Type of Meeting: Monthly Board of Trustees Meeting

Date & Time: Sunday, March 23, 2025, 2:00 p.m.

Location: In-Person, VRIC Main, Yaqeen Wing

Attendees: Dr. Adeel Raza, Dr. Ehap Sabri, Dr. I. Sulyman Olanrewaju, Sameer Syed, Tammam Alwan

Absentees: None

Minutes: Prepared in full by Tammam, a separate summary of the public forum comments later provided by Sameer and included, per BOT motion.

Approval: Approved by a 4-1 vote (Tammam opposed) with the summary of the public forum comments on Sunday, April 20, 2025.

Meeting Minutes

- Dr. Ehap called the meeting to order at 2:15 PM
 - A quorum of five out of five BOT members was reached, in accordance with Section 3.4 of the VRIC bylaws.
- The minutes from the Dec 29, Feb 9, and Feb 23 BOT meetings were reviewed.
 - A motion was made to approve the minutes as recorded.
 - The motion was approved unanimously by the BOT.
- Dr. Ehap opened the public forum.
 - Sixteen public attendees attended, four of whom shared public comments.

Agenda Item	Speaker	Updates
Public Forum	General Assembly	 Br. Syed Oqail: Raised concerns about the design of the wudu' area at VRIC, citing fiqh and cleanliness issues (e.g., splashing dirty water, spitting). Suggested temporary foot elevation steps (offering to fund 100 himself) and a long-term drainage solution, referencing a similar fix at Irving mosque. Highlighted past privacy concerns with elevated bathroom doors, and encouraged incorporating such considerations into the new expansion. Emphasized learning from past oversights and building with intentional design for taharah and privacy. Sr. Shereen Baig: Called for decisive leadership and accountability in the youth program. Noted her team's efforts since 2019 to build community-driven youth engagement. Identified structural issues, such as lack of transparency, rushed hiring (e.g., elementary coordinator), and high staff turnover. Shared that community feedback efforts were often disregarded. Proposed a Youth Program Taskforce to support leadership and ensure sustainable governance beyond board transitions. Highlighted the importance of checks and balances in nonprofits and stressed that paid roles must uphold integrity and accountability. Clarified that her advocacy was not personal but aimed at systemic improvement and collaborative progress for youth programming. Br. Kashif (Kashi) Ahmed: Acknowledged the dedication of BOD and BOT but emphasized the need for professionalism and role alignment. Questioned whether the BOD is being supported, trained, and held accountable, and whether biases are being addressed. Suggested improving communication, such as using WhatsApp for official announcements, and having a presence on multiple platforms (email, Instagram, Remind App, VRIC App). Recommended creating an anonymous feedback system to support open and constructive community input. Br. Ejaz Ahmad: Appreciated the BOT's improved transparency



		and detailed communication. Argued that WhatsApp is not ideal for nonprofit messaging and recommended refining existing tools (email, app). Offered to help improve the VRIC app and cautioned against overextending communications without proper management. Suggested adding "completion percentage" and "target date" fields to the strategic objectives table for better tracking.
2025 Strategic Objectives	Dr. Ehap Sabri	 Br. Tammam connected with key BOT-BOD stakeholders regarding the finance-related objective, which was reviewed in detail by the BOD Treasurer. This was in preparation for a joint BOT-BOD meeting to finalize the 2025 strategic plan. The other three objectives were not discussed with the BOD due to the BOD's limited availability during this busy season. However, meaningful discussions did take place with BOT members on all the draft objectives. It was acknowledged that Ramadan is an especially demanding time for the BOD, with a heightened focus on programming and fundraising, which has understandably limited their capacity for additional strategic planning meetings at this time. Dr. Ehap facilitated the discussion on the drafted 2025 strategic objectives during the current BOT meeting, which were edited and captured below as part of the final minutes. Dr. Ehap proposed inviting the BOD to a future joint meeting to review and build consensus around the current draft. Afterward, the broader leadership team, including past board members and volunteer committee leads, would be invited to provide input before finalizing the strategic plan and presenting it to the community.
Constitutional Amendment	Tammam Alwan	 Br. Tammam mentioned that, as a BOT, it is important to remember that activity at VRIC is not the same as achievement. Motion without direction can lead to wasted energy. The BOT recognizes that the organization's actions must be intentional, purpose-driven, and aligned with long-term strategic objectives. Br. Tammam emphasized that the full BOT agrees that strategy sets direction, and our community has real, pressing needs. These are pain points that require thoughtful and proactive planning. Addressing these needs is a core responsibility of the BOT, yet the BOT has been stagnant in this area and has not made the progress the position demands. The December 2024 BOT meeting appropriately reviewed the 2024 objectives. However, the January 2025 meeting was delayed until February, where the 2024 objectives were reviewed again. This was already into the second month of the new calendar year of 2025 and during a critical transitional period between outgoing and incoming BOT members. Later in February, a draft of the 2025 strategic objectives was presented. However, with Ramadan approaching, the BOD was understandably occupied with preparations for one of the busiest and most critical times of the year for programming and fundraising. Now, in March, the BOT still has not finalized

 VRIC's 2025 objectives, and the current BOT cohort only started about five weeks ago. By the time the BOT holds the next monthly public meeting in April, it will be more than one-third of the way through 2025. This prolonged delay undermines the BOT's ability to set direction for the organization's operations, staffing, and budgeting. As of today, VRIC does not have an approved annual budget. While this is in part understandable since effective budgeting depends on defined goals, strategies, and tactics, it is also symptomatic of larger structural issues within the organization's planning processes. At several general assembly meetings, the state of our organization's finances has been a concern, and VRIC has experienced multiple months operating in the red. This operating model is not sustainable. The BOT holds an amanah (trust) on behalf of the VRIC membership, and it is the BOT's duty to act with foresight and responsibility.
The current situation highlights a shortfall in fulfilling our constitutional obligations as outlined below:
ARTICLE 8: Board of Trustees, Section 2: Responsibilities of Board of Trustees
 7. The BoT shall be responsible for the long term strategic planning for VRIC. The BoT in partnership with BoD shall be responsible for the following: a. Conduct the long term planning process at least every three years. b. As an outcome of the strategic planning process, the BoT must come up with goals and objectives and associated financial projections for those objectives. BoT shall help BoD with the raising of funds for those objectives. c. Any new strategic initiatives that spans beyond 2 years must be approved by BoT. d. Review the goals and objectives on a yearly basis. e. The BoT shall be responsible for reviewing the yearly operational budget to ensure that it is aligned with the long term goals and objectives and provide feedback to the BoD.
Proposal: Align Board Transitions with the Islamic Calendar
 One of the contributing factors to these current challenges is the timing of board transitions. Both the current BOD and BOT cohorts began their terms shortly before Ramadan, in 1445 AH (2024) and 1446 AH (2025) respectively, at a time when the demands on the organization are at their peak. This left little opportunity to meet, plan, or transition effectively, especially with the BOD immersed in operational execution. It is important to note that when VRIC's Bylaws were originally written, Ramadan was not so close to board transitions. Our current structure did not anticipate this seasonal overlap, and it is time to adapt accordingly to preserve our efficiency and sustainability.

		<u>Proposal</u>
		 Br. Tammam proposed transitioning BOT and BOD terms to begin on the 1st of Muharram (Islamic New Year), following the Fiqh Council of North America calendar, which we already use for VRIC's Ramadan declarations. Nominations and elections can take place in Shawwal and Dhu al-Qi'dah. Board Terms would begin after Eid al-Adha and after our religious leadership return from Hajj. This would allow new board members to transition and prepare during a calm period and to have eight full months to gain momentum before Ramadan. Br. Tammam credited Br. Salim Anik (BOD) for originally suggesting this idea, which also aligns with the advice of Muhammad Faris (Productive Muslim) to anchor planning and leadership cycles to Islamic timelines.
		 Br. Tammam clarified that this amendment is not a strategy to extend power. The idea that the current BOD might continue for an additional four months is not out of self-interest but rather because they are deeply invested in the success of this organization and do not want their successors to experience the same struggles they endured. Br. Tammam mentioned that he has personally spoken with several BOD members. They would accept this extended term reluctantly and only because they care about building a sustainable, well-functioning future for VRIC.
Main Campus Expansion	Sameer Syed	 Br. Sameer presented financial data related to the main campus expansion. Approximately \$820K was received so far, meeting the short-term liquidity requirement. Despite this success, the need for external financing still arises. If the cost of steel being billed is delayed by a month, the projected shortfall will also shift by a month from May to June 2025. As Br. Sameer stated during the February 23, 2025 BOT meeting and reiterated, a halt in construction would have significant negative financial implications. Delays are not financially viable and could increase overall project costs. Br. Sameer has explored Shari'ah-compliant financing options through Stearns Salaam Banking and University Islamic Financial (UIF). Stearns confirmed that equity from the main campus can be leveraged. Both institutions confirmed that the North Campus, estimated at \$3M in value, can be used, with up to 70% loan-to-value (LTV), resulting in a potential financing amount of \$2.1M. The expected profit rate is approximately prime 7.50% plus a 0.25% margin, totaling an estimated 7.75% annual rate. While this is a considerable cost, it is financially more feasible than pausing construction. Additionally, there would be application fees of ~\$40K as well as loan origination costs of 1.25%.

		 local community members willing to offer Qard Hasan (interest-free loans). The projected funding gap for the remainder of the expansion is estimated at \$3–4 million. This matter is time-sensitive, and further delays could significantly impact project timelines and financial health. Br. Sameer noted that formal applications to each financing institution will cost ~\$15K, and proceeding with those applications may be necessary to ensure construction continues without interruption.
Closed Session (Legal)	Dr. Adeel Raza	 At 4:04 p.m., the BOT moved into a closed session, and general assembly members exited the Yaqeen Wing. Notes from this session will not be included in the public minutes.

2025 Objectives (Draft)	2025 Strategies (Draft)	2025 Tactics (Draft)
Objective #1 Strengthen Financial Sustainability	Strategy 1.1 Expand and Diversify Revenue	Create a Donor Relations committee to oversee and improve donor engagement and retention to attain a 20% overall increase in average revenue per community member by 12/2025.
Objective #1 Strengthen Financial Sustainability	Strategy 1.1 Expand and Diversify Revenue	Introduce flexible and convenient non-cash donation methods focusing on a 30% increase in digital currency by 12/2025.
Objective #1 Strengthen Financial Sustainability	Strategy 1.1 Expand and Diversify Revenue	Establish a fundraising committee and task it with developing a comprehensive funding strategy to secure 80% of required cash-flow needs within the next 18 months by 09/2025.
Objective #1 Strengthen Financial Sustainability	<u>Strategy 1.2</u> <i>Optimize Financial Management</i>	Engage a local, preferably muslim, accounting firm to outsource/bring in house the bookkeeping function in order to facilitate timely financial reporting and reduce administrative burdens by 09/2025.
Objective #1 Strengthen Financial Sustainability	<u>Strategy 1.2</u> <i>Optimize Financial Management</i>	Develop an organizational budget by 04/2025, including 2-year expansion cost and income projections that include repayment of any loans (if applicable) by 03/2025 and 2 year operational projections by 09/2025.
Objective #1 Strengthen Financial Sustainability	<u>Strategy 1.3</u> Develop Long-Term Financial Planning	Establish a Waqf governance structure and policies by 09/2025.

Objective #2 Build a Sustainable Organizational Framework	Strategy 2.1 Enhance Governance Structure	Complete a comprehensive policy assessment by 06/2025, identifying and developing at least 5 critical policies with implementation plans and staff training by 12/2025.
<u>Objective #2</u> Build a Sustainable Organizational Framework	<u>Strategy 2.1</u> Enhance Governance Structure	Launch a comprehensive membership growth and retention plan by 06/2025 to streamline registration, provide member benefits, and include targeted outreach campaigns to increase total membership to at least 400 members by 12/2025 (15% growth from 12/2023).
Objective #2 Build a Sustainable Organizational Framework	Strategy 2.1 Enhance Governance Structure	Develop and implement a succession planning process for Board of Directors/Trustees by 09/2025, including identifying critical positions, recommended competencies, and suggested level of community engagement. - This might need more discussion because it needs to be reworded in a way where it provides a framework and guidance for future leaders or a recipe for success, rather than mandating certain requirements for board members beyond what is already outlined in VRIC's bylaws.
<u>Objective #2</u> Build a Sustainable Organizational Framework	<u>Strategy 2.2</u> <i>Optimize Human Resources</i>	 Implement a volunteer management framework by 09/2025 that includes recruitment, training, recognition, and retention components, resulting in 25% increase in volunteer satisfaction. We want to be able to set a benchmark, pre-implementation, and then survey afterwards to measure success.
Objective #2 Build a Sustainable Organizational Framework	<u>Strategy 2.2</u> <i>Optimize Human Resources</i>	Create a standardized training program for all staff and key volunteers by 12/2025, with 100% completion rate and pre/post assessments showing 30% knowledge improvement. - OakTree has training that may fulfill this objective.
Objective #2 Build a Sustainable Organizational Framework	<u>Strategy 2.3</u> Standardize Operational Processes	Establish standardized facility management by 09/2025 that extends into the new facility at the main campus by defining and

		documenting processes, roles, and responsibilities with measurable metrics for cleanliness, maintenance, and space utilization.
Objective #2 Build a Sustainable Organizational Framework	<u>Strategy 2.3</u> <i>Standardize Operational Processes</i>	 Develop and adopt a Communication Charter by 06/2025 that establishes clear response time expectations, standardized message templates, and a self-assessment component for staff, board members, and volunteers with a goal of achieving 85% self-reported compliance by 12/2025. Maybe a ticketing system could be a solution to track response time and provide beneficial data. We need to further discuss the measurement of success.
Objective #2 Build a Sustainable Organizational Framework	Strategy 2.3 Standardize Operational Processes	Complete the expansion project's outer shell and start the interior of the first floor by 12/2025, staying within 10% of the approved budget and timeline.
Objective #3 Promote Educational and Spiritual Growth	<u>Strategy 3.1</u> Enhance Islamic Education Programs	Establish an Education Strategy Committee by 06/2025 to develop a comprehensive education roadmap with clear objectives and an implementation timeline by 09/2025.
Objective #3 Promote Educational and Spiritual Growth	<u>Strategy 3.1</u> Enhance Islamic Education Programs	Optimize Quran School management by 12/2025 through a teacher training program and performance metrics resulting in 20% improved student outcomes. - How would success be measured?
Objective #3 Promote Educational and Spiritual Growth	<u>Strategy 3.2</u> <i>Strengthen Community Spiritual</i> <i>Development</i>	Create and launch a structured religious development program by 12/2025 with defined learning pathways for at least 3 different age/knowledge levels. - We can also optimize existing programs instead.
Objective #3 Promote Educational and Spiritual Growth	<u>Strategy 3.2</u> <i>Strengthen Community Spiritual</i> <i>Development</i>	Develop and launch a series of quarterly workshops addressing contemporary challenges to faith by 12/2025, with at least 50 participants per workshop and 80% reporting increased confidence in addressing these issues.

Objective #3 Promote Educational and Spiritual Growth	Strategy 3.3 Expand Outreach and Inclusion Initiatives	Launch a convert support program by 09/2025 that includes mentorship, regular meetings, and community integration activities, measuring success by consistent attendance of 10 or more converts.
Objective #3 Promote Educational and Spiritual Growth	Strategy 3.3 Expand Outreach and Inclusion Initiatives	 Develop and implement a "Welcome Home" branding campaign by 09/2025 that captures VRIC cultural practices, history, and community values, with 50% of members able to articulate these core elements. Perhaps this should be more about the welcome committee rather than an online campaign. We could measure success with a simple one-question survey at the main entrance asking masjid-goers how welcomed they feel.
Objective #3 Promote Educational and Spiritual Growth	Strategy 3.4 Develop Community Leadership Capabilities	Enhance the Leadership Academy by 09/2025 to serve as a second-level program with advanced curriculum modules or hands-on experience, graduating at least 40 community leaders who complete all requirements and demonstrate leadership competencies through practical projects. <u>Enhancement #1 Idea: Belt System</u> - Yellow Belt - Completed basic leadership training (intro-level) - Green Belt - Serves as a Committee Leader with 80% of committee objectives achieved - Black Belt - Qualified as a Board Member-level leader - Master Black Belt - Acts as a Leadership Instructor, mentoring and training others <u>Enhancement #2 Idea: Quarterly C-Level Leadership Panel</u> - Learning from their experiences, taking their advice <u>Enhancement #3 Idea: Improve Strategy Session</u>
Objective #3 Promote Educational and Spiritual Growth	<u>Strategy 3.4</u> Develop Community Leadership Capabilities	Establish a Civic Engagement Academy by 12/2025 with a first cohort of at least 10 participants each, focusing on local government processes, public speaking,

		 advocacy skills, and community organizing, including best-in-class system-level guidance. We can have the belt-level for this as well.
Objective #4 Foster an Inclusive and Supportive Environment for Youth	Strategy 4.1 Ensure Continuity of Youth Programs	Establish a plan by 06/2025 to maintain at least 90% of preexisting programming.
Objective #4 Foster an Inclusive and Supportive Environment for Youth	<u>Strategy 4.1</u> Ensure Continuity of Youth Programs	Develop and implement a quarterly program assessment process by 12/2025 that tracks attendance, volunteer engagement, parent feedback, and resource needs for all core youth programs.
Objective #4 Foster an Inclusive and Supportive Environment for Youth	<u>Strategy 4.2</u> <i>Strengthen Youth Leadership</i> <i>Structure</i>	Create a diverse Youth Advisory Committee, consisting of parents, youth, volunteers, and the board, who complete a review of the youth organization structure by 06/2025, resulting in a hiring plan, job descriptions, and key success metrics by 12/2025.
Objective #4 Foster an Inclusive and Supportive Environment for Youth	<u>Strategy 4.2</u> <i>Strengthen Youth Leadership</i> <i>Structure</i>	Complete an assessment of key youth department operational needs by 09/2025, resulting in the development and implementation of 2 critical SOPs (safety protocols and event planning) by 12/2025, with staff and volunteer training completed and 100% compliance in documentation.
Objective #4 Foster an Inclusive and Supportive Environment for Youth	Strategy 4.3 Enhance Youth Programming	Establish partnership structure with 2 external organizations by 12/2025 to expand youth programming opportunities in education, community service, and leadership development.
Objective #4 Foster an Inclusive and Supportive Environment for Youth	Strategy 4.3 Enhance Youth Programming	Design and implement specific programs for male and female college students by 12/2025, with at least 30 regular participants in each program.
Objective #4 Foster an Inclusive and Supportive Environment for Youth	<u>Strategy 4.4</u> Increase Youth Participation in Decision-Making	Create and launch male and female Youth Boards by 09/2025 with at least 10 youth members with bylaws, including scope, mission, and meeting frequency.

Objective #4 Foster an Inclusive and Supportive Environment for Youth	<u>Strategy 4.4</u> Increase Youth Participation in Decision-Making	Conduct a youth-focused survey by 06/2025 collecting feedback from at least 200 youth participants, with results analyzed and incorporated
		into a youth strategic plan by 09/2025.

Objective (Draft)	Strategy (Draft)	Tactic (Draft)
		Create a Donor Relations committee to oversee and improve donor engagement and retention to attain a 20% overall increase in average revenue per community member by 12/2025.
	Expand and Diversify Revenue	Introduce flexible and convenient non-cash donation methods focusing on a 30% increase in digital currency by 12/2025.
Otrongthon Financial Custoinability		Establish a fundraising committee and task it with developing a comprehensive funding strategy to secure 80% of required cash-flow needs within the next 18 months by 09/2025.
Strengthen Financial Sustainability		Engage a local, preferably muslim, accounting firm to outsource/bring in house the bookkeeping function in order to facilitate timely financial reporting and reduce administrative burdens by 09/2025.
	Optimize Financial Management	Develop an organizational budget by 04/2025, including 2-year expansion cost and income projections that include repayment of any loans (if applicable) by 03/2025 and 2 year operational projections by 09/2025.
	Develop Long-Term Financial Planning	Establish a Waqf governance structure and policies by 09/2025.
Objective (Draft)	Strategy (Draft)	Tactic <i>(Draft)</i>
	Enhance Governance Structure	Complete a comprehensive policy assessment by 06/2025, identifying and developing at least 5 critical policies with implementation plans and staff training by 12/2025.
		Launch a comprehensive membership growth and retention plan by 06/2025 to streamline registration, provide member benefits, and include targeted outreach campaigns to increase total membership to at least 400 members by 12/2025 (15% growth from 12/2023).
		Develop and implement a succession planning process for Board of Directors/Trustees by 09/2025, including identifying critical positions, recommended competencies, and suggested level of community engagement.
Build a Sustainable Organizational	Optimize Human Resources	Implement a volunteer management framework by 09/2025 that includes recruitment, training, recognition, and retention components, resulting in 25% increase in volunteer satisfaction.
Framework		Create a standardized training program for all staff and key volunteers by 12/2025, with 100% completion rate and pre/post assessments showing 30% knowledge improvement.
		Establish standardized facility management by 09/2025 that extends into the new facility at the main campus by defining and documenting processes, roles, and responsibilities with measurable metrics for cleanliness, maintenance, and space utilization.
	Standardize Operational Processes	Develop and adopt a Communication Charter by 06/2025 that establishes clear response time expectations, standardized message templates, and a self-assessment component for staff, board members, and volunteers with a goal of achieving 85% self-reported compliance by 12/2025.
		Complete the expansion project's outer shell and start the interior of the first floor by 12/2025, staying within 10% of the approved budget and timeline.

Objective (Draft)	Strategy (Draft)	Tactic (Draft)		
Promote Educational and Spiritual Growth	Enhance Islamic Education Programs	Establish an Education Strategy Committee by 06/2025 to develop a comprehensive education roadmap with clear objectives and an implementation timeline by 09/2025. Optimize Quran School management by 12/2025 through a teacher		
		training program and performance metrics resulting in 20% improved student outcomes.		
	Strengthen Community Spiritual Development	Create and launch a structured religious development program by 12/2025 with defined learning pathways for at least 3 different age/knowledge levels.		
		Develop and launch a series of quarterly workshops addressing contemporary challenges to faith by 12/2025, with at least 50 participants per workshop and 80% reporting increased confidence in addressing these issues.		
	Expand Outreach and Inclusion Initiatives	Launch a convert support program by 09/2025 that includes mentorship, regular meetings, and community integration activities, measuring success by consistent attendance of 10 or more converts.		
		Develop and implement a "Welcome Home" branding campaign by 09/2025 that captures VRIC cultural practices, history, and community values, with 50% of members able to articulate these core elements.		
	Develop Community Leadership Capabilities	Enhance the Leadership Academy by 09/2025 to serve as a second-level program with advanced curriculum modules or hands-on experience, graduating at least 40 community leaders who complete all requirements and demonstrate leadership competencies through practical projects.		
		Establish a Civic Engagement Academy by 12/2025 with a first cohort of at least 10 participants each, focusing on local government processes, public speaking, advocacy skills, and community organizing, including best-in-class system-level guidance.		
Objective (Draft)	Strategy (Draft)	Tactic (Draft)		

Objective (Draft)	Strategy (Draft)	Tactic <i>(Draft)</i>	
Foster an Inclusive and Supportive Environment for Youth	Ensure Continuity of Youth Programs	Establish a plan by 06/2025 to maintain at least 90% of preexisting programming.	
		Develop and implement a quarterly program assessment process by 12/2025 that tracks attendance, volunteer engagement, parent feedback, and resource needs for all core youth programs.	
	Strengthen Youth Leadership Structure	Create a diverse Youth Advisory Committee, consisting of parents, youth, volunteers, and the board, who complete a review of the youth organization structure by 06/2025, resulting in a hiring plan, job descriptions, and key success metrics by 12/2025.	
		Complete an assessment of key youth department operational needs by 09/2025, resulting in the development and implementation of 2 critical SOPs (safety protocols and event planning) by 12/2025, with staff and volunteer training completed and 100% compliance in documentation.	
	Enhance Youth Programming	Establish partnership structure with 2 external organizations by 12/2025 to expand youth programming opportunities in education, community service, and leadership development.	
		Design and implement specific programs for male and female college students by 12/2025, with at least 30 regular participants in each program.	
	Increase Youth Participation in Decision-Making	Create and launch male and female Youth Boards by 09/2025 with at least 10 youth members with bylaws, including scope, mission, and meeting frequency.	
		Conduct a youth-focused survey by 06/2025 collecting feedback from at least 200 youth participants, with results analyzed and incorporated into a youth strategic plan by 09/2025.	

Meeting Action Items

Action Item	Assignee	Due Date	Status
Share the BOD's committee creation policy with the BOT for review.	Dr. Adeel Raza	Sat, Apr 20, 2025	Not Started

Next Meeting - The next BOT meeting was tentatively scheduled for Sunday, April 20th, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.