McMaster University | University Secretariat

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Meeting Minutes of the Board of Governors
8:30 AM, Thursday, March 5, 2026
Convocation Hall

Attendance: Stephen Elop (*Chair*), Jane Allen, Catherine Anderson, Lisa Brown, Catherine Clase, Susan Cunningham, Arlene Dosen, Michael Ferencich, Gillian Goward, Saara Greene, Barry Hill, David Huctwith, Greg Kaufman, Natalia Lishchyna, Maureen MacDonald, Sue McCracken, Ben Menka, Brad Merkel, Mayu Nishimura, Kevin Nye, Dee Perera, Mamdouh Shoukri, Susan Tighe, Lance Trumble, Michael Ramsay, Bob Walker, Salwa Zaher, Andrea Thyret-Kidd (*University Secretary*), Michelle Zheng (*Associate University Secretary*), Kelly Snow (*Assistant University Secretary*)

Observers: Omer Ahmed, Kusum Bhatta, Susan Birnie, David Estok, Saher Fazilat, Bhagwati Gupta, Emily Heikoop, Ehab Kamarah, Lili Litwin, Clare Mitchell, Paul O'Byrne, Gianni Parise, Wanda McKenna

Invited: Dina Brooks, *Executive Vice-Dean and Associate Vice-President, Academic, Faculty of Health Sciences*
Fernando Carneiro, *Associate Director, Communications and Marketing, Office of the Provost*
Matheus Grasselli, *Deputy Provost*
Khaled Hassanein, *Dean, Faculty of Business*
Norm Hawton, *Director of Design and Construction, Facilities Services*
Gerard Hayes, *Interim Executive Director of Ancillaries*
Salman Hirani, *Associate Vice-President, Real Estate, Ancillaries and Partnerships*
Jerry Hurley, *Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences*
Bruce Newbold, *Dean, Faculty of Science*
Nancy McKenzie, *Director, Strategic Planning, Office of the President*
Lou Mitton, *Controller, Financial Affairs*
Steven Moore, *Treasurer and Chief Investment Officer, Financial Affairs*
Melissa Pool, *Associate Vice-President, Academic Finance and Planning*

Maggie Pooran, *Executive Director, Health, Safety, Well-Being & Labour Relations*
Mary Reid, *Director and Chief Curator, McMaster Museum of Art*
Chris Roberts, *Director, Hospitality*
Heather Sheardown, *Dean, Faculty of Engineering*
Pamela Swett, *Dean, Faculty of Humanities*
Dennis Tavares, *Associate Controller, Financial Affairs*
George Vadakken, *Assistant Director, Project Planning, Facilities Services*
Barrington Walker, *Vice-Provost, Equity and Inclusion*

Regrets: Justin Boye, Megumi Harada, David Huctiwth, Ben Menka, Wayne Purboo, Jennifer Rowe, Silvia Stankovic

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OPEN SESSION

1. Notice of Meeting

Stephen Elop, *Chair of the Board of Governors,* called the meeting to order and welcomed members, observers, and guests to the meeting.

Board members were advised that the audio for the open session of the meeting was being livestreamed over YouTube. The channel is advertised on the University Secretariat's website.

Susan Tighe, *President and Vice-Chancellor,* began by acknowledging that the meeting was being held on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations and within the lands protected by the Dish with One Spoon wampum agreement.

The Notice of Meeting was circulated on February 21, 2026.

2. Remarks from the Chair

S. Elop introduced and welcomed Salman Hirani as the new *Associate Vice-President, Real Estateand Partnerships*. Members were also advised that Nicholas Brathwaite had been appointed *Chancellor of the University*, effective January 1, 2026, and is an ex-officio member of the Board.

3. Approval of the Agenda – Open Session

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the Board of Governors approve the Open Session agenda for the meeting of March 5, 2026, and that items 5 and 6 be approved or received for information by consent.

The motion was ***Carried.***

4. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

CONSENT

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting - December 11, 2025 (Open Session)

Motion:
that the Board of Governors approve the Open Session minutes of the meeting held on December 11, 2025, as circulated.

The motion was ***Carried.***

6. Committee Reports

1. Planning and Resources Committee

a. Report from the University Student Fees Committee

Motion:
that the Board of Governors approve the fee recommendations from the University Student Fees Committee.

The motion was ***Carried.***

2. University Planning Committee

a. Report from the Office of the Vice-President, Research

This item was for information.

b. Report from Financial Affairs

This item was for information.

REGULAR

7. Business Arising

There was no business arising.

8. Board Feedback on Strategic Plan

Board Members Susan McCracken, *Strategic Planning Co-Chair,* and Natalia Lishchyna facilitated the strategic planning discussion.

The Board engaged in a strategic discussion on McMaster's values, mission, and future priorities. The Board was also asked to consider what distinguishes McMaster and where the University should focus its efforts moving forward. Engagement across the McMaster community in the strategic planning process was noted as strong and ongoing.

This item was for information.

9. Minute of Appreciation - Lynton 'Red' Wilson

S. Tighe delivered the Minute of Appreciation for Lynton "Red" Wilson.

On February 9th, Canada lost an inspiring leader in business and philanthropy who cared deeply about understanding our country's past and securing its future. McMaster lost a true champion who had dedicated half his life to helping the University from which he had graduated in 1962. McMaster Chancellor Emeritus Lynton (Red) Wilson was 85.

Dr. Wilson had earned seven honorary degrees, including a McMaster Doctor of Laws degree in 1995. He was an Officer of the Order of Canada and a recipient of the prestigious Vanier Medal for Public Service, but he preferred for people to call him Red, a nickname he had earned for the original colour of his hair.

Red was a towering and deeply admired figure in the life of this University, as demonstrated through the naming of L.R. Wilson Hall. He profoundly loved McMaster, as he demonstrated through transformational philanthropy that gave us Wilson College for Leadership and Civic Engagement, the Wilson Institute for Canadian History, the Wilson Leadership Scholar Awards and much more. Beyond his and his wife Brenda's gifts to the University, Red was deeply engaged in the life and success of McMaster and its people, especially its students.

As a student, Red played football and tennis for McMaster, and after graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics, he entered the diplomatic service at the urging of Classics professor Edward Togo Salmon, a trusted mentor of his.

After serving Canada abroad and earning a master's degree in Economics at Cornell University, he built a highly successful career in the civil service and

business, serving the governments of Canada and Ontario, and working in senior executive roles at blue-chip corporations including Bell Canada Enterprises, Nortel, John Labatt, Redpath, MacMillan Bloedel, the Bank of Nova Scotia and CAE.

Red served on McMaster's Board of Governors from 1983 to 1991 and as Chancellor from 2007 to 2013. He chaired the highly successful Changing Tomorrow Today campaign from 2009 to 2011.

Red was born in Port Colborne, where he started his working life as a paperboy. Throughout his storied life, Red remembered his roots, honoured his family and credited his McMaster education for helping him to reach his potential. He was a firm believer in a well-rounded education, a patriotic Canadian and a lifelong learner who advocated strongly for the teaching and learning of history, especially Canadian history.

Red is survived by his beloved wife, Brenda, his children, Margot, Jennifer (Paul) and Edward (Michele), and grandchildren Ryder, Ruby, Atom, Twyla, Franklin, Matthew, and Sam.

I feel fortunate to have known Red, as I know is true for so many here at McMaster and beyond. On behalf of the University, I want to share my sympathy with Red's family and all who knew him. We are planning a campus commemoration of his life and the many ways he gave to McMaster on May 12th.

The Board of Governors joined in a minute of silent appreciation. S. Elop noted that R. Wilson was truly a giant of Canadian society, and the Board is honoured to have him as a crucial part of McMaster's story.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that, as an expression of our high regard for the contributions of Lynton "Red" Wilson to McMaster University, this Minute of Appreciation be recorded in the permanent minutes of the Board of Governors and a copy sent to his family.

The motion was ***Carried.***

10. President's Report to the Board of Governors

S. Tighe presented the report to the Board of Governors.

S. Tighe began her remarks with an update on recent developments affecting the post-secondary sector and McMaster's research and strategic priorities. In

February, the Government of Ontario announced significant reforms to post-secondary funding. This announcement included $6.4 billion in increased operating funding over four years, adjustments to program funding weights, the resetting of the corridor, and new enrolment growth opportunities through a provincial priority growth competition. The changes also include the lifting of the tuition freeze beginning in 2025-26 and modifications to OSAP, which will increase the loan component of student aid. Members heard that the University is assessing the overall impact of these changes and will incorporate them into planning and a revised Strategic Mandate Agreement.

At the federal level, the newly announced Canada Impact+ Research Chairs and Emerging Leaders programs will invest nearly $1 billion to attract leading international researchers in priority areas such as artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, health and biotechnology, and climate resilience. McMaster has nominated ten U.S-based candidates in the first intake and will submit additional nominations in a second round later this year. S. Tighe also noted strong research activity at the University, including more than $12.2 million secured for 20 projects in the latest Canadian Institutes for Health Research competition and three Canada Foundation for Innovation Fund awards totaling $35.6 million. McMaster is also leading the development of a Defense Innovation Network for Southern Ontario, which involves five universities and multiple industry partners.

Updates were also provided on strategic planning and community achievements. Consultations for the University's next strategic plan, *Setting the Course*, are underway and there is broad engagement across campus through surveys, student outreach, and more than 80 planned focus groups and consultation sessions with faculty, staff, alumni, and external partners. S. Tighe also highlighted accomplishments and recognition within the McMaster community. McMaster students and alumni represented Canada at the Winter Olympics, including Mark Zanette**,** Trent Michaud, and Madeline Schizas**,** whose request for an assignment extension from Sociology Professor Vic Satzewich while competing at the Games attracted international media attention. The University also hosted a series of events for Black History Month**,** culminating in a celebration featuring Chancellor Nicholas Brathwaite**,** Jean Augustine**,** Pamela Appelt**,** and Gary Warner. Finally, several members of the McMaster community received notable honours: Philip J. Devereaux**,** Jean-Robert Bernier**,** John L. Semple**,** Joe Mancinelli**,** and Claudette McGowan were appointed to the Order of Ontario, while Gary Warner**,** Alex Sévigny**,** Mark John Stewart**,** Jessica Bonilla-Damptey, and Nagham Azzam-Iqbal were named to the Order of Hamilton.

11. Communications

1. Artwork Feature

Mary Reid, *Director and Chief Curator, McMaster Museum of Art,* presented a feature on Claude Monet's oil on canvas piece, *Pont de Waterloo, effet de soleil / Waterloo Bridge, Sunlight Effect, 1903,* which had been gifted to the Museum by Herman H. Levy in 1984.

This item was for information.

2. Equity and Inclusion Office Annual Report 2024-2025

Barrington Walker**,** *Vice-Provost, Equity and Inclusion*, provided an overview of the Equity and Inclusion Office Annual Report 2024-2025.

A member noted that they would appreciate a presentation on the course B. Walker mentioned on guidance for teaching contentious subjects.

Members asked how McMaster compares with other Ontario universities in addressing issues and cases, and whether incident trends are similar across campuses. B. Walker noted that while McMaster remains a leader, institutions across the province are facing increasing challenges, though not to the same extent as in the United States. Incidents at McMaster rose in recent years but have begun to level off, and the office maintains an open-door approach to encourage individuals to bring forward concerns. Other universities may not share detailed case data. Members discussed the value of benchmarking across institutions while recognizing the sensitivity of such information. In response to questions about emerging concerns, B. Walker discussed the growing expectations placed on a small office and the influence that broader geopolitical events can have on campus dynamics.

This item was for information.

12. Report from the Senate

Susan Tighe, *as Chair of the Senate,* presented the report from the Senate.

1. Enrolment Management Team

At its meeting on February 11, 2026, the Senate received a presentation on the Enrolment Management Team. Matheus Grasselli, *Deputy Provost,* provided a brief overview of the history and background of the Enrolment Management Team, as well as its composition, mandate and the process of improving its structure.

In response to a question, M. Grasselli discussed international student enrolment and strategic considerations for McMaster and Canada.

Members heard that international enrolment caps exceeded the intended objective, but remained below McMaster's own maximum. Maureen MacDonald, *Provost and Vice-President, Academic,* noted that the University's enrolment approach is guided by a multi-year, consultative strategy developed with external experts. A member raised broader policy questions about the sustainability of relying on international enrolment, and it was explained that earlier government intervention specifically targeted rapid recruitment growth at colleges. S. Tighe added that adjusting the enrolment midpoint increased domestic student numbers and the corresponding provincial grant funding.

This item was for information.

13. Committee Reports

1. Remunerations Committee

Mamdouh Shoukri, *Chair of the Remunerations Committee,* presented the report.

a. First Tentative Agreement with CUPE Unit 4 (Residence Life)

At its meeting on February 26, 2026 the Remunerations Committee reviewed and approved the first tentative agreement between CUPE 3906, Unit 4 (Residence Life) and the University.

Wanda McKenna, *Associate Vice-President and Chief Human Resources Officer*, and Maggie Pooran, *Executive Director, Health, Safety, Well-Being & Labour Relations,* provided an overview of the tentative agreement.

In response to a question about how the agreement compares to previous arrangements, M. Pooran explained that the structure was designed to better support employee needs, including spreading rent deductions across the term through payroll and developing mechanisms to align the various components of the agreement. The overall increase in total compensation remained within the agreement's mandate. W. McKenna discussed the complexity of converting elements of the previous arrangement into dollar values while ensuring reasonable rates and alignment with Housing and Conference Services values. Saher Fazilat, *Vice-President, Operations and Finance*, explained that while costs increase incrementally as room rates rise, the housing component is now treated as a taxable benefit. This new structure creates additional administrative considerations for employees.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the Board of Governors approve the first tentative collective agreement reached between McMaster University and CUPE Local 3906, Unit 4 (Residence Life), effective March 5, 2026 and expiring on August 31, 2029.

The motion was ***Carried.***

14. Presentation to the Board of Governors

Susan Tighe introduced and welcomed Allison Williams, *Professor, Earth, Environment & Society and Tier I Canada Research Chair in the Care Economy, Aging and Policy*, who delivered the presentation "Setting the Standard for Employer Supports for Caregivers: the CSA Standard."

15. Other Business

S. Elop called for any other business. As there was none, the open session of the meeting adjourned. All guests, including the Faculty Deans and the Deputy Provost, withdrew from the meeting.