



BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Approved Minutes of the Meeting (Open Session) held on
Tuesday, May 26, 2020, 3:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Candace Thomas (Board Chair), Paul Beesley, Fatima Beydoun, Level Chan, Cassandra Dorrington, Elaine Gibson, Robert (Bob) Hanf, Kevin Hewitt, Kristan Hines, Joyce Hoeven, Brenda Hogan, Chris Huskilson, Laurie Jennings, Brian Johnston, Jay MacIsaac, Carolan McLarney, Anne McLellan, Sherry Porter, Robert Richardson, Deep Saini (President), Devarsh Sood, Madeleine Stinson, Michele Williams

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alice Aiken (Vice-President Research & Innovation), Peter Fardy (Vice-President Advancement), Chris Moore (Associate Vice-President Academic), Ian Nason (Vice-President Finance & Administration), Susan Brousseau (University Secretary)

GUESTS:

Susan Robertson (Assistant Vice-President, Financial Services), Cheryl MacDonald (Board Governance Assistant)

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as presented.

C. Thomas noted the recent news that researchers in the Canadian Centre for Vaccinology, based at Dalhousie, the IWK Health Centre and the Nova Scotia Health Authority, will lead the human clinical trials for a COVID-19 vaccine, which speaks to the world-class scientists and researchers who work at the University. C. Thomas offered her thanks to President Saini and the senior team for their leadership and hard work during the last several months of dealing with pandemic-related challenges. Lastly, C. Thomas noted the efforts of those who have worked to provide students with a virtual convocation this month to mark this important milestone for graduates and their families.

2. Items for Decision

2.1 2020-2021 Student Fee Proposals

B. Hogan provided introductory comments, noting that the recommendations were given robust consideration by the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk (FAIR) Committee at its meeting on May 8, 2020 and that these were approved unanimously for recommendation to the Board. She reported that the FAIR Committee received regular updates on the budget development process at its fall and winter meetings and reviewed the report dated February 27, 2020, noting that the Committee felt the process was open and transparent with a wide range of constituents providing input. B. Hogan highlighted several key data points, including tuition and government funding as the main revenue sources for the University. She reported that FAIR engaged in thorough review of the fee proposal information and challenged Administration to consider all possible options.

B. Hogan spoke briefly to the impact of the current pandemic situation, noting that the budget development process was halted to allow Management to assess the financial implications, particularly for student enrolment and the University's operations. Management is now revisiting the budget

development exercise and a substantially revised financial plan is being prepared by Management for consideration in June. Today's meeting is required to approval tuition and fee recommendations that would normally have come forward in April so that students have adequate notice and some certainty around tuition rates and fees for 2020-21.

2.1.1 Tuition Fees

B. Hogan introduced the item and presented the motion.

Moved by B. Hogan, seconded by C. Dorrington:

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment & Risk Committee, approve the 2020-2021 tuition fees as presented in the attached tuition fee schedule including a 3% general tuition fee increase applied to tuition fees for all programs effective April 2020 to be applied beginning in the Fall 2020 term.

C. Huskilson noted that the motion, as currently stated, is quite rigid and queried whether an amendment might provide Management with greater flexibility once the enrolment projections are clearer.

Moved by C. Huskilson, seconded by K. Hewitt:

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment & Risk Committee, approve the 2020-21 tuition fees as presented in the attached tuition fee schedule including a general tuition fee increase of up to 3% applied to tuition fees for all programs effective April 2020 to be applied beginning in the Fall 2020 term.

Discussion on the proposed amendment followed. I. Nason reported that Management has attempted, as best it can, to develop enrolment models for September to help inform the process. Enrolment pressures are expected to be significant, likely resulting in a revenue shortfall that will have to be met using a variety of measures.

I. Nason also addressed questions regarding student concerns around tuition and funding, noting that the financial pressure on students is recognized and that student scholarships and bursaries are a key part of budget development. He highlighted the relief from certain fees outlined in the materials that will be part of the budget plan and spoke to the doubling of bursary support and the continued availability of endowment resources to students in need. He also noted that the University has been in regular contact with U15 counterparts and universities in Nova Scotia and Dalhousie's approach is consistent with approaches taken elsewhere. He noted that Management has tried to approach the financial challenges in a sensible and responsible way.

B. Hogan responded to a question regarding FAIR's review of the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) report and whether this included a document summarizing recommendations from Senate that was to be attached as an appendix to the report. I. Nason confirmed that BAC has met on a couple of occasions since the pandemic situation emerged to consider the management of the potential budget shortfall but has not yet resumed consideration of the input received from various constituents prior to this. He noted that the circumstances of the pandemic have essentially overtaken the process and the BAC report issued in late February has been set aside for the moment.

There was further discussion of the need to provide certainty for students while also providing Management with some flexibility to navigate challenging circumstances D. Saint confirmed that while he is not opposed to the amendment, it would be the intention of Management to implement

the full 3% at this time. He noted that there is always an opportunity to amend the motion later if circumstances or projections change significantly.

Responding to a query regarding short- and long-term projections and risks of not increasing tuition this year, I. Nason noted that the 3% tuition increase in normal circumstances (with stable enrolment) would generate \$5.7M in revenue. If fees were frozen for the 2020-21 year, this revenue would not be able to be recouped in subsequent years because of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Province of Nova Scotia which limits annual tuition fee increases for undergraduate students from Nova Scotia to 3%. Over a ten-year period, this would result in a loss of \$57M in revenue, a revenue line that the University cannot financially forego.

The motion to amend the main motion **CARRIED.**

Members then voted on the motion as amended.

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment & Risk Committee, approve the 2020-21 tuition fees as presented in the attached tuition fee schedule including a general tuition fee increase of up to 3% applied to tuition fees for all programs effective April 2020 to be applied beginning in the Fall 2020 term.

CARRIED.

(F. Beydoun and M. Stinson opposed)

2.1.2 Auxiliary Fees

B. Hogan introduced the item and presented the motion.

S. Robertson responded to questions regarding the temporary reduction in fees with respect to facilities and services that are inaccessible in the context on an online learning environment. She noted that Faculties and departments levy fees for certain goods (equipment and materials) and services that are provided for certain courses (lab fees, field trips, co-ops, etc.). For the summer and fall terms, the University will review each fee to determine which goods are services are inaccessible because of those courses being offered online and not in person; those fees will be temporarily reduced. S. Robertson confirmed that no new distance learning fees will be added to courses that are moved to an online platform for the fall; such fees are only applicable to courses that were initially developed as distance courses; in those cases, distance learning fees are a component of the regular tuition for those programs.

Moved by R. Richardson, seconded by R. Hanf:

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve the Auxiliary fee changes for 2020-21 as presented.

CARRIED.

(M. Stinson opposed; F. Beydoun abstaining)

2.1.3 Residence and Food Service Fees

B. Hogan introduced the item and presented the motion.

Moved by B. Johnston, seconded by P. Beesley:

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve the 2020-21 residence and meal plan rate schedules as presented.

CARRIED.

(F. Beydoun and M. Stinson opposed)

2.1.4 Student Referendum Fee Proposal

B. Hogan introduced the item and presented the motion.

Moved by L. Jennings, seconded by M. Williams:

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve the increase of \$2.00 per fall and winter term, from \$23.00 to \$25.00 per term in the Dalhousie Law Students' Society Fee.

CARRIED.

2.1.5 Halifax Transit U-Pass Fees

Moved by K. Hines, seconded by L. Chan:

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee, approve the 2020-21 U-Pass fee of \$162.70 for full-time (fall/winter) students (pro-rated to \$81.35 for the winter).

CARRIED.

3. In Camera Session

The Board moved to the *in-camera* session.

4. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.