
McMaster University

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

December 17, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.

via Videoconference (Zoom)

PRESENT: Mr. B. Merkel (Chair), Ms L. Allan, Ms J. Allen, Dr. D. Brooks, Dr. L. Bronsard, Ms L. Brown, Mr. J. Coles, Ms. S. Cruickshanks, Dr. J. Daniel, Mr. S. Donnelly, Dr. D. Farrar, Mr. D. Feather, Mr. M. Ferencich, Dr. C. Filipe, Ms. Z. Hassan, Mr. D. Horwood, Mr. D. Huctwith, Ms R. Jamieson, Dr. R. Kleiman, Mr. J. Mancinelli, Ms S. McLarty, Mr. K. Nye, Dr. L. Parker, Ms M. Pool, Ms J. Rowe Ms F. Samji, Ms G. Sasa, Dr. D. Sloboda, Ms C. Stefankiewicz, Dr. E. Szathmáry, Dr. S. Tighe, Dr. R. Walker, Ms A. Thyret-Kidd (University Secretary), Ms M. Zheng (Associate University Secretary), Mr. T. Paul (Governance Coordinator)

OBSERVERS: Ms B. Couchman, Mr. R. Couldrey, Mr G. Da-Ré, Ms E. Davies, Dr. E. Hassini, Ms D. Henne, Ms A. Farquhar, Dr. B. Levy, Ms D. Martin, Ms W. McKenna, Dr. K. Mossman, Dr. P. O’Byrne, Ms M. Williams

INVITED: Dr. A. al Shaibah, Associate Vice-President, Equity, and Inclusion
Ms P. Michaud, Director, Human Rights and Dispute Resolution
Mr. S. Van Koughnett, Associate Vice-President (Students and Learning) and Dean of Students
Dr. D. Welch, Vice-Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies
Mr. J. Emberson, Director of Engineering Operations

REGRETS RECEIVED: Mr. P. Douglas, Mr. N Skelding

A. OPEN SESSION

1. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

Mr. Merkel welcomed members to the December.

Ms Zeina Hassan was introduced as the new undergraduate student representative. Ms Hassan is a Level III student in the Department of Political Science.

2. NOTICE OF MEETING – December 3, 2020

The Notice of Meeting was circulated on December 3, 2020.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – OPEN SESSION

A member requested to amend the agenda to include an item regarding the union membership status for TA's residing outside of Ontario.

Ms Thyret-Kidd provided the Board with an overview of the process to add an item to the agenda. It was explained that a two-thirds majority vote is required to amend the meeting agenda.

The Board asked questions and discussed the member's rationale for amending the agenda. Mr. Merkel noted that the matter is being reviewed via the University's established bargaining processes and suggested that the regular bargaining process should be followed rather than including this on the Board agenda. A member commented that the Board could not impact the decision as the matter is considered a legal issue.

IT WAS DULY MOVED AND SECONDED,

that the Board of Governors approve the Open Session agenda for the meeting of December 17, 2020, including the addition of an agenda item relating to "restoring union membership for TA's residing in other provinces during the COVID-19 pandemic", and that items 4-6 be approved or received for information by Consent.

The motion *Failed*.

Several members explained that the item is more appropriately discussed at the Remunerations Committee level.

Mr. Merkel noted that no further requests had been received to move any items from the Consent to the Regular agenda of the Open Session.

IT WAS DULY MOVED AND SECONDED,

that the Board of Governors approve the Open Session agenda for the meeting of December 17, 2020, and that items 4-6 be approved or received for information by Consent.

The motion was *Carried*.

CONSENT

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – October 8, 2020 (OPEN SESSION)

Motion:

that the Board of Governors approve the Open Session minutes of the meeting held on October 8, 2020 as circulated.

Approved by Consent

5. REPORT FROM SENATE

- a. SPS – Policy for Referees – Tenure-Stream Faculty & SPS B11 – Curriculum Vitae Requirements Revisions**

Motion:

that the Board of Governors approve the revisions to SPS – B7 Policy for Referees – Tenure-Stream Faculty and SPS B11 – Curriculum Vitae Requirements, as circulated.

Approved by Consent

- b. Procedure for Making Acting Academic Administrative Appointments**

Motion:

that the Board of Governors approve the revised Procedure for Making Acting Academic Administrative Appointments, as circulated.

Approved by Consent

- c. Ombuds – Terms of Reference**

Motion:

that the Board of Governors approve the proposed revisions to the Ombuds Office Terms of Reference.

Approved by Consent

- d. Director of the CPA-DeGroot Centre for the Promotion of Accounting Education and Research - Terms of Reference**

Motion:

that the Board of Governors approve the proposed revisions to the Director of the CPA-DeGroot Centre for the Promotion of Accounting Education and Research Terms of Reference.

Approved by Consent

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Remunerations Committee**

- i. Ratification of Tentative Agreement – UNIFOR Local 5555, Unit 5 (Operations & Maintenance)**

Motion:

that the Board of Governors approve the tentative agreement between McMaster University and UNIFOR Local 5555, Unit 5 (Operations and Maintenance) for a 1-year term effective December 17, 2020, and expiring November 30, 2021, with terms outlined in the circulated report.

Approved by Consent

- ii. Ratification of Tentative Agreement – CUPE 3906, Unit 2 (Sessional Faculty)**

Motion:

that the Board of Governors approve the tentative agreement between McMaster University and CUPE Local 3906, Unit 2 (Sessional Faculty) for a 1-year term effective December 17, 2020, and expiring August 31, 2021, with terms outlined in the circulated report.

Approved by Consent

b. Planning and Resource Committee

- i. Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures - Salaried Plan**

Motion:

that the Board of Governors approve the revised Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures (“SIP&P) for Contributory Pension Plans for Salaried Employees.

Approved by Consent

- ii. Audited Financial Statements of Contributory Pension Plan Information for Hourly-Rated Employees of McMaster University Including McMaster Divinity College as at June 30, 2020**

The material was for information.

- iii. Audited Financial Statements of Contributory Pension Plan Information for Salaried Employees of McMaster University Including McMaster Divinity College (Plan 2000) as at June 30, 2020**

The material was for information.

iv. Audited Financial Statements of Contributory Pension Plan Information for Salaried Employees of McMaster University Including McMaster Divinity College (Original Plan) as at June 30, 2020

The material was for information.

c. University Planning Committee

i. Naming Policy & Procedures – Proposed Revisions

Motion:

that the Board of Governors approve the revisions to the Naming Policy and Procedures, as circulated.

Approved by Consent

ii. Name Change - CRESS

Motion:

that the Board of Governors approve the name change for CRESS, as circulated.

Approved by Consent

REGULAR

7. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising from the minutes of the meeting held on October 8, 2020.

8. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications for the meeting of December 17, 2020.

9. PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD

Dr. Farrar informed the Board that his written report outlines the responses to the recent Shape the Future social media campaign, which forms part of the overall visioning process. Dr. Farrar noted his appreciation for the time and effort that so many members of the community gave to the campaign. The results have provided a clear picture of the areas and issues that members of our community view as critically important to McMaster, and our local and global communities, over the coming years.

The President explained that he heard a strong desire and commitment from our community to make a difference, to address critically important global issues such as climate change, racism, inequity, healthcare provision, poverty, and the impact of aging, to play a role in solving the big issues facing our world and make use of the transformative power of knowledge to create a fairer, more equitable future. This sense of purpose is local as well as global. There was feedback on the important role for McMaster within Hamilton and the surrounding communities, including partnering with our local Indigenous communities. This builds on our ongoing community engagement activities, and encompasses expanded entrepreneurial activities within the local community, increased technology and business-focused partnerships, employment opportunities, as well as enhanced pathways for access to education.

Dr. Farrar noted that students are a critical part of expanding the University's impact. Ensuring that students are able to develop the skills needed to thrive in our rapidly changing world remains a key priority, and ties in well to the ongoing work to develop our Teaching and Learning Strategy. Respondents highlighted the need for students to be flexible, adaptable and resilient, and equipped with the skills needed to analyze and solve complex problems. A focus on equity and inclusivity was also threaded throughout the conversations and responses and corresponds well to our EDI Strategy and Action Plan.

Dr. Farrar highlighted that there was strong support for McMaster's current Positioning Statement: "*Advancing Human and Societal Health and Well-Being*". Members heard that the University's vision will include a focus on the positive impact of scholarship and research; the importance of inclusion and building a clear sense of community; and ensuring we are well-positioned to tackle the major local and global issues we face. A refreshed vision statement capturing these key themes will be shared with the McMaster community early in 2021. This will be followed by the development of the strategic plan, which will be discussed first with the Executive and Governance Committee.

The Board received an update regarding the University's strategic targeted hiring initiative in collaboration with the African-Caribbean Faculty Association of McMaster (ACFAM). It was explained that with the support of the Provost's Office and all the Faculty Deans, the University has been able to announce a cohort hiring initiative that will see the appointment of up to 12 emerging and established academics and scholars who will contribute to the advancement of Black academic excellence across all six Faculties. This represents an important step forward and forms part of the University's Strategic Equity and Excellence Recruitment and Retention (STEERR) program, which is a key priority within McMaster's EDI Strategy and Action Plan. The University remains focused on Indigenous education and research and continues to support the Indigenous Education Council as they develop strategies to guide Indigenous learning and scholarship at McMaster.

With regard to the Athletics and Recreation Review, members heard that the Task Force reviewing the Black Student-Athlete Experience and the McMaster Athletics Climate completed its report. This was shared with Board Members and publicly released on

October 27, together with a letter to the community and a detailed action plan. Dr. Farrar expressed appreciation for the courage of those students who came forward to share their personal stories and insights. Dr. Farrar noted his gratitude to the members of the Task Force for their commitment to this important work and for providing such a clear and forthright report and recommendations.

The Board heard that work is already underway to implement the action plan and recommendations. The progress of several key initiatives was highlighted to the Board. It was explained that a location for the Black Student Services Office has now been identified and will be announced shortly. Student Affairs is in the final stages of recruiting for the role of *Senior Advisor, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism*. Once the Senior Advisor is hired, that individual will spearhead many of the other follow up actions in time for the start of the 2021/22 academic year. The Equity and Inclusion Office has engaged members of the Athletics and Recreation staff and coaches in multiple sessions related to EDI education and training. EIO has also facilitated discussions with Black student-athletes following the release of the report. Mr. Sean Van Koughnett and Dr. Arigal Shaibah continue to have conversations with both ACFAM and the PACBIC R3 (race, racialization, and racism) group about the review to get their feedback. Other initiatives include establishing a Black graduate assistant coaching program, increasing the representation of Black staff within the Department, establishing a Black Student-Athlete Council, developing additional Financial Aid awards, as well as a mentoring program. The University community will continue to receive regular updates as this work proceeds.

The Virtual Learning Task Force report recommendations have been made available and it includes 21 recommendations grouped in short, medium and long-term timelines, designed to offer support to both students and instructors, help alleviate stress heading into the virtual winter term, and look ahead to possible solutions for the 2021-22 academic year. Dr. Farrar thanked all the members of the Task Force and particularly the Co-Chairs, Deans Puri and Hurley, as well as all those who completed surveys and contributed to the discussion.

Provincially, members heard that the Ministry finalized and signed the latest SMA3 documents, which lay-out key performance measures and metrics for 2020-2025. The documents are the same as those reviewed and discussed with the Board earlier in the year with the addition of a brief summary of the impact of COVID-19 on the University's operations. Though no changes have been made to the agreed metrics or performance measures, the Ministry has confirmed that performance-based funding will be uncoupled from metric results for the first two years of the agreement and reassessed each year after that. The documents have recently been posted on the Ministry's website, as well as on the President's and Provost's Office websites. The Provost's Office is working through the technical details and reporting requirements.

Dr. Farrar explained that as part of the ongoing review of McMaster's investment and carbon reduction strategies, the next annual Carbon Town Hall will be held virtually next term. The event will highlight McMaster's work on carbon reduction strategies across its

invested endowment and pension assets. Dr. Farrar encouraged interested Board and McMaster community members to attend.

The President highlighted that a fellow member of the Board, Dr. Juliet Daniel, recently received a *2020 WXN Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Award* in the category of Manulife Science and Technology. This recognizes women in STEM roles who are challenging the status quo for knowledge and female empowerment.

A member inquired about the University's plans regarding the Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour investigation. It was explained that a public report regarding a systemic review of the Department was published with recommendations focusing on several areas. Members heard that there are several ongoing investigations, and the University cannot comment further at this time. It was noted that the matter would be discussed further during members' discussion, immediately following the Board meeting.

A question was raised about the University's negotiations with CUPE regarding TA's. Ms McKenna explained that the recognition clause within the collective agreement only pertains to individuals residing in the province of Ontario. The matter is being reviewed through the established grievance and arbitration process. Members heard that the affected TA's are receiving the same compensation and are eligible for benefits from the Graduate Student Association (GSA). The University has also extended coverage to the employee and family assistance program for affected individuals. Arbitration is set to begin in early April 2021. It was noted that if any of the affected individuals relocate to Ontario, they would immediately become part of CUPE's membership. In response to a question, members heard that there are over 2,500 TA's under the collective agreement and approximately 40 TA's that reside outside of the province.

In response to a question, the Board received an overview of McMaster's programs and resources for staff members working remotely.

10. REPORTS RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION

a. Equity and Inclusion Office Annual Report

Dr. al Shaibah provided an overview of the Equity and Inclusion Office report. Dr. al Shaibah informed members that the circulated report contains high level information and does not capture progress on the EDI strategy and action plan. Progress reports related to the University's EDI strategy are available on the Equity and Inclusion Office website. Members heard that 2019-2020 was the third year operating with an intake team model which has allowed for the inclusion of comparative data. The increase in the number of consultations and dispute resolutions was interpreted as positive due to increased awareness of the Office.

In response to a question, it was explained that there was no correlation between the number of complainants and faculty respondents. Dr. al Shaibah noted that the

Equity and Inclusion Office would investigate alternate methods of presenting the data for clarity.

11. REPORT FROM SENATE

Dr. Farrar provided an overview of the report from Senate.

a. Enrolment Update

Dr. Farrar explained that McMaster's enrolment report was provided for information. It was noted that the material was reviewed by the Senate at its December 9, 2020 meeting.

Mr. Van Koughnett and Dr. Welch addressed the circulated undergraduate and graduate enrolment figures, respectively. In response to a question, members heard that there were approximately 150 deferrals granted for incoming undergraduate students. With to graduate students, it was noted the number of deferrals was nearly identical to the previous year. It was noted that the majority of the graduate student deferrals were from international students in health and business programs.

A member inquired about the University's plans to accommodate the increase in student enrolment. Members heard that planning for the 2021-22 academic year is underway. The University is considering a variety of curriculum delivery strategies that consider both public health guidelines and the increased number of students on campus. Board members were encouraged to review the Virtual Learning Task Force's recommendations.

In response to a question, it was explained that McMaster is planning to accept a number of international graduate students arriving in January 2021. The University has provided international students the ability to quarantine in its residence buildings.

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Planning and Resources Committee

Ms Allen provided an overview of the report from the Planning and Resources Committee.

i. Centre for Continuing Education Fees

It was explained that at its meeting on November 26, 2020, the Planning and Resources Committee reviewed and approved, for recommendation to the Board, the proposed Centre for Continuing Education Fees. The

material was also approved by the Budget Committee and Student Fees Committee. Details of the proposed fees are contained in the circulated report.

There were no comments or questions.

IT WAS DULY MOVED AND SECONDED,

that the Board of Governors approve the Centre for Continuing Education proposed tuition fees and the proposed tuition fee schedule for 2021/22, as circulated.

The motion was *Carried*.

b. Executive and Governance Committee

Mr. Merkel provided an overview of the report from the Executive and Governance Committee. It was noted that amendments to the By-Laws require two meetings of the Board, one to provide notice of motion, and a second for final approval. The following items were approved in principle at the Board's October 8, 2020 meeting and are now presented for final approval.

i. Revisions to Board By-Laws – Appendix B – Banking Resolution Changes

At its October 8, 2020 meeting, the Board of Governors approved in principle, on the recommendation of the Executive and Governance Committee, revisions to Appendix B – Banking Resolution within the Board of Governors By-Laws. Details of the proposed revisions are contained in the attached report.

IT WAS DULY MOVED AND SECONDED,

that the Board of Governors approve revisions to Appendix B – Banking Resolution within the Board of Governors By-Laws, as set out in the attached.

The motion was *Carried*.

ii. Revisions to Board-By-Laws – University Student Fees Committee Membership

At the same meeting, the Board of Governors approved in principle, on the recommendation of the Executive and Governance Committee, revisions to the University Student Fees Committee Membership. Details of the proposed

revisions are contained in the attached report.

IT WAS DULY MOVED AND SECONDED,

that the Board of Governors approve revisions to the membership of the University Student Fees Committee within the Board of Governors By-Laws, as set out in the attached.

The motion was *Carried*.

13. 2020-21 UPDATED CONSOLIDATED BUDGET

Ms Henne provided the Board with an update on the 2020-21 consolidated budget. Members were reminded that the consolidated budget approved in June 2020 reflected the University's pandemic scenario model with multi-year financial projections. The original model anticipated a 20% drop in international enrolment. Significant losses were projected for the Ancillary Fund based on a half year campus closure. Non-personnel related expenses and contingency technology expenses were increased by 10% and \$5 million, respectively.

The Board heard that the updated consolidated budget contains material adjustments to the Operating Fund, Ancillary Fund, and Capital Fund and is more reflective of the University's financial outlook. The updated budget demonstrates an improved financial position for 2020-21 because the enrolment declines did not materialize. The campus closures for the full year materially affect the Ancillary Fund, which project a \$37 million deficit despite loss mitigation actions. It was noted that deficits will be addressed over the next 1-4 years. Capital spending plans have been reduced by approximately \$50M for construction delays and re-prioritization of projects.

Members heard that McMaster's credit rating agencies are waiting for the release of the updated 2020-21 consolidated budget to validate the University's credit rating assessment. The updated budget will also impact the forthcoming Debt Strategy Report, which will include a recommendation for McMaster to go to market for new debt.

A member inquired about the increase to salaries and wages. It was explained that because enrolment is up the University has increased the typical staffing costs related to the various Operating Fund activities.

IT WAS DULY MOVED AND SECONDED,

that the Board of Governors approve the Updated 2020-21 Consolidated Budget, as circulated.

The motion was *Carried*.

14. PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Mr. Roger Couldrey, Vice-President (Administration), delivered a presentation and answered questions on the Foundation to Operational Excellence.

15. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business for the Open Session portion of the meeting.