



BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Approved Minutes of the Meeting (Open Session) held on
Tuesday, April 20, 2021, 3:00 p.m.
Via Microsoft Teams

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Robert (Bob) Hanf (Chair), Paul Beesley, Fatima Beydoun, Scott Brison, Level Chan, Cheryl Fraser, Angeline Gillis, Ahsan Habib, Kevin Hewitt, Kristan Hines, Joyce Hoeven, Laurie Jennings, Brian Johnston, Jay MacIsaac, Merle MacIsaac, Carolan McLarney, Aparna Mohan, Sherry Porter, Robert Richardson, Deep Saini (President), Devarsh Sood, Madeleine Stinson, Michele Williams

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alice Aiken (Vice President Research & Innovation), Susan Brousseau (University Secretary), Peter Fardy (Vice President Advancement), Frank Harvey (Provost and Vice President Academic - Acting), Matt Hebb (Vice President Government and Global Relations), Gitta Kulczycki (VP Finance & Administration), Cheryl MacDonald (Board Governance Assistant), Judith Ng'ethe (Associate Secretary of Senate)

GUESTS:

Donna Bourne-Tyson (Dean of Libraries), Lane Harrison (Editor-In-Chief Dalhousie Gazette), Josh Leon (Assistant Vice-President Information Technology Services), Susan Robertson (Assistant Vice-President Financial Services), Mary-Ann Rowston (Director Budgets and Financial Analysis), David Westwood (DFA Observer), Sarah Elliott (Student Minute Taker)

REGRETS:

Cassandra Dorrington

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

2. Consent Agenda

All items were adopted by consent.

2.1 Minutes of Meeting February 9, 2021

THAT the Board of Governors approve the minutes of the meeting of February 9, 2021 as presented.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.2 Board of Governors Appointment 2021-22

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, 2021 to April 30, 2022.

AND

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the reappointment of Dr. Carolan McLarney as a Senate-appointed faculty

representative on the Board of Governors of Dalhousie University for a three-year term from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2024.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.3 Interim Spending Authority

THAT in order to allow the University to continue to expend funds to support operations until such time as the 2021-22 operating budget is given final approval in June, it is recommended that the Board of Governors authorize expenditures of up to 25% of the 2020-21 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 Name Change – College of Continuing Education

THAT the Board of Governors approve the change of name from the College of Continuing Education to the Faculty of Open Learning & Career Development.

Approved by CONSENT.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business noted.

4. Chair's Report

R. Hanf began his report by congratulating Board member Fatima Beydoun on being selected as one of the inaugural cohort of McCall MacBain Scholars. He also thanked F. Beydoun for her contributions and diligent service to the Board during her two-year term.

R. Hanf noted that though the annual Impact Awards gala was not held this year, the award winners will be celebrated in a series of videos. He extended his congratulations to the five students who were awarded a Governors' Award: Selam Abdella, Fatima Beydoun, Sarah Meng Li, Sierra Sparks, and Emma Stirling Cameron, and thanked Board members L. Chan, A. Habib and M. Stinson for their service on the selection committee.

R. Hanf shared that he will be attending the Canadian University Board Association conference, which is being hosted online by the University of Toronto.

5. President's Report

D. Saini began by congratulating F. Beydoun on being named a McCall MacBain scholar.

D. Saini spoke to the recently released Federal budget and highlighted two initiatives of interest for Dalhousie: continued student supports and investments in science, which include targeted support for life sciences and bio-manufacturing as well as artificial intelligence research.

D. Saini referred board member to his written report and reviewed plans for a return to campus, noting that vaccine rollout, travel restrictions and variants of concern continue to be monitored. He noted Dalhousie's commitment to serving the community, highlighting vaccine clinics held at the Student Health and Wellness Centre for members of the general public and the Dalhousie community.

D. Saini spoke to international academic partnership agreements finalized by the Government and Global Relations team and highlighted a recent partnership between the Faculty of Computer Science and Universal College Lanka;

students admitted to the program will complete two years of study in Sri Lanka before transferring to Dalhousie to complete their degree. This partnership will serve as a prototype on which Dalhousie can begin to engage with universities internationally to diversify student populations on campus.

D. Saini shared that Dr. Afua Cooper was awarded \$1M in funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage for the Black Peoples History of Canada initiative, and he spoke to the University's recently announced Sankofa scholarship program offering financial support and mentorship to incoming undergraduate students of Black and African descent. In recognition of outgoing Senate chair Dr. Hewitt's service to Dalhousie and his ongoing work to make the University a more equitable, diverse and inclusive space for all, the scholarship for international Caribbean students will be named the Joan and Dr. Kevin Hewitt Sankofa Scholarship.

Following the report D. Saini responded to a question, noting that the University, via the Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents (CONSUP), Universities Canada, and the U15, continues to advocate for increased government funding at both provincial and federal levels.

6. Dalhousie Student Union President's Report

M. Stinson referred members to her report included in the meeting materials. She spoke to the student demonstrations on campus held over the past week in response to the recommended tuition fee increases and noted concerns related to the relationship between students and Administration with feedback from students indicating their dissatisfaction. She noted that current displeased students will become alumni and stressed the importance of considering the potential financial impact this may have on the University in the future.

7. Items for Discussion

7.1 Budget Advisory Committee Final Report LXI

F. Harvey presented an overview of the recommendations in the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) Draft Report LXI. He noted that the planning process for development of the 2021-22 budget was significantly delayed due to delays in planning for 2020-21 budget as a result of the pandemic; COVID-19 considerations continue to impact budgetary planning and the return to campus, particularly in relation to vaccine rollout, health protocols, and travel restrictions.

F. Harvey spoke to the draft report which was released on February 25, 2021. It was developed using the same basic parameters of the 2020-21 plan in order to allow: Faculties and units to plan based on known budget allocations; students to make informed decisions based on tuition and fee rates for the coming year; flexibility to adapt to potential tuition and other revenue swings; for known expenditure changes; and flexibility for areas of investment if revenues improve. He spoke to budget challenges, highlighting the anticipated 3.5-4.2% increase in annual costs, which leaves a 3.0-3.7% gap to be addressed once the 0.5% Provincial grant is applied, and noted additional pressing needs including the launch of the strategic plan, the digital strategy, the internationalization strategy, and post-pandemic infrastructure space planning.

F. Harvey spoke to campus engagement held prior to and following the release of the February 25 draft, which included a student survey and email feedback. Highlights of feedback from students included significant concerns related to tuition increases and top priorities included online learning infrastructure, mental health supports, and the need for increased financial supports. The final report was issued on March 25 after consideration of this feedback.

G Kulczycki noted that this is a balanced budget that allows for continuing operation and revenue losses which are expected for some ancillaries as a result of the pandemic. While tuition is based on level enrolment with 2020-21, domestic undergraduate and graduate applications are up 11% and 13% respectively, with International applications down 10.4%. She reviewed the recommendations in the 2021-22 budget plan, which include Faculties and Units to address a 1.5% gap between expenditures and funding allocated, \$6M investment in strategic priorities, \$1M increase in deferred maintenance funding, and an additional \$500,000 for classroom technology upgrades. Recommendations on tuition and student assistance include a 3% general tuition fee increase, \$3.5M in one-time bursary and scholarship support,

\$500,000 in on-campus student employment opportunities, and \$200,000 in support of First Nations and Indigenous Black students in renewable scholarships over 4 years.

G. Kulczucki noted that the \$9.5M in one-time government funding was used to address the 2020-21 budget shortfall, which frees up reserves to support the 2021-22 budget if required. Areas of priority investment, should revenues allow, include increasing the facilities renewal budget and priorities identified out of the Strategic Plan and the Digital Strategy. Looking ahead, a return to a normal budget planning scheduled is expected for the 2022-23 budget and will be informed by the strategic plan. She noted that the pandemic has informed a need for reserve funding, and a policy on this will be developed.

Following the report F. Harvey and G. Kulczycki responded to a question related to student supports and eligibility. F. Harvey noted that conversations are ongoing with the Registrar in an effort to revise how financial aid, scholarships and bursaries are managed in order to impact marginalized students.

Board members expressed some concern related to the projected rate of growth in expenses, questioning the University's sustainability long-term. As well, it was noted that revenue generation projections to address budgetary gaps could be included in the budget.

8. Items for Decision

Finance, Audit, Investment & Risk Committee

8.1 2021-2022 Student Fee Proposal

P. Beesley provided introductory comments, noting that the fee recommendations presented were given robust consideration by the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee at its meeting on March 31, 2021 and that these were approved unanimously for recommendation to the Board. He highlighted several key data points, including tuition and government funding as the main revenue sources for the University and noted that, in recognition of the increased financial burden the pandemic has placed on students, the allocation of additional funding supports for students in need. P. Beesley noted that the FAIR Committee also reviewed other adjustments to fees pertaining to auxiliary fees, residence and meal plan rates, and Halifax Transit U-Pass fees; the Committee is recommending these fee increases as presented.

Following the report, M. Stinson voiced the concerns of students, noting that the recommendation does not reflect an understanding of the unique circumstances the pandemic has caused.

G. Kulczycki responded to a question noting that Dalhousie's Faculty expenditures are on the high end when compared proportionally to other U15 universities.

Items for the attention of the Budget Advisory Committee included feedback from students indicating their reluctance to commit money to Dalhousie as alumni and metrics comparing student support to the need identified in the student population.

It was agreed the motions captured in 8.1.1 and 8.1.2 would be considered together.

Moved by P. Beesley and seconded by A. Mohan:

8.1.1 Tuition and Facilities Renewal Fees

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve the 2021-22 tuition fees as presented in the attached tuition fee schedule including:

In 2021-22, a 3% general tuition fee increase applied to tuition fees for all programs effective April 1, 2021.

AND

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve a 3% increase in the auxiliary fee for facilities renewal to \$97.70 per term for full time students effective April 1, 2021.

CARRIED.

(F. Beydoun, A. Mohan, M. Stinson objecting)

8.1.2 Other Fees

8.1.2.1 Facility Auxiliary Fees

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve the Auxiliary fee changes for 2021-22 as presented, effective April 1, 2021.

CARRIED.

(F. Beydoun, A. Mohan, M. Stinson objecting)

8.1.2.2 Residence and Food Service Fees

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve the 2021-22 residence and meal plan rate schedules as presented, effective for the Fall term 2021.

CARRIED.

(F. Beydoun, A. Mohan, M. Stinson objecting)

8.1.2.3 Halifax Transit U-Pass Fees

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve the 2021-22 U-Pass fee of \$165.10 for full-time (fall/winter) students) pro-rated to \$82.55 for the winter and summer terms), effective for the Fall term 2021.

CARRIED.

(F. Beydoun, A. Mohan, M. Stinson objecting)

8.1.3 DSU-Proposed Fees

8.1.3.1 Student Health and Dental Plan

M. Stinson presented the motions on the proposed fee increases, which were approved by the DSU Council. Board members agreed that the motions would be considered together.

Moved by P. Beesley, seconded by M. Stinson:

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve an increase to the DSU Domestic Health and Dental Plan single student fee of \$4.64 (to a total of \$468.64 per year) for all full-time students at both the Halifax and Truro campuses.

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve an increase to the DSU Domestic Health and Dental Plan family fee of \$4.64 (to a total of \$468.64 per year) for all full-time students at both the Halifax and Truro campuses. These fees are in addition to single fees.

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve an increase to the DSU International Health

Plan single student fee of \$12.74 (to a total of \$740.74 per year) for all full-time international students at both the Halifax and Truro campuses.

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve an increase to the DSU International Health Plan family fee of \$19.32 (to a total of \$1123.32 per year) for all full-time international students at both the Halifax and Truro campuses. These fees are in addition to single fees.

CARRIED.

9. Items for Information

9.1 Digital Strategy – Update

D. Bourne-Tyson presented an update on the Digital Strategy. The strategy will serve as a framework to support data governance, security, infrastructure and services and will help to determine needs, priorities and opportunities in an ever-increasing digital world. The strategy, a living document that will be regularly reviewed and revised, was designed in parallel with the University's strategic plan and will ensure the University is digitally prepared to address priorities and requirements. D. Bourne-Tyson spoke to the deliverables to be included in the finalized plan as well as the timeline; it is anticipated that the final strategy will be presented to the Board for approval at the June Board meeting. She noted the discussion group topics held as part of the strategy development and reviewed captured data which has fed into the digital strategy and the implementation plan. A wide range of consultations were held, and feedback has been very positive. The strategy has been broken down into five strategic themes, or pillars, which have been mapped onto the strategic plan. Strategic statements and a series of goals have been created for each pillar, and during the implementation plan the goals will be further distilled into objectives and tactics with attached project charters, projects leads and KPIs.

J. Leon reviewed the 5 strategic themes: Teaching and Learning; People Centric; Research and Innovation; Community Collaborations; and Foundational Enabling Digital Elements, and the goals that have been identified for each theme.

Following the report D. Bourne-Tyson and J. Leon responded to questions related to the ability to use open platforms, agility in relation to procurement, and user-testing. D. Bourne-Tyson noted that a series of benchmarking digital competency tools have been identified and will be included in the KPIs. She noted that users have indicated interest in further consultation before the procurement process begins, and the Statement of Needs will be further refined.

The importance of ensuring the University has a robust digital platform in order to best serve students was emphasized.

9.2 Board Standing Committee Reports

S. Porter reported that the Governance and Human Resources Committee received a report on the Human Resources Strategic Plan 2021-22, which will fit within the context of the broader institutional strategic plan. She also spoke to the summary report received by the Committee from the Board chair on recent meetings with individual Board members, which highlighted the need for a broader review of the University's governance structure and processes; this is timely in the context of the renewed strategic plan.

K. Hines noted the meeting of the Community Affairs Committee on April 20 was her first as chair. At this meeting the Committee had the opportunity to hear from the newly appointed community engagement directors – Jalana Lewis, Director of African Nova Scotian Community Engagement, and Catherine Martin, Director of Indigenous Community Engagement. She thanked M. Proctor, Assistant Vice-President Communications, Marketing and Creative Services, and his team for presentations on Dalhousie's brand positioning, recruitment marketing strategies, and the web renewal project, and noted presentations by P. Fardy and his team on the Alumni Engagement Strategic Plan.

P. Beesley, on behalf of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, acknowledged the hard work and diligence of G. Kulczycki, S. Robertson and the Financial Services team in preparing the budget, as well as that of the Budget Advisory Committee in preparing the BAC Report LXI.

10. *In Camera* Session

The Board moved to the *in camera* session.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.