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**McMaster University**

**Meeting Minutes of the Board of Governors**

9:00 AM, Thursday, March 2, 2023

Gilmour Hall, Council Room (Room 111) and Zoom

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**Attendance:** Ms J. Allen (*Chair*), Mr. J. Boye, Dr. D. Brooks, Ms L. Brown, Mr. R. Clarke, Mr. S. Elop, Dr. D. Farrar, Mr. M. Ferencich, Ms S. Galloway, Mr. D. Horwood, Mr. D. Huctwith, Mr. B. Merkel, Dr. M. Narimani, Mr. K. Nye, Ms M. Pool, Ms J. Rowe, Dr. M. Shoukri, Dr. D. Sloboda, Ms S. Stankovic, Dr. S. Tighe, Dr. B. Vrkljan, Dr. B. Walker, Ms A. Thyret-Kidd (*University Secretary*), Ms M. Zheng (*Associate University Secretary*), Ms K. Snow (*Assistant University Secretary*)

**Observers:** Dr. K. Cuff, Ms A. Farquhar, Ms S. Fazilat, Ms D. Henne, Ms D. Martin, Ms W. McKenna, Dr. K. Mossman, Mr. R. Walters.

**Invited:** Dr. S. Anand, *Acting Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion*  
Ms L. Lukasik-Foss, *Director of Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office and Anti-Oppression Programs*  
Ms C. Podedworny, *Director and Chief Curator of McMaster Museum of Art*  
Dr. A. Emadi, *Professor and Canada Excellence Research Chair Laureate*  
Dr. K. Hassanein, *Dean, Faculty of Business*  
Dr. M. MacDonald, *Dean, Faculty of Science*  
Dr. H. Sheardown, *Dean, Faculty of Engineering*  
Dr. P. Swett, *Dean, Faculty of Humanities*  
Dr. S. Denburg, *Vice-Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences*

**Regrets:** Dr. E. Apatu, Dr. L. Bronsard, Ms S. Cruickshanks, Ms J. Dhaliwal, Mr. D. Feather, Ms R. Jamieson, Dr. N. Lishchyna, Ms M.L. Maher, Ms F. Samji, Dr. E. Szathmáry

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**A. OPEN SESSION**

**1. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR**

Ms Jane Allen, *Chair of the Board of Governors*, welcomed members and observers to the meeting and provided attendees with a brief overview of meeting procedures and the proceeding agenda items. Members were reminded that there would be an optional information session about McMaster Innovation Park (MIP) held on-site that afternoon.

**2. NOTICE OF MEETING**

The Notice of Meeting was circulated on February 16, 2023.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA – OPEN SESSION**

There were no requests to have items moved 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 March 2, 2023, and that items 4-6 be approved or received for information by Consent.**

The motion was *Carried*.

**CONSENT**

**4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – DECEMBER 15, 2022 (OPEN SESSION)**

Motion:

**that the Board of Governors approve the Open Session minutes of the meeting held on December 15, 2022, as circulated.**

Approved by *Consent*.

**5. REPORT FROM SENATE**

**i. Closure of the Institute for Multi-Hazard Systemic Risk Studies (INTERFACE)**

Motion:

**that the Board of Governors approve the closure of the Institute for Multi-Hazard System Risk Studies.**

Approved by *Consent*.

**ii. New Program Proposal - Master of Biomedical Innovation**

Motion:

**that the Board of Governors approve the establishment of the Master of Biomedical Innovation (MBI) program.**

Approved by *Consent*.

**6. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**a. PLANNING & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**i. Hourly Pension Plan Actuarial Valuation**

Motion:

**that the Board of Governors approve the results of the Actuarial Valuation for Funding Purposes as at July 1, 2022 for the Contributory Pension Plan for Hourly-Rated Employees of McMaster University Including McMaster Divinity College and be filed with the Financial Services Regulatory Authority of Ontario and the Canada Revenue Agency.**

Approved by *Consent*.

**b. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE**

**i. Report from Health, Safety & Well-Being**

This item was received for information.

**REGULAR**

**7. BUSINESS ARISING**

There was no business arising.

**8. COMMUNICATIONS**

Dr. David Farrar, *President and Vice-Chancellor*, introduced and welcomed Dr. Sonia Anand, *Acting Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion* and Ms Lenore Lukasik-Foss, *Director of Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office and Anti-Oppression Programs* to present the Equity and Inclusion Office (EIO)'s Annual Report.

Members heard that the EIO has a three-pronged mandate: to provide leadership to advance institutional equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) priorities and inclusive excellence goals; to provide education, training, and resources related to accessibility, inclusion and anti-racism, human rights, and sexual violence; and to provide harassment, discrimination, and sexual violence response services. Dr. Anand provided an overview of staffing changes and policies under review, adding that an external review of the EIO had been recently completed. Members heard there were 970 human rights dispute consultations. This was an increase of 400 from the year prior due to requested accommodations from the mandatory vaccination policy. Concerns around vaccine mandates are expected to decrease, although requests for accommodations in other areas are likely to increase. Dr. Anand highlighted staff turnover in recent years and explained that new human rights advisors will need to be hired.

A member inquired as to the number and nature of complaints in Health Sciences, particularly whether they were from clinical or non-clinical staff, residents, or students. Dr. Anand clarified that her office does have the capacity to examine the numbers

between students and faculty, and are expecting new software which can provide better descriptors.

A member asked about cases concerning the COVID-19 vaccine. It was noted that the office's approach has been congruent with Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) policies. Where appeals have been sought, the University's original decisions were upheld.

A brief discussion commenced on disclosures related to sexual violence as cases were increasing. It was explained that increases in disclosures can be a positive development, as they imply that people were choosing to come forward for assistance and resources. It is not often that they pursue a lengthy investigation process, and it is important for that process to be fair and robust. In response to a question, Dr. Anand explained that the average length of an investigation is 8.4 months, and further explained that there are often many parties involved which can draw out the process.

A small number of protestors (14) from MacDivest and other student groups entered the Council Chambers. The students spoke passionately to the urgency of the climate crisis. The group made several demands of the Board relating to total divestment from Carbon Underground 200 companies, cancelling the Peak Shavers project, as well as removing the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) branch from the University's campus. The students advised the Board that if they were removed from the meeting, they would commence a hunger strike. Ms Allen initially offered the students time to express their concerns, but after further disruption, the meeting could not continue and was moved to Zoom videoconference.

## **9. PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD**

Dr. David Farrar, *President and Vice-Chancellor*, presented his Report to the Board. Dr. Farrar began his remarks by acknowledging that McMaster is located on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations and within the lands protected by the Dish with One Spoon wampum agreement.

Members heard that Parks Canada announced \$3.5 million in funding to McMaster and other members of the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System. The funding supports several projects aimed at restoring and protecting the wetlands, plants, and wildlife. This included an initiative to invite Indigenous communities to share insight about the land and participate in its management. This is crucial not only for the continued protection of the lands surrounding campus, but also for the collective journey toward Truth and Reconciliation.

Dr. Farrar then explained that McMaster recently hosted a reception at the University's new Bloor Street location in Toronto to discuss Wilson College. This was attended by Dr. Farrar and senior leadership, as well as Ms Allen, federal and provincial legislators, global academic leaders, experts from the non-profit sector and members of the media. Attendees provided advice on leadership education and development in Canada, as well as feedback on the search for the External Director of Wilson College and the future membership of the Wilson College Advisory Council.

McMaster is now the lead Canadian partner in the Canada-Caribbean Institute (CCI), which is an organization dedicated to bringing together scholars from across Canada and the Caribbean to collaborate on economic, environmental and social issues. Dr. Farrar recently attended the CCI's annual symposium at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus in Barbados. McMaster has in its archives the works of Louise Bennett Coverley, known as 'Miss Lou.' She was an important national figure; her Jamaican works are in the Jamaican National Archives and her Canadian works are at McMaster.

Dr. Farrar then spoke to several recent investments and funding received by the University, including \$61 million from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research for clinical trials, \$8 million of which will support Phase 2 of the clinical trials for McMaster's inhaled COVID-19 vaccine. The federal government also announced an additional \$3.8 million towards McMaster's Aerospace Regional Recovery Initiative, which is spearheaded by the Faculty of Engineering to provide targeted upskilling and reskilling training programs to Canada's aerospace sector.

McMaster recently welcomed Prime Minister Trudeau and his Cabinet to McMaster Innovation Park (MIP). The Prime Minister toured the McMaster Automotive Resource Centre and the McMaster Manufacturing Research Institute. Faculty and student researchers showcased their work in clean transportation and advanced manufacturing. Members heard that Dr. Farrar spoke with the Prime Minister about McMaster's research on the electrification of vehicles, biomanufacturing, preparing for future pandemics and biological threats through Global Nexus, as well as the further development of MIP.

Dr. Farrar discussed recent meetings with Ministers Francois-Phillipe Champagne, Filomena Tassi and Jean-Yves Duclos regarding the University's pandemic preparedness and inhaled COVID-19 vaccine. Other topics discussed with both provincial and federal officials include small modular reactors, support for medical isotopes, as well as ensuring financial sustainability of universities. The University continues to advocate for increased operating support and flexibility in tuition planning because tuition levels in the province have been frozen for 5 years. They are now 20% below the 2018 levels, and Ontario has the lowest funding per student of any province.

Dr. Farrar concluded his remarks by noting that the Provost had delivered the State of the Academy Address the day prior. Dr. Tighe provided a high-level summary to the Board, highlighting in particular the Graduate Student Funding Task Force. Dr. Tighe explained that it is important to note that the issue of graduate funding is not universal across all Faculties. The launch of the Indigenous Studies department and celebratory activities related to this launch was also noted for the Board.

## **10. REPORTS RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION**

### **a. McMaster Museum of Art - Annual Report**

Dr. Farrar introduced and welcomed Ms Carol Podedworny, *Director and Chief Curator of McMaster Museum of Art*, to present the Museum's Annual Report to the Board. It was noted that the Museum re-opened to the public in September 2021. Its

priorities since then were to re-envision staff and public schedules; re-commit to decoloniality; re-imagine what can be achieved through a hybrid presentation of exhibitions and programs; and return to pre-pandemic audience levels. Ms Podedworny then provided a high-level overview of the Museum's facilities, collections, and exhibitions.

## **11. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **a. AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE**

#### **i. Benefits of Decentralization**

Dr. Susan Tighe, *Provost and Vice-President*, provided an overview on the benefits of decentralization to the Board. Dr. Tighe explained that, because McMaster only has six Faculties, the University can be more coordinated, aligned, and nimble in how issues are discussed and institutional goals are reached. The concept of coordinated decentralization allows leaders to make decisions at the appropriate level, and critical decisions are based on the needs of the leaders' respective areas. Key considerations in operational discussions include the quality of service provided, transactional activities or custom work, and the specific needs across Faculties. The ongoing question remains whether to be more or less decentralized. It was noted that teaching activities are often decentralized, as the needs of instructors and learners are unique, while finance activities tend to be more centralized. Dr. Tighe provided several examples of services and structures, which were further detailed in the circulated presentation.

A member brought up the recent conversations on campus regarding graduate funding and pay, and inquired as to how centralizing some of these aspects might result in better pay equity. Dr. Tighe noted that students recently attended the State of the Academy to express their sentiments on the matter. The Graduate Funding Task Force is examining funding levels across the institution and will produce an evidence-based report by the end of the year. There are difficulties and nuances in determining funding and compensation for graduate students and this information is not easily or readily determined. Students can be funded quite differently based on their Faculty of registration.

In response to a question about considerations around risk, Dr. Tighe noted that these conversations are beginning now that Mr. Colin George, *Chief Risk Officer*, has been hired. He is working with colleagues across the University to identify risks in all areas. Some risks are broadly present, including cyber security activities and prevention of threats.

## **12. PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Dr. Farrar introduced and welcomed Dr. Ali Emadi, *Professor and Canada Excellence Research Chair Laureate*, who delivered his presentation titled *Comeback of the Electric City* to the Board of the Governors.

**13. OTHER BUSINESS**

As there was no other business, the open session adjourned at 10:52 am.