



BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Approved Minutes of the Meeting (Open Session) held on
Tuesday, June 23, 2020, 3:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Candace Thomas (Board Chair), Paul Beesley, Fatima Beydoun, Scott Brison, 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, Sherry Porter, Robert Richardson, Deep Saini (President), Devarsh Sood, Madeleine Stinson

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alice Aiken (Vice-President Research & Innovation); Peter Fardy (Vice-President Advancement); Frank Harvey (Provost and Vice-President Academic, Acting); Ian Nason (Vice-President Finance & Administration); Susan Brousseau (University Secretary); Cheryl MacDonald (Board Governance Assistant); Judith Ng'ethe (Associate Secretary of Senate);

REGRETS:

Michele Williams

GUESTS:

Susan Robertson (Assistant Vice-President, Financial Services); Jasmine Walsh (Assistant Vice-President, Human Resources); Chloe Westlake (Senior Manager, Communications and Special Projects) for Item 5.1

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as presented.

2. Consent Agenda

The following items were approved by consent.

2.1 Minutes of Meetings of April 21, 2020 and May 26, 2020

THAT the minutes of the meetings held on April 21, 2020 and May 26, 2020 be approved as circulated.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.2 Board of Governors Appointments 2020-21

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the nomination of Angeline Gillis for recommendation to the Governor in Council for appointment to the Board of Governors of Dalhousie University for a three-year term from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023.

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the appointment of Merle MacIsaac to the Board of

Governors of Dalhousie University, for a three-year term from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023.

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the appointment of Cheryl Fraser to the Board of Governors of Dalhousie University for a three-year term from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023.

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the appointment of Dr. Ahsan Habib as a faculty Board member to the Board of Governors of Dalhousie University for a three-year term from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.3 Appointment of Board Vice-Chair 2020-21

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the appointment of Robert Hanf as Vice-Chair of the Board of Governors for a one-year term from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.4 Appointment of Board Committee Chairs & Members 2020-21

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the appointment of the following Chairs of the Board Standing Committees, effective July 1, 2020.

Academic and Student Affairs
Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk
Capital Projects and Facilities
Community Affairs
Executive
Governance & Human Resources

Laurie Jennings
Cassandra Dorrington
Robert Richardson
Robert (Bob) Hanf
Candace Thomas
Sherry Porter

Approved by CONSENT.

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the appointments of members to the Board Standing Committees as presented on the list dated June 15, 2020.

Approved by CONSENT.

2.5 Board Appointments to University Committees

2.5.1 Appointment of IC Members, PTF and RTF Trustees

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the reappointment of Paul Conrod as an external appointee to the University Investment Committee and as a trustee of the Pension Trust Fund and the Retirees Trust Fund for a three-year term from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023.

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, approve the reappointment of Ron Pink as the

Dalhousie Faculty Association-appointed trustee of the Pension Trust Fund and the Retirees Trust Fund for a two-year term from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2022.

Approved by CONSENT.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business noted.

4. Chair's Report

C. Thomas introduced Scott Brison as Dalhousie's new Chancellor and ex officio member of the Board, thanking him for his participation at several virtual convocation events held in May. C. Thomas also welcomed Frank Harvey as Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic.

On behalf of the Board, C. Thomas expressed her gratitude to retiring Board members Elaine Gibson and Brenda Hogan for their significant contributions to the Board.

C. Thomas congratulated I. Nason on his upcoming retirement and thanked him for his commitment to Dalhousie and for his tremendous leadership and his many and lasting contributions over the past four decades.

C. Thomas concluded her report by acknowledging the anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism movement that has mobilized people across the world to take action to improve the lives of Black and Indigenous people. She spoke to some of work in this area happening at Dalhousie and the role of all members of the community to contribute to these efforts.

5. President's Report

D. Saini began his report by welcoming Chancellor Scott Brison to Dalhousie University. In acknowledgement of the movement happening across North America and the world, he reiterated Dalhousie's commitment to safeguarding its community against all forms of discrimination and harassment.

D. Saini reported that the Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents (CONSUP) is working closely with senior members of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education on a proposal for the provincial government to assist universities with the impacts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. He also acknowledged the incredible work done by all members of the Dalhousie community to adapt to the new online environment, noting in particular the work done under the leadership of the Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic and the Vice-President Finance and Administration who are co-chairing a committee tasked with overseeing a safe and coordinated return to campus.

D. Saini concluded his report by extending his sincere thanks to I. Nason for his outstanding service and commitment to Dalhousie over his long career.

Following this report, P. Fardy responded to a question on the apparent decline in new donor commitments, noting that the recent transition in presidential and senior Advancement leadership led to some softening during this period. He spoke to the planning for a new capital campaign, the pace of which has been impacted to some degree by the onset of COVID-19; he noted that the pandemic has not eliminated opportunities, but it has impacted to some extent the work of Advancement, given the in-person nature of donor relationships. P. Fardy highlighted the importance of the leadership roles both President Saini and new Assistant Vice-President Development Ben MacIsaac will play in the development of the next campaign.

Responding to a question, D. Saini noted that he anticipates once the budget development process returns to more normal circumstances and a higher degree of certainty around the University's financial position, Senate would continue to play the usual role in the budget process.

5.1 Annual Progress Report 2019-20

D. Saini noted that Dalhousie is at an historic moment, not just as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is really a moment, but more in terms of the significant milestone in the march towards justice and equity for people of African decent, Indigenous people and people of colour. He noted that recent events present a moment for reflection, and that while Dalhousie has strong policies and infrastructure in place, more needs to be done. D. Saini noted that Dalhousie has had several reports over the years that have produced many important recommendations in the area of equity, diversity and inclusiveness, but that it is now time to act on these recommendations and distill this work into Dalhousie's top priorities. This initiative is proceeding under the direction of the Vice-Provost Equity and Inclusion, Dr. Theresa Rajack-Talley, but he noted that the responsibility lies with all members of the Dalhousie community.

D. Saini referred members to the annual progress report for 2019-20 provided in the meeting materials and provided an overview of progress and accomplishments in key areas, including enrolment, student success and service, research funding, new academic programs, new partnerships, external philanthropic support, and engagement with the broader community.

D. Saini concluded his report by noting that immediate priorities include ensuring the safety and security of the university community and providing an excellent academic experience for students heading into 2020-21. He acknowledged the tremendous work undertaken by faculty and staff to move to an online environment in a short period of time.

With respect to the strategic planning process, President Saini acknowledged the work completed to date by the learning circles and study groups that have contributed input around eight key areas, and which will provide the foundation for continued development of a renewed strategic plan. He reported that, in his view, it is not prudent to proceed quickly to finalize the strategic plan, given the current climate of uncertainty, and so the University will work through the framework of the recent plan and continue to draw on the self-study papers that have been prepared. The University will return to long-term strategic planning once there is a clearer understanding of Dalhousie's priorities and resources, and drawing on lessons learned from its response to the pandemic.

6. Dalhousie Student Union President's Report

M. Stinson thanked D. Saini for his report, noting her appreciation for the "One Dalhousie" approach. M. Stinson referred members to her report as provided in the meeting materials, highlighting the DSU's priorities for 2020-21 which include support of students, particularly in light of the pandemic, as well as championing for the rights of students and embodying the values of sustainability and accountability. She also indicated that the executive is undertaking an organizational audit of the DSU as well as policy review and reform.

M. Stinson noted that the DSU stands in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and Black and Indigenous students and students of colour within the Dalhousie community, and called on the Board and senior leaders of the university to respond to requests for: the collection of race-based data related to all aspects of the student experience at Dalhousie; the prioritization of mental health services including the hiring of BIPOC counsellors, social workers, nurses, psychologists and medical practitioners; support in creation of a collaborative committee including Senate and DSU to oversee integration of values of harm reduction and anti-oppression into curriculum; divestment from fossil fuels and private prisons; mandatory anti-oppression training for members of the Board, Senate, senior administration and faculty.

M. Stinson noted that the delivery of Orientation events scheduled for September 1-8 will be a mix of online and in-person programming, with some fees to be associated with in-person events. She also

noted that after consideration of feedback from students, the DSU membership with the Canadian Federation of Students has been paused until such time as a referendum vote can be held.

Acknowledging the amount of work required for the move to online learning, M. Stinson asked Board members to recognize the expectations and pressures on students in the current climate. She urged the Board to consider rescinding the 3% tuition fee increase, noting growing concerns that students may choose to defer acceptances, take a gap year, or enrol elsewhere, all of which may have deleterious impacts on enrolment retention in the long-term.

D. Saini thanked M. Stinson for her thoughtful presentation and noted a meeting in the coming week where further discussion with her of these matters can continue. Other members also expressed appreciation for the report and the proposals advanced.

7. Items for Information

7.1 2019-2020 Operating Budget Report

B. Hogan introduced the report and provided a high-level summary of the 2019-20 results. I. Nason reported that the \$6.4M surplus resulting largely from increased enrolment in 2019-20 will be used to mitigate anticipated shortfalls in 2020-21 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

7.2 Board Standing Committee Reports

C. Thomas referred members to the reports of the standing committees in the meeting materials. C. Thomas thanked the chairs for their work this past year and acknowledged S. Porter for her work and support as vice-chair. She also acknowledged B. Hogan, the retiring chair of the Finance, Audit, Investment & Risk Committee, for her contributions as chair, particularly through the significant work of the past several months.

Responding to a question regarding Dalhousie's Indigenous Strategy, D. Saini noted that work is in progress under the direction of Dr. Theresa Rajack-Talley, Vice-Provost Equity and Inclusion, to distill recommendations received to date into a list of actions pertaining particularly to Black and Indigenous First Nations communities. He noted that a presentation on this work will come to the Board, likely in the fall.

8. In Camera Session

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

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.