting is that of The Jefferson Council. In essence, you are admitting that you see your fiduciary duties as owing to that organization and not to the University or as recently suggested by the Attorney General, the taxpayers of Virginia. Most worrisome to me you have arrived to save the University, which of course allows to believe at any cost.

The Jefferson Council represents a small number of self-appointed alumni, it traffics in facts that at best have been manipulated and distorted and which you know to be inaccurate in order to provide a false narrative, and in essence serves as a politicized lobbying entity of a state agency.

I attended the recent meeting of the organization and was struck by many things but particularly the complete inaccuracy of the facts presented and the willingness to use our students in promoting your agenda - a concern that the Jewish Leadership Advisory Board recently decried in its letter to this board. (Please listen to the audio from that meeting attached to this letter.) Your legal obligations, however defined, are to a broader constituency than The Jefferson Council. Time and again you have proven unable to recognize and fulfill your legal responsibilities, you should resign.

In your email to me you stated, "I assume you understand."

I understand is that I as most board members will adamantly agree, am not here to save the University.

I understand I am not here to make unwarranted accusations or search for issues that are contrived.

I understand that I have no right to promote myself at the expense of my fellow board members suggesting as you have that you are the only one who cares about a given issue.

I understand that when my term ends that this University will do just fine.

I understand that the preeminence of this University today has been built on the generous efforts and resources of so so many who have come before me.

I further understand that my job is to inquire and question and welcome differing views openly in an honest fashion with the same degree of integrity and respect that we expect of our students but not to demean, harass, and disparage with no basis.

I understand how much damage to this University can be done by a small

number of loud voices pursuing their own agenda without regard to others' views. But I will never understand what you believe you are achieving for a university you profess to love.

Bert, with no pleasure or bad will, I strongly believe that you should resign from Board of Visitors.


Thomas DePasquale

Attachment A

Link 1 the recordings of the Jefferson Council meeting, from 3pm to 5:30 at Alumni hall on April 9, 2024.

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/ou7h9yq6a41kuqumnlqfi/AKCNQARDafhUKaub07o2xg?rlkey=frbqq40kihtcyrhmxfc6jn5z&dl=0>

Attachment B letter from Bert Ellis April 5, 2024
imageO.png



Bert Ellis
To: Thomas DePasquale >

4/5/24

Re: Leadership | The Jefferson Council

The Jefferson Counsel is the loyal opposition to a large number of things that the BOV has been allowing the administration of UVA to do over the past 8-10 years. I have stepped out of the management of TJC and do not control in any way what they do or say. But in general I support what they do.

There are going to be a huge amount of changes coming to the future governance and operations of UVA by this Board starting as soon as July 1, 2024. We have had to sit back and politely watch/listen to a lot of things we did not like given we did not have the votes to make serious changes. Soon we will. Elections do have consequences. We will be very polite, but we are going to make a lot of changes. I assume you understand this.

BTW: This administration and this BOV allowed a student to put a huge F..K UVA sign covering her entire Lawn door. That is how this all got started. This could have been easily avoided had UVA done the right thing back then.

Bert Ellis
Member
Board of Visitors
University of Virginia

BertEllis@ellis.tv
Va. Code § 2.2-3705.1 (10)