



BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Approved Minutes of the Meeting (Open Session) held on
Tuesday, April 21, 2020, 3:00 p.m.
Videoconference

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sherry Porter (Vice Chair and Meeting Chair), Aisha Abawajy, Paul Beesley, Fatima Beydoun, Level Chan, Cassandra Dorrington, Elaine Gibson, Robert (Bob) Hanf, Kevin Hewitt, Kristan Hines, Joyce Hoeven, Brenda Hogan, Chris Huskison, Laurie Jennings, Brian Johnston, Jay MacIsaac, Carolan McLarney, Anne McLellan, Robert Richardson, Deep Saini (President), Alireza Siadat, Devarsh Sood, Michele Williams

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alice Aiken (Vice-President Research & Innovation), Teri Balser (Provost and Vice-President Academic), Peter Fardy (Vice-President Advancement), Ian Nason (Vice-President Finance & Administration), Susan Brousseau (University Secretary)

REGRETS:

Candace Thomas (Chair)

GUESTS:

John Hope (General Counsel), Susan Robertson (Assistant Vice-President, Financial Services), Julia Wright (DFA Observer), Cheryl MacDonald (Board Governance Assistant)

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as presented.

2. Consent Agenda

The following items were adopted by consent.

2.1 Minutes of Meeting of February 11, 2020

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on February 11, 2020 be approved as circulated.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.2 Board of Governors Appointment 2020-21 – Student Appointment

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the appointment of Madeleine Stinson as a student Board member on the Board of Governors of Dalhousie University for a one-year term from May 1, 2020 to April 20, 2021.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.3 Interim Spending Authority

THAT in order to allow the continued operation of the University until such time as the 2020-21 operating budget is given final approval, it is recommended that the Board of Governors

authorize expenditures of up to 25% of the 2019-20 approved operating budget amounts. The President or his designate, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Board, is authorized to approve expenditures in excess of 25% in special cases to permit the orderly management of the University.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.4 Matters from Senate

2.4.1 New Program Proposal: Master of Science in Occupational Science, Faculty of Health

THAT the Board of Governors approve the program proposal for the Master of Science in Occupational Science as presented.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.4.2 Program Termination: Master of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture & Planning

THAT the Board of Governors approve the termination of the Master of Architecture (Post-Professional) program as presented.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.4.3 New Institute: Romeo Dallaire Institute for Children, Peace and Security

THAT the Board of Governors approve the establishment of the Dallaire Institute for Children, Peace and Security as presented.

Approved by CONSENT.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business noted.

4. Chair's Report

S. Porter acknowledged the tragic incident that happened over the weekend in Nova Scotia. A minute of silence was observed.

S. Porter acknowledged Anne McLellan's significant and valued contributions to Dalhousie as University Chancellor and thanked her for her service over her five-year term.

S. Porter referred Board members to the report of the Executive Committee in the meeting materials and the motion approved on behalf of the Board on April 1, 2020. The motion is as follows:

THAT the Board Executive Committee, on behalf of the Board of Governors, and on the recommendation of the Board Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, ratify and approve the signing of the Contribution Agreement with the Province of Nova Scotia to fund programs designed to assist small businesses and individuals who are impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

After the preparation of that report, she noted that the Executive Committee approved a second, related motion for a contract with the Canadian Red Cross, entered into under that Contribution Agreement. The motion is as follows:

THAT the Board Executive Committee, on behalf of the Board of Governors, and on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve the execution of the Emergency Response Services Agreement with the Canadian Red Cross Society for the

provision of registration, authentication and payment of financial assistance to Nova Scotia residents who are out of work as a result of COVID-19.

S. Porter extended her congratulations to the four students who were recipients of the Governors' Award this year and spoke to the status of funds raised under the Student Relief Fund established in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. She concluded her report by thanking, on behalf of the Board, retiring student Board member Aisha Abawajy, whose term ends April 30, 2020.

5. President's Report

D. Saini began his report by extended his condolences to all those affected by the tragedy this past weekend. He also commended those who have worked so diligently over the past several weeks to address the issues and challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly those who played a part in moving the University's academic programs and operations to a virtual environment. He also thanked Anne McLellan for her support and dedication to Dalhousie during her term as Chancellor.

D. Saini spoke to the overarching strategy going forward with regards to the COVID-19 situation, highlighting that although the response to the pandemic required that immediate measures be put in place to address serious health and economic issues, it should not distract the University from its long-term strategy or the consideration of the potential major opportunities for Dalhousie (and for the sector) that may arise as a result of the current situation. He offered that the important questions will be how Dalhousie responds to the situation and what position it will take in addressing the challenges and opportunities. He noted some of the current experiences in other provinces in terms of government support, and while Dalhousie will continue to seek support where it can, there is a need to consider scenarios that include decreased government support and a reimagining of how and what Dalhousie can do, with a goal to identifying creative solutions that will ensure stability and self-reliance. He noted that this work will require frank and collegial conversations involving all members of the Dalhousie community, and that he expects to begin bringing some proposals to the Board in due course.

T. Balser provided an update on convocation, noting that although the spring ceremonies were cancelled, Senate will still award degrees, with parchments to be mailed to graduates. Plans are underway through the Faculties for virtual celebrations and graduates will be offered the opportunity to be recognized at a future in-person convocation, if desired.

T. Balser reported that given the high degree of uncertainty regarding the impact COVID-19 will have on the fall semester, multiple scenarios are being considered, all of which indicate the need for substantial online course delivery. Planning is underway to support faculty to move fall courses online as needed, with a focus on maintaining academic quality and mitigating the impact on enrolment and students, faculty and staff with this shift to a new mode of delivery. T. Balser reported briefly on spring/summer session enrolment (down by 0.3% compared to last year), and the current enrolment outlook for the fall which is roughly on par with last year, although there has been some "softening" in incoming admission applications. She spoke to various strategies underway to support enrolment stabilization, including enrolment plans for each Faculty, outreach to students via a survey to identify the extent to which online delivery may impact their decision to attend Dalhousie, and the establishment of teams in six areas to develop initiatives to enhance student connections and online communities, provide a program for place-bound students, increase outreach to under-represented communities, and examine other options for program delivery (micro-credentials, certificates, etc.). T. Balser also noted the focus on student well-being, including mental health and the ability to succeed and thrive, as well as support for faculty and staff.

I. Nason provided an overview of the impact of COVID-19 on operational matters over the past six weeks, including, initially, travel restrictions, followed by the closing of facilities (residences, Dalplex, libraries and other campus buildings), cancellation of events and the move to online instruction for all classes. Most Dalhousie employees are now working remotely, and research labs have been closed (other than for COVID-19 research). Some essential services employees remain on campus, but in limited numbers (including security and custodial staff, some trades employees and front-line residence staff) to ensure

the safety and well-being of front-line employees and the 250 students remaining in residence. Human Resources are focused on ensuring the well-being of employees who are now working remotely or continuing to work on campus.

I. Nason noted that work on certain capital projects including the Cox Building, Ruminant Animal Care facility and Feed Barn (Agricultural Campus), and the thermal plant project and the Arts Centre renewal (Halifax), has slowed due to pandemic-related issues, but is continuing. A review of planned facilities renewal work and requirements for the current year is underway in light of the current financial challenges and uncertainties. I. Nason also noted Dalhousie's contribution to community pandemic responses, including the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) and chemicals and other agents needed by the health care sector for COVID-19 testing. Communication with faculty, staff, students and the Board continues, and there has also been regular communication with the Department of Labour and Advanced Education as well as local universities and U15 counterparts regarding particular issues and responses.

D. Saini concluded by reporting that the fund for emergency student bursaries has disbursed \$600,000 to date and clearly the need far exceeds the amount the University has raised through the student relief fund.

6. Dalhousie Student Union President's Report

A. Abwajy reported that the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) is continuing to operate the food bank despite the campus closure and that the service has experienced a steady increase in usage. She noted that she will provide an email update on the student experience as it pertains to the COVID-19 situation to Susan Brousseau for circulation to the Board. S. Porter thanked A. Abwajy and the DSU for this important initiative.

T. Balser thanked the DSU for their collaboration and work to support students through this time. D. Saini also expressed his appreciation for the DSU's efforts, noting that the food bank has been open not only to students but also to others in the community who are in need. He also acknowledged Ivan Joseph, Vice-Provost, Student Services, for his efforts in supporting students at this time, both personally and in terms of financial support to the DSU food bank from Student Affairs.

7. Items for Information

7.1 Board Standing Committee Reports

S. Porter referred members to the reports of the standing committees in the meeting materials. There were no questions on the reports.

8. In Camera Session

The Board moved to the *in-camera* session.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.