

University of Waterloo
SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of the 7 February 2022 Meeting

Present: Michael Beauchemin, Jeff Casello, Joan Coutu, Lori Curtis, Benjamin Easton, George Freeman, Vivek Goel (chair), Karen Jack (secretary), Christiane Lemieux, Kristina Llewellyn, Graham Murphy, Oudy Noweir, Luke Potwarka, James Rush, Johanna Wandel

Regrets: Zabeen Khamisa

Guests: Diana Gonçalves, Andrea Kelman

1. MINUTES OF THE 4 JANUARY 2022 MEETING

Members heard a motion to approve the minutes of the 4 January 2022 meeting.

Beauchemin and Murphy. Carried unanimously.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The chair advised that the follow-ups arising from the December minutes are complete.

3. DRAFT 28 FEBRUARY 2022 SENATE AGENDA

Following a brief overview of the agenda, during which the chair advised that a typographical error will be corrected, and that following discussions at the councils this week, an additional matter may be added to their joint report at part #7.b., the committee approved the agenda by consensus.

4. SENATE GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Update on Survey and Plans for 1:1 Conversations

The chair thanked members for contributing feedback to the survey and advised that it was distributed on 1 February 2022 and will run for one month. Members heard there has been a good response already, and that an external consultant is being engaged for the 1:1 interviews and analysis of the results of the survey. There were no comments regarding the memorandum about individual consultations distributed with the agenda.

Work Plan

The chair invited feedback on the proposed work plan distributed with the agenda. Members understood that materials will be prepared and circulated for discussion at meetings and the results of the consultations will feed into the work in the future too. There were no comments on the plan.

Items for Discussion at Senate

The chair invited members to discuss ways to enable Senate to devote time for discussion of strategic matters. In discussion: an impression that disengagement with some agenda matters is due to awareness that due diligence has occurred at the committee or council delegated to do that work; agreement that there is greater engagement on matters like admissions and tuition; a suggestion that better clarity in reports on matters which have had a full debate, and what is being asked of Senate would be worthwhile; a suggestion that matters bearing Senate's consideration which are outside of committee or council business be included in agendas; appreciation for discussions which can influence matters and decisions before they are made; a suggestion for improved cover notes for agenda materials; the potential to restructure agendas and use technology to enable engagement; a question whether Senate's size hinders deep conversations, and ways to address that; a suggestion that time be reserved at meetings for pre-submitted questions; a suggestion that all presentations at Senate engage the body on substantive matters of direct relevance to all of Senate; an observation that the committees and councils would benefit from direction from Senate to engage in strategic discussions too.

Frequency of Meetings

The chair invited members to discuss whether Senate's current schedule of meeting nine times each governance year is correct, and if not, consider the right number of meetings that should be held each year. In discussion: a

caution that a reduced number of meetings may be perceived as a decrease in transparency; agreement that if the number of meetings does decrease, there would be a need to ensure substantive discussions happen elsewhere; a suggestion that a firm decision be taken on whether to hold the December meeting or not; some various options for types of meetings, and their frequency, including expanding the length of the meeting “year”; the option of fewer, but longer meetings with deep dives into the strategic plan and the use of technology to transparently undertake routine Senate business, perhaps asynchronously; a suggestion to ensure that any changes to meeting frequency do not make calendar changes more difficult to undertake; a suggestion to start meetings earlier in the day; some caution that business occurring outside of meetings may inhibit discussion that might otherwise occur and there may be hesitancy in flagging matters for discussion from this type of business; agreement that technology should be used to enable discussion, not hinder it; the need for some homework on some suggestions.

The chair thanked members for the fruitful discussion and excellent suggestions.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

11 February 2022

Karen Jack
University Secretary