



BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Approved Minutes of the Meeting (Open Session) held on
Tuesday, June 22, 2021, 3:00 p.m.
Microsoft Teams

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Robert (Bob) Hanf (Chair), Paul Beesley, Scott Brison, Level Chan, Cassandra Dorrington, Cheryl Fraser, 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), 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), Susan Brousseau (University Secretary)

GUESTS:

Carey Blair (External Auditor – KPMG), Donna Bourne-Tyson (Dean of Libraries), John Hope (General Counsel), Chris LeBlanc (Controller), Josh Leon (Assistant Vice-President Information Technology Services and CIO), Cheryl MacDonald (Board Governance Assistant), Judith Ng'ethe (Associate Secretary of Senate), Susan Robertson (Assistant Vice-President Financial Services), Mary-Ann Rowiston (Director Budgets and Financial Analysis), Tara Perrot (DFA Observer), Matt Proctor (Assistant Vice-President Communications, Marketing & Creative Services), Verity Turpin (Acting Vice Provost Student Affairs), Theresa Rajack-Talley (Vice-Provost, Equity and Inclusion), Doug Reid (External Auditor – KPMG),

REGRETS:

Angeline Gillis

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, R. Hanf acknowledged the recent, tragic discovery of 215 children's remains at a former residential school in Kamloops, B.C. and the tragic vehicle terror attack in London, Ontario that caused the death of four member of the Afzaal family. R. Hanf expressed his sympathy and support to the families, friends, and all those affected by these tragedies.

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

2. Consent Agenda

All items were adopted by consent.

2.1 Minutes of Meeting of April 20, 2021

THAT the Board of Governors approve the minutes of the meeting of April 20, 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 nominations of Anne Campbell and Glen Dexter for recommendation to the

Governor in Council for appointment to the Board of Governors of Dalhousie University for a three-year term from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2024.

AND

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the reappointment of Devarsh Sood as an alumni representative on the Board for a two-year term from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2023, such approval conditional on approval by the Dalhousie Alumni Association.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.3 Appointment of Board Vice-Chair

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the appointment of Cassandra Dorrington as Vice-Chair of the Board of Governors for a one-year term from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.4 Appointment of Board Committee Chairs & Members

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the appointment of the following Chairs of the Board Standing Committees, effective July 1, 2021.

Academic and Student Affairs
Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk
Capital Projects and Facilities
Community Affairs
Executive
Governance & Human Resources

Laurie Jennings
Cassandra Dorrington
Robert Richardson
Kristan Hines
Robert (Bob) Hanf
Cheryl Fraser

AND THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the appointments of members to the Board Standing Committees as presented on the list dated June 10, 2021.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.5 Board Appointments to University Committees

2.5.1 Appointment of IC Members, PTF and RTF Trustees

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the reappointment of Greg Hebb as the Senate appointee to the University Investment Committee and as a trustee of the Pension Trust Fund and the Retirees Trust Fund for a three-year term from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2024.

AND

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the appointment of Andrew Cochrane as the Retiree trustee of the Retirees' Trust Fund for a term to run from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2024.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.5.2 Reappointment of Board Representative – Senate Honorary Degrees Committee

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the reappointment of Cassandra Dorrington as a Board of Governors representative on the Senate Honorary Degrees Committee for a three-year term from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2024.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.6 Appointment of External Auditors for 2021-22

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve the appointment of KPMG as auditors of the University for the year ending March 31, 2022.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.7 Sexualized Violence Policy – Proposed Revisions

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the proposed revisions to the Sexualized Violence Policy as presented.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.8 Document Execution/Contract Signing Authority Policy – Proposed Revisions

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve the amendments to the Document Execution/Contract Signing Authority Policy as presented.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.9 Matters from Senate

2.9.1 Major Modifications – BSc in Health Promotion Program

THAT the Board of Governors approve the major modifications to the Bachelor of Science in Health Promotion program as presented.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.9.2 Amendments to Research Centres and Institutes Policy

THAT the Board of Governors approve the amendments to the Research Centres and Institutes Policy as presented.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.9.3 Conversion of the Centres for Comparative Genomics & Evolutionary Bioinformatics (CGEB) to the Institute for Comparative Genomics (ICG)

THAT the Board of Governors approve the conversion of the Centre for Comparative Genomics & Evolutionary Bioinformatics (CGEB) to the Institute for Comparative Genomics (ICG).

Approved by CONSENT.

2.9.4 Revised Syllabus Policy

THAT the Board of Governors approve the revisions to the Syllabus Policy as presented.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.9.5 Draft Holistic Evaluation of Teaching Policy

THAT the Board of Governors approve the draft Holistic Evaluation of Teaching Policy, as presented.

Approved by CONSENT.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business noted.

4. Chair's Report

R. Hanf reported that he, along with C. Dorrington and S. Brousseau, recently attended the virtual conference of the Canadian University Boards Association (CUBA), which afforded the opportunity to hear from Board and university leaders across Canada. Sessions focussed on themes of institutional autonomy; equity, diversity and inclusion; and universities in a post-covid world.

R. Hanf thanked retiring Board members B. Johnston, M. Williams, K. Hewitt and S. Porter for their significant contributions to the Board over their respective terms. R. Hanf noted that the Board hopes to be able to schedule an in-person event in the future to celebrate the contributions of retiring members.

5. President's Report

D. Saini expressed his appreciation to the retiring board members for their valuable contributions to Dalhousie. He highlighted the strong attendance at recent virtual University events including the spring convocation, which enjoyed more than 11,000 attendees, as well as the launch of the strategic plan, which had more than 700 attendees from the university community.

D. Saini referred members to his written report in the Board materials. There were no questions on the report.

5.1 Annual Progress Report 2020-2021

D. Saini presented the Annual Progress Report for the 2020-2021 year. He thanked members of the President's Executive and leadership teams who are key to Dalhousie's success and noted the contributions of all members of the Dalhousie community. Dr. Saini spoke to the recently launched strategic plan 'Third Century Promise' that builds on the prior strategic plan while introducing new innovative initiatives. He reported on successes and provided updates in each of the five pillars of the strategic plan.

In the area of exceptional student experience, D. Saini highlighted a 4.4% increase in student enrolment; increases in retention among first-to-second year, first-to-third year and international students; the endorsement of concept papers for two new programs (a BA Major in Black and African Diaspora Studies and a Bachelor of Management Major in Software Development); access to same-day physical and mental health appointments; and increases in student financial support as well as work to expand opportunities for experiential learning.

In the area of inclusive excellence, three appointments have been made in the Office of the Vice-Provost Equity and Inclusion to support Dalhousie's community engagement program; Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committees have been established in all 13 faculties; and initiatives to develop a BA/BA Honours

in Black and African Diaspora Studies and a Black Studies Research Institute are on track for Senate approval fall in 2021.

In the area of high-impact research, research funding has increased by \$13M to \$194M, a record high; 12 new and renewed Canadian Research Chairs have been allocated at Dalhousie; and he noted the successful launch of a Minor in Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

In the area of Civic University with Global Impact, D. Saini highlighted Dalhousie's ranking of 10th in Canada and the U15 by the Times Higher Education WORLD rankings; the receipt of \$13.3M from the provincial government to support the expansion of Computer Science programming; the continued growth of international partnership agreements; and increases in external philanthropic support.

In the area of Foundation for Inclusion and Distinction, D. Saini noted significant investments in the Agricultural and Halifax campuses and \$111.7M in major capital projects currently underway.

D. Saini noted that priorities related to addressing the challenges presented by COVID-19 included increases in funding, bursaries and student employment; the institution of a number of programs to enhance student engagement and supports; increased supports for teaching and learning; community support which included vaccination clinics and the administration of programs, on behalf of the province of Nova Scotia, to support businesses affected by the pandemic; and managing the return to campus.

Following the presentation, Board members expressed thanks to D. Saini and the leadership team for their work in making progress in many areas despite the challenges of the pandemic. D. Saini acknowledged the commitment and hard work of all members of the Dalhousie community that enabled the institution to address the significant challenges of the past 16 months while moving forward on university priorities. Members noted that having some targets and measures of success going forward into the new strategic plan will be helpful for context.

6. Dalhousie Student Union President's Report

M. Stinson referred members to her written report and highlighted several items, including various capital projects currently underway; these include the commissioning of a mural for the Student Union Building by a local Indigenous artist and the rebranding of signage to be in both English and Mi'kmaq. She also noted changes in leadership within the DSU Executive for 2021-22, reporting that the position of Vice-President Academic and External will be filled on an interim basis until a by-election can be held in October. Also highlighted was the creation of an anti-oppression training course, which will be mandatory for all student societies in order to be ratified and insured under the DSU.

M. Stinson spoke to work underway on the DSU's strategic plan, with the goal to work collaboratively with the President, Provost and Vice-Provost Student Affairs to build a plan that aligns with Dalhousie's mission and represents students more effectively. She invited Board members to be involved in these conversations and discussions.

Following the report, D. Saini expressed strong support for working together with student leadership and finding shared ground. Additional comments included acknowledgement of the hard work of the DSU executive over the past year, particularly given the challenges of the pandemic, and the opportunity for the DSU and university administration to work closely together to address student mental health issues.

7. Items for Decision

7.1 2020-2021 Operating Budget Report

C. Dorrington introduced the report and provided a high-level summary of the 2020-21 results, noting the significant financial risk posed by the pandemic. The one-time funding of \$9.5M from the Province of Nova Scotia to address pandemic pressures, along with strong leadership from Management, resulted in a shortfall of just \$311,000, which will be drawn from reserve funds.

7.2 2020-2021 Audited Financial Statements

C. Dorrington presented the Audited Financial Statements for 2020-21. She noted the FAIR Committee, at its meeting on June 9, 2021, reviewed the audited financial statements along with the Operating Budget results report and the audit findings report from the external auditors KPMG. Highlights from the statements include revenue losses in ancillaries and other areas totalling \$17M for the year; \$4.3M increase in student bursaries and financial assistance; \$6.6M in savings to students as a result of the waiving of recreation and athletics and fitness centre fees; travel and meeting cost savings realized by most Faculties and units which allowed them to address pandemic-related costs; and the Provincial funding of \$9.5M.

Moved by C. Dorrington, seconded by M. Williams:

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve the audited Financial Statements of the University for the year ended March 31, 2021.

CARRIED.

7.3 2021-2022 Operating Budget Approval

C. Dorrington presented the 2021-22 Operating Budget, which is based on the recommendations in the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) Operating Budget Plan for 2021-22, released in March. She noted the FAIR Committee engaged in robust discussions of the BAC Report LXI at its April meeting, and reviewed the budget earlier this month, recommending approval of the budget presented today. She spoke to updated enrolment forecasts which have allowed for a reallocation of \$4M to a further increase of \$3M for facilities renewal funding, as recommended by BAC, and a \$1M increase to contingency funds to address pandemic-related pressures as they arise. Additional highlights include \$3.5M in additional one-time student assistance funding for students; \$10.1M in forecasted revenue losses and extraordinary costs related to pandemic-based plans to return to campus activities in the fall; and \$2.5M in reserve funds supporting one-time student assistance.

Following the report, G. Kulczycki responded to a question related to departmental budgets, noting that while a 2% increase has been budgeted for library expenditures, given the increased cost in journals, etc., all other departments are asked to absorb any increases realized as a result of inflation.

Moved by C. Dorrington, seconded by P. Beesley:

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve the 2021-2022 Operating Budget with revenues of \$491.6 million and expenditures of \$494.1 million, with use of one-time reserves of \$2.5 million to achieve a balance as required.

CARRIED.

7.4 Dalhousie Digital Strategy

D. Bourne-Tyson presented the Dalhousie Digital Strategy. The strategy provides foundational digital supports to enable the achievement of the goals in the Strategic Plan and was developed to leverage an increasingly digital world to positively impact its academic missions in research, teaching, service, student life, as well as processes and systems in administrative and support functions. It will be tied to a strong implementation plan with KPIs, accountability, and regular updates to the Community as part of the process. D. Bourne-Tyson highlighted the overarching themes and spoke to the five pillars of the Digital Strategy; Teaching & Learning; People Centric; Research & Innovation; Community Collaborations; and Digital Foundations. She reviewed the consultation process undertaken during development and thanked consultation participants, the Provost, President's Executive, Senate, the Board of Governors and especially the Digital Strategy Steering Committee.

Following the presentation, F. Harvey spoke to the extensive consultation process and thanked everyone involved for their efforts in building this strategy over an eight-month period.

Moved by D. Saini, seconded by R. Richardson:

THAT the Board of Governors approve the Dalhousie Digital Strategy (subject to additional minor revisions to the final text as approved by the President), including the five strategic pillars that will guide the work of administration and others on major initiatives over this period.

CARRIED.

8. Items for Information

8.1 Board Standing Committee Reports

Chairs of the standing committees spoke briefly to their annual reports and the work of their respective committees in 2020-21. Several committees experienced a significantly heavier workload and a greater number of meetings over the year due to the pandemic circumstances and other issues that came forward during this period. The chairs thanked retiring members of each committee for their contributions and also expressed thanks and gratitude to the members of administration who so ably supported the work of the committees.

R. Hanf thanked S. Porter for her dedicated service as chair of the Governance and Human Resources Committee for the past several years and welcomed C. Fraser who will take on the role for 2021-22.

9. *In Camera* Session

The Board moved to the *in camera* session.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.