



BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Approved Minutes of the Meeting (Open Session) held on
Tuesday, October 17, 2023, 3:00 p.m.
Videoconference

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cheryl Fraser (Board Chair), Eshan Arora, Paul Beesley, Kim Brooks, Ryan Dee, Cassandra Dorrington, Jo Galarneau, Kristan Hines, Joyce Hoeven, Shona Kinley, Jay MacIsaac, Merle MacIsaac, Angela Siegel, Rustum Southwell, Louise Spiteri

MEMBERS REGRETS:

Ahsan Habib, Mariam Knakriah, Catherine MacPherson, Alana Riley, Caroline Zayid

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sheila Blair-Reid, (Acting Vice-President Advancement), Frank Harvey, (Provost & Vice-President Academic), Matt Hebb, (Vice-President Government & Global Relations), Gitta Kulczycki, (Vice-President Finance & Administration), John Hope, (General Counsel & University Secretary), Cheryl MacDonald, (Associate Secretary, Board of Governors), Judith Ng'ethe, (Associate Secretary of Senate)

GUESTS:

Level Chan, Angie Gillis, Glen Dexter, Rick Ezekiel (Vice-Provost Student Affairs), Laurel Munroe (Director of communications and public relations), Matt Proctor (Assistant Vice-President Communications, Marketing and Creative Services), David Westwood (DFA Observer)

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

2. Consent Agenda

All items were adopted by consent.

2.1 Minutes of Meetings of June 27, 2023

THAT the minutes of the meetings of June 27, 2023 be approved as presented.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.2 University & Endowment Investment Signing Authority Policy

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Board Finance, Audit Investment and Risk Committee, approve the proposed amendments to the University & Endowment Investment Signing Authority Policy.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.3 Matters from Senate

2.3.1 Proposal – Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS), FGS and Faculty of Medicine

THAT the Board of Governors approve the proposed new program to be known as Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS), FGS and Faculty of Medicine.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.3.2 Proposal – College of Digital Transformation, Faculty of Management and Faculty of Computer Science

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of Senate, approve the full proposal for the creation of the College of Digital Transformation, Faculty of Management and Faculty of Computer Science.

Approved by CONSENT.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business noted.

4. Chair's Report

C. Fraser began her report by congratulating Dalhousie's recent graduates. She also welcomed Dalhousie's newly appointed President and Vice-Chancellor Kim Brooks and Chancellor Rustum Southwell.

C. Fraser thanked staff in facilities management, security services, ancillary services, and student affairs for their coordinated effort in preparing Dalhousie for the arrival of Hurricane Lee.

Closing her report, C. Fraser highlighted the upcoming conference of the Universities Studying Slavery consortium. Dalhousie University and the University of King's College have partnered with the Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia to host the event, and this is the first Universities Studying Slavery event to be held outside of the United States.

5. President's Report

K. Brooks opened her report by welcoming Dalhousie's newly appointed Chancellor, Rustum Southwell.

K. Brooks referred members to her written report provided in the meeting materials, and highlighted preliminary enrolment figures and trends observed at Dalhousie. Domestic student enrolment exhibits modest growth, with a decline in "New from High School" students from Ontario, likely related to factors including inflation, housing costs, and Ontario provincial tuition incentives. International enrolment overall has declined in the areas of both new and returning students. Potential contributing factors may include inflation, student permit processing delays, and other factors including travel limitations, housing, and increase competition from source countries.

K. Brooks reviewed recovery and mitigation efforts underway, including Strategic Enrolment Management planning under a renewed framework, and major digital systems transformations to facilitate undergraduate admissions. She noted that many counterparts in Nova Scotia are also experiencing declines in the number of enrolled international students.

6. Items for Information

6.1 Transition & Engagement Framework, Campus Vibrancy Initiatives, and Response to Unsanctioned Street Gathering

R. Ezekiel provided an overview of the significant work done across various units at Dalhousie to create solutions to the unsanctioned street gatherings and enhance the student experience. He spoke to several processes initiated over the 2022-23 academic year to inform a wholistic, multi-level response to this complex issue, which included a community engagement process facilitated by Inspiring Communities to engage neighbours, community partners and multiple members of the Dalhousie community to understand the issue and potential solutions; a student engagement process to understand student perspectives, motivations and potential solutions to the issue; the development of a framework to assess potential actions, grounded in promising practices that have been effective at peer institutions and jurisdictions; and a collaborative process to establish a Dalhousie Student Transition and Engagement Framework with the goal of enhancing campus vibrancy, connection, and student sense of belonging during the critical period of transition to university.

R. Ezekiel spoke to the need to shift to an approach focussed on community building, social accountability, and efforts to address the underlying needs students are expressing, and highlighted various initiatives to create a vibrant atmosphere on campus that facilitates connection while promoting a coordinated and effective response to potential unsanctioned street gatherings. Orientation and transition events in September saw a high level of student engagement, and Dal Care Hubs were launched to provide students with free food, water, and medical and mental health first aid from the Dalhousie Medical Campus Response Team. He spoke to community building efforts facilitated by Dalhousie between students and neighbours in the form of a community mural, and the formalization of the Dalhousie-Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) task force, which has resulted in improved collaboration between the University, HRM and Halifax Regional Police. The totality of these campus-wide efforts resulted in successful sanctioned programming on campus this fall and a more manageable unsanctioned street gathering event.

Following the report, R. Ezekiel responded to a question, noting that a full assessment plan on the transition and engagement framework is planned; these include surveys on orientation events as well the launch of a first-year experience survey that will be distributed in May.

R. Ezekiel also noted that for unsanctioned events, campus resources are mobilized including staff from the Dalhousie Medical Campus Response Team operating in residences 24/7, collaboration with Security Services to increase security presence on campus, and increased on-call rotation and staffing of the residence life team.

R. Ezekiel noted that next steps include a debrief with the Dalhousie-HRM Taskforce, which includes two members from the community, to discuss response plans and lessons learned, and to consider a strategy to engage neighbours and the community more broadly.

Board members thanked R. Ezekiel and his team for the progress made to date and efforts to ensure the safety and security of students while creating a welcoming environment at Dalhousie.

7. In Camera Session

The Board moved to the *in camera* session.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm.