

## MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

8:30 AM, Thursday, March 7, 2024

Gilmour Hall, Council Room (Room 111)

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- Attendance:** Jane Allen (*Chair*), Nicole Agyei-Odame, Emma Apatu, Catherine Anderson, Justin Boye, Dina Brooks, Ryan Clarke, Stephen Elop, David Farrar, Michael Ferencich, Susan Galloway, Saara Greene, Barry Hill, Sarrah Lal, Ben Menka, Brad Merkel, Kevin Nye, Michael Ramsay, Jennifer Rowe, Mamdouh Shoukri, Silvia Stankovic, Susan Tighe, Brenda Vrkljan, Bob Walker, Andrea Thyret-Kidd (*University Secretary*), Michelle Zheng (*Associate University Secretary*), Kelly Snow (*Assistant University Secretary*)
- Observers:** Omer Ahmed, Catherine Anderson, Susan Birnie, Saher Fazilat, Emily Heikoop, Ehab Kamarah, Andy Knights, Wanda McKenna, Paul O’Byrne, Lil Scime, Rob Walters
- Invited:** Matheus Grasselli, *Deputy Provost*  
Khaled Hassanein, *Dean, Faculty of Business*  
Jerry Hurley, *Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences*  
Debbie Martin, *Associate Vice-President, Real Estate, Ancillary Operations and Partnerships*  
Lou Mitton, *Controller*  
Steven Moore, *Treasurer*  
Pamela Swett, *Dean, Faculty of Humanities*
- Regrets:** Lisa Brown, Sandra Cruickshanks, David Feather, Natalia Lishchyna, Mary-Lou Maher, Joseph Mancinelli, Mehdi Narimani, Wayne Purboo, Fareen Samji
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### OPEN SESSION

#### 1. Remarks from the Chair

Jane Allen, *Chair of the Board of Governors*, introduced Michael Ramsay as the new appointment of the Lieutenant-Governor in-Council (LGIC).

#### 1. Update from the Committee to Recommend a President

J. Allen acknowledged David Farrar's decision to end his term as President and Vice-Chancellor in June of 2025. J. Allen thanked D.

Farrar for his dedication and service to McMaster and that there will be celebration of his accomplishments next spring. Members were reminded that the Committee for Recommending a President was struck in December 2023, and is currently in consultations with community and stakeholder groups, both internal and external to the University. Board members would have received an invitation to share their thoughts on the ideal candidate profile.

This item was for information.

**2. Notice of Meeting - February 22, 2024**

The Notice of Meeting was circulated on February 22, 2024.

**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 7, 2024, and that items 5 through 8 be approved or received for information by consent.**

The motion was *Carried*.

**4. Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

No conflicts were declared.

**CONSENT**

**5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting - December 14, 2023 (Open Session)**

Motion:

**that the Board of Governors approve the Open Session minutes of the meeting held on December 14, 2023, as circulated.**

Approved by *Consent*.

**6. Report from the Senate**

- 1. Establishment of the Dr. David Weaver Distinguished Engineering Professor and the Dr. Simon Haykin Distinguished Engineering Professor**

This item was for information.

**7. Reports Received for Information**

**1. McMaster Museum of Art - Annual Report**

This item was for information.

**2. Health, Safety & Well-being Report**

This item was for information.

**8. Committee Reports**

**1. Planning and Resources Committee**

**a. Rescindment of Policies**

**i. Guaranteed Housing Loans to Faculty and Staff - 1987**

Motion:

**that the Board of Governors approve the termination of the Guaranteed Housing Loans to Faculty and Staff Policy.**

Approved by *Consent*.

**ii. Policy on Approval Authorities for Construction and Maintenance Policy (2014)**

Motion:

**that the Board of Governors approve the termination of the Policy on Approval Authorities for Construction and Maintenance Policy (2014).**

Approved by *Consent*.

**b. Funding Valuations for Original Pension Plan as at July 1, 2023**

Motion:

**that the Board of Governors approve the results of the Actuarial Valuation for Funding Purposes as at July 1, 2023 for the Contributory Pension Plan for Salaried Employees of McMaster University Including McMaster Divinity College (Original Plan) and its filing with the Financial Services Regulatory Authority of Ontario and the Canada Revenue Agency.**

Approved by *Consent*.

**c. Funding Valuations for Pension Plan 2000 as at July 1, 2023**

Motion:

**that the Board of Governors approve the results of the Actuarial Valuation for Funding Purposes as at July 1, 2023 for the Contributory Pension Plan for Salaried Employees of McMaster University Including McMaster Divinity College 2000 (Plan 2000) and its filing with the Financial Services Regulatory Authority of Ontario and the Canada Revenue Agency.**

Approved by *Consent*.

**d. Statement of Investment Pool Policies and Procedures - Investment Pool**

Motion:

**that the Board of Governors approve the updated Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures, including updated Asset Mix, for the Investment Pool.**

Approved by *Consent*.

**2. Executive and Governance Committee**

**a. Actions Taken on Behalf of the Board**

- i. Terms of Reference - Establishment of the Joseph & Amy Ip Chair in Bio-innovation

This item was for information only.

**REGULAR**

**9. Business Arising**

There was no business arising.

**10. Communications**

No communications were received by the Board of Governors.

**11. President's Report to the Board**

David Farrar, *President and Vice-Chancellor*, presented his report to the Board. D. Farrar began his remarks by speaking to his recent visit to the Gathering Place on the Six Nations of the Grand River to attend the “We Will Take Care of Mother Earth” Traditional Ecological Knowledge Summit. The summit is a forum for McMaster to engage with Indigenous communities and discuss ways to amalgamate traditional Indigenous and western scientific knowledge in addressing climate change. Members were also briefed on the new Master of Arts in Indigenous Studies, which would be welcoming its first cohort in September.

D. Farrar then discussed several recent updates across campus; including the mandate of the new Artificial Intelligence Advisory Panel, and progress at the 10 Bay Graduate Residence, which members heard has now tested free of coliform bacteria and meets the water standard set by Public Health guidelines. D. Farrar also spoke of the Total Solar Eclipse occurring on April 8<sup>th</sup>.

D. Farrar acknowledged numerous changes in senior leadership by introducing Omer Ahmed, *Associate Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer*, and he also welcomed Ehab Kamarah, *Associate Vice-President and Chief Facilities Officer* back to McMaster. D. Farrar thanked Lil Scime for her leadership as *Interim Chief Financial Officer* and reminded members that Debbie Martin has moved into a new role as *Associate Vice-President, Real Estate, Ancillary Operations and Partnerships*. D. Martin is also currently the Acting CEO for McMaster Innovation Park (MIP).

In an update on dealings with the Ontario government, D. Farrar explained that the province recently announced \$1.3 billion in funding to colleges and universities over three years in response to the Blue-Ribbon Panel report. The tuition freeze would remain for at least three years, which will impact the University’s budget. However, McMaster would receive a significant portion of the \$100 million allocated for unfunded STEM program costs. D. Farrar acknowledged Alex Lawson and the Public Affairs team for their advocacy on this front. Susan Tighe, *Provost and Vice-President*, spoke further to this update and noted opportunities to receive additional funds.

Members heard that President Farrar recently engaged with federal government officials, including the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Marc Miller, about the international student cap. The Minister was clear that the government would reduce the number of the new international student study permits by 50%, and the provincial government would be responsible for determining how the visas are allocated. This decision will greatly impact revenues and will be particularly felt in research, as revenue from international student tuition is used to support research expenses and overhead not covered through grants. S. Tighe was invited to speak to the University’s targets, recruitment events and strategies. In response to a question, D. Farrar noted that Canada’s housing crisis likely triggered this decision as several politicians had publicly, although erroneously, placed blame on international students. The issue is that not

enough affordable housing is being built. S. Tighe discussed the recruitment efforts by some colleges in recent years to enroll large numbers of international students.

In preparation for the Federal Budget, members heard that the U15 Group of Canadian Research Universities will be asking for a considerable increase in funding from the Tri-Council; the creation of a \$200 million Critical Technologies Fund for research projects in areas identified by the Sensitive Technology Research Areas list; and a 50% increase to the value of federally funded graduate scholarships, doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships including the doubling of the number of scholarships.

An update on research security was also provided. Members heard that the federal government announced new regulations to protect Canadian research and minimize emerging threats through guidance on identifying high-risk partners. Andy Knights, *Acting Vice-President, Research*, explained that this is a list of institutions and universities which the federal government deems a security risk. As a result, they will not provide grants to researchers who engage with them. This area is evolving constantly, and new instructions are provided and responded to weekly.

D. Farrar concluded his remarks by advising members that many of the World War II maps seen in Steven Spielberg's newest series, *Masters of the Air*, were provided by Lloyd Reeds Maps Collection in McMaster Library's archives. Members were also reminded that tomorrow was International Women's Day.

## 12. Committee Reports

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

### 1. Remunerations Committee

#### a. **New Policy: Definition of Retiree and Eligibility for Supplemental Benefits for Retirees of McMaster University**

At its meeting on February 15, 2024, the Remunerations Committee reviewed and approved the new policy titled "Definition of Retiree and Eligibility for Supplemental Benefits for Retirees of McMaster University."

Wanda McKenna, *Associate Vice-President & Chief Human Resources Officer*, provided a brief overview of the new policy. Members heard that the policy defines a "retiree" and encompasses pension plan members, Group RRSP participants and members of Clinical Faculty not eligible to participate in a Defined Benefit Pension Plan. It also confirms eligibility for supplemental benefits.

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that the Board of Governors approve the proposed new policy titled “Definition of Retiree and Eligibility for Supplemental Benefits for Retirees of McMaster University”, effective March 7, 2024, and as circulated.**

The motion was *Carried*.

**13. Presentation to the Board of Governors**

David Farrar introduced and welcomed Jerry Hurley, *Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences*, who delivered a presentation on the Faculty.

**14. Other Business**

As there was no other business, the open session of the meeting adjourned at 9:36 AM. Steven Moore, *Treasurer*, Lou Mitton, *Controller*, and D. Martin remained in the meeting.