
McMaster University

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

October 8, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.

via Videoconference (Zoom)

PRESENT: Mr. B. Merkel (Chair), Ms L. Allan, Dr. D. Brooks, Dr. L. Bronsard, Ms L. Brown, Ms. S. Cruickshanks, Dr. J. Daniel, Mr. S. Donnelly, Mr. P. Douglas, Dr. D. Farrar, Mr. D. Feather, Mr. M. Ferencich, Dr. C. Filipe, Mr. D. Horwood, Mr. D. Huctwith, Ms R. Jamieson, Dr. R. Kleiman, Mr. J. Mancinelli, Ms S. McLarty, Mr. K. Nye, Ms M. Pool, Dr. L. Parker, Ms F. Samji, Ms G. Sasa, Mr. N Skelding, Dr. D. Sloboda, 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: Mr. R. Couldrey, Ms E. Davies, Mr. G. Da-Ré, Ms A. Farquhar, Dr. E. Hassini, Ms D. Henne, Dr. B. Levy, Ms D. Martin, Ms W. McKenna, Dr. K. Mossman, Ms M. Williams

INVITED: Ms K. McGlynn, Senior Manager, Accounting and Financial Reporting
Ms L. Mitton, Controller, Financial Affairs
Ms C. Heysel, Director of Nuclear Operations and Facilities

REGRETS RECEIVED: Ms J. Allen, Mr. J. Coles, Dr. P. O’Byrne, Ms J. Rowe, Ms C. Stefankiewicz,

A. OPEN SESSION

1. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

Mr. Merkel welcomed members to the October meeting and introduced new members and observers of the Board of Governors.

2. NOTICE OF MEETING – September 24, 2020

The Notice of Meeting was circulated on September 24, 2020.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – OPEN SESSION

Mr. Merkel noted that no 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 October 8, 2020, and that items 4-7 be approved or received for information by Consent.

The Motion was *Carried*.

CONSENT

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

Motion:

that the Board of Governors approve the Open Session minutes of the meeting held on June 4, 2020 as circulated.

Approved by Consent

5. BUSINESS ARISING

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Executive and Governance Committee

i. Actions Taken on Behalf of the Board

The material was for information.

b. Remunerations Committee

i. Ratification of Tentative Agreement – SEIU Unit 2 (Machinists)

Motion:

that the Board of Governors approve the tentative agreement between McMaster University and SEIU Unit 2 (Machinists) for a 5-year term effective October 8, 2020, and expiring September 30, 2025, with terms outlined in the circulated report.

Approved by Consent

c. Planning and Resources Committee

i. Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures – Hourly Plan

Motion:

that the Board of Governors approve the revised Statement of Investment

Policies and Procedures for Contributory Pension Plan for Hourly Employees as set out in the attached.

Approved by Consent

7. REPORTS RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION

a. Report from Health, Safety and Risk Management

The material was for information.

REGULAR

8. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising from the minutes of the meeting held on June 4, 2020.

9. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications for the meeting of October 8, 2020.

10. PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD

a. President's Report to the Board

Dr. Farrar informed the Board of the University's recent announcement regarding plans for the winter term. Similar to the fall term, the winter term will be held almost entirely online with a few exceptions for courses that require access to labs and other specialized facilities. This decision was made in September in order to provide as much certainty and stability for students, faculty and staff as possible.

Members heard that a Virtual Learning Task Force has been established and is being led by the Deans of Engineering and Social Sciences. The Task Force is gathering feedback from students and instructors and evaluating what has been successful and what needs improvement in the remote teaching and learning environment. An anonymous survey has been launched to allow students and faculty to share experiences with remote teaching and learning in the Fall 2020 semester so far. The results of the survey will help shape plans for supporting remote teaching and learning for the rest of the semester and into Winter 2021. A report from the Task Force is expected in December. The University is also evaluating responses to the Intersession and Spring/Summer programming held earlier this year, with a focus on drawing out feedback and issues related to the virtual environment.

Dr. Farrar noted that the #ShapetheFuture social media campaign is now

underway. This forms part of the ongoing visioning process for the University and invites faculty, students, staff and alumni to provide their thoughts on five big questions intended to help shape the future of McMaster. The feedback will help determine a new vision statement and longer-term vision for the University and will be followed by a shorter-term strategic plan intended to chart the course for McMaster over the next 2-3 years.

Dr. Farrar provided the Board with an update regarding the launch of The Global Nexus for Pandemics and Biological Threats. The Board heard that this is intended as a pan-institutional initiative engaging McMaster experts from across all Faculties to help ensure that Canada and the world are better able to manage the human and economic devastation of COVID-19 and avert future pandemics. The goal is to position McMaster as a leader in this area, breakdown barriers between disciplines and provide positive societal impact. Further details will be made available as planning begins.

Dr. Farrar highlighted that McMaster is the first university in Canada to become a signatory to the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investments (UN-PRI), a set of sustainable investment practices that are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The University's application was accepted last week and represents our commitment to addressing climate change through responsible investment practices. McMaster is committing to a 45 per cent reduction in the carbon footprint of its investments by 2030 and aspires to achieve a carbon neutral investment portfolio by 2050.

A question was raised about the University's goals related to student growth. Dr. Farrar explained that Senate has been discussing the matter through the lens of student learning and experience. The Provost commented that McMaster has enrolled more domestic students for the 2020-2021 academic session than anticipated. It was noted that this area is governed at the Departmental and Faculty levels.

A member queried about how McMaster's impact is communicated to the broader community. Dr. Farrar highlighted a number of communications strategies employed by the University, including involvement in the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, a monthly newsletter to Hamilton City Hall, and participation in community activities. Dr. Farrar noted that several University initiatives, including research commercialization, have created an economic benefit to the community.

A member commended the University on the launch of The Global Nexus for Pandemics and Biological Threats. It was noted that there is an opportunity for McMaster to play a leadership role in this area.

b. Addendum to President's Report to McMaster University's Board of Governors

Members heard that in response to a range of calls related to Security Services on campus, the circulated report contains additional details about the role, mandate, training and funding of Security Services. Dr. Farrar noted that it was important that the Board be aware of the range and scope of the Department's work before engaging in discussion of this issue.

The President advised that it was a good time to review Security Services due to the limited number of staff and students on campus. Planning related to a climate survey of how students experience the campus environment is underway. In response to questions and comments, it was explained that the intention is to bring the discussion back to the Board upon completion of the security services review.

In response to a question regarding out of province coverage for members of CUPE 3906, it was explained that members who current reside outside of the province of Ontario are currently not in the union. This is an issue that is covered under Ontario legislation, however they still receive the same benefits and wages.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Audit and Risk Committee

Mr. Nye provided an overview of the report from the Audit and Risk Committee.

i. Annual Financial Report 2019-2020

Mr. Nye informed members that Annual Financial Report was reviewed and approved by the Audit and Risk Committee on October 1, 2020. It was also reviewed by the Planning and Resources Committee on September 24, 2020. It was noted that the Annual Financial Report 2019-2020 consists of detailed Financial Analysis and the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended April 30, 2020, together with supplemental information relating to the Operating Fund and Operating Budget

Ms Henne delivered a presentation on the comparison of actual results and the annual financial report, including the audited financial statements for the year end April 30, 2020. Ms McGlynn provided supplementary information regarding the financial analysis and results.

Ms Henne informed members that a revised report containing the University's final enrolment figures will be presented to the Planning and Resources Committee on November 26, 2020 followed by the Board of

Governors on December 17, 2020. Enrolment has been strong and positive results are anticipated.

Ms Henne highlighted that the greatest volatility was related to investment income. The unexpected bounce back in the market resulted in just a -1.9% loss, in contrast to the initial -18% projection. Ms Henne noted that the University has enhanced financial disclosures in accordance with new Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) recommendations. It was noted that McMaster is the first Canadian university to adopt the TCFD recommendations.

The Board heard that the delay of several planned activities related to capital expenditures has impacted reserve balances. In particular, the substantive capital projects include the Peter George Centre for Living and Learning (PGCLL) and the Student Activity Building and Fitness expansions.

Questions were raised regarding the University's enrolment planning process. It was explained that decisions related to enrolment are discussed at the Senate level. The Annual Financial Report includes enrolment figures after decisions have been finalized by the Academy.

There were no further questions.

IT WAS DULY MOVED AND SECONDED,

that the Board of Governors approve the Annual Financial Report 2019-2020, which includes the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended April 30, 2020.

The Motion was *Carried*.

ii. Appointment of External Auditor

Mr. Nye explained that on October 1, 2020, the Audit and Risk Committee met to review and approve the re-appointment of KPMG LLP as the external auditors for McMaster University for 2020-2021.

IT WAS DULY MOVED AND SECONDED,

that the Board of Governors approve the re-appointment of KPMG LLP Chartered Accountants as the Auditors for McMaster University for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

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 will be approved in principle at the Board's October 8, 2020 meeting followed by final approval on December 17, 2020.

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

On September 16, 2020, the Executive and Governance Committee reviewed and approved, for recommendation to the Board of Governors, 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 in principle, 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

On October 1, 2020, the Executive and Governance Committee reviewed and approved via electronic vote, for recommendation to the Board of Governors, 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 in principle, 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*.

12. PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Dr. Karen Mossman, Vice-President (Research), and Mr. Chris Heysel, Director of Nuclear Operations and Facilities, delivered a presentation and answered questions on the

Nuclear Research Strategy.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

In response to a question, Dr. Farrar explained that the purpose of the report on Security Services was to make the Board aware that the University is reviewing Security Services and will be reporting the results back to the Board in a year.

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