

University of Waterloo
SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE
Minutes of the 15 February 2023 Meeting
[in agenda order]
Meeting held in Needles Hall 3318 and Teleconference

Present: Sheila Ager, Marc Aucoin, Jeff Casello, Charmain Dean, Vivek Goel (Chair), David Ha, Marten Karsten, Jennifer Kieffer, Scott Kline, Bob Lemieux, Christiane Lemieux (for Mark Giesbrecht), Lili Liu, Ellen MacEachen, Erin O’Connell, Nicholas Pfeifle, Jacinda Reitsma, James Rush, Sharon Tucker, Johanna Wandel (for Bruce Frayne), Mary Wells, Kathy Winter (secretary), Stanley Woo

Resources: MaryAnne Chan, Sarah Hadley, Allan Starr

Absent: Onurcan Gokkaya, Sonia Ismail*, Beth Sandore-Namachchivaya

Organization of meeting: Vivek Goel took the chair and Kathy Winter (secretary) advised that due notice of the meeting had been given, a quorum was present, and the meeting was properly constituted.

1. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

2. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

Goel welcomed new Senate Finance committee members, including the Jacinda Reitsma, Vice-President, Administration and Finance.

3. MINUTES OF 18 MARCH 2022 AND BUSINESS ARISING

The minutes were approved as distributed. Casello and Ha. Carried. In terms of business arising from the minutes, Casello confirmed having addressed a question regarding funding distribution within the 2022 Teaching Assistantship package.

4. SENATE GOVERNANCE REVIEW – COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Goel provided an overview of the item as distributed, noting the context and elements of the Senate Governance Review across all committees and councils of Senate. Committee members’ invited feedback and initial observations included: length of time since inception of the committee’s initial terms of reference; changed landscape given the now greater numbers of Senate committees; recognition that content brought to this committee is seen elsewhere today. Discussion to be continued at 15 March 2023 Senate Finance meeting; members were invited to forward interim comments or reflections to secretary Winter (kwinter@uwaterloo.ca).

5. GENERAL INFORMATION ON UNIVERSITY FUNDS

This item was received for information. Hadley spoke to her [presentation](#) and provided a general overview of fund accounting at Waterloo, including Operating, Research, Ancillary, Trust and Endowment, Capital funds. In response to a question about transfers to capital fund, Hadley flagged accounting principles for fund accounting, the restricted nature of the capital fund, and proposed potential alternatives to track budget for potential future use in capital projects through visible tags on operating budget in the general financial system, for example. In other discussion: University’s investing strategy across funds; Board of Governors approval and policies in relation to budget and funding models; need for University to consider and evaluate future growth models; appetite for cyclical review of financial principles and this committee’s role thereon; Responsibility Center Management (RCM) budgeting and Continuity Model budgeting.

6. 2022/23 OPERATING BUDGET UPDATE

Rush spoke to his presentation and provided an update on the University’s execution of the 2022/23 operating budget. Members heard that the update reflects: (a) a balanced budget (Opening Budget April 2022 - \$1.2 M deficit; Current Budget Update February 2023 - \$263k surplus); (b) tuition revenue changes driven by oscillating and heterogeneous changes across different tuition categories (positive and negative deviations; impact due to student intake deviating from forecast, increased graduations resulting from students fast-tracking their academic progression); (c) interest income increase due to increased interest rates; (d) areas of expense budget increases include salary and wages (reallocation from other non-salary budget), capital project, and deferred maintenance fund; (e) University’s continued commitment to align between the budget and institutional strategic priorities.

7. 2023/24 OPERATING BUDGET SCENARIO

With respect to budget activities for 2023/24, Rush continued his presentation and spoke to: (a) some budget planning considerations, including ongoing constrained revenue environment (no enrolment corridor grant adjustment, fixed and/or less tuition flexibility (domestic tuition rate decrease in 2019/20 followed by a freeze) and government and geopolitical uncertainty), along with expense growth as salaries and other costs increase; and (b) overall approach to mitigating budget challenges (e.g., commitment to year over year balanced operating budgets, multi-year scenario planning, and risk mitigation through expense management, enrolment and tuition rate planning, tuition advocacy). In discussion: expected corridor negotiation that did not come to fruition; proportion of international tuition and impact of geopolitical uncertainties; international enrolment diversification; inclusion of other elements within future operating budgets (e.g., increased visibility of strategic investments, including but not limited to sustainability, anti-racism, student mental health, indigenization); Waterloo's responsible investing and its commitment to government advocacy alongside Council of Ontario Universities (re: grant funding, tuition framework, student aid). In broader discussion: how big should Waterloo become; lifelong learning; graduate to undergraduate ratios; Waterloo's commitment to accessible campus and community housing located on main transit lines (Waterloo, alongside WLU and Conestoga College, soon to attend meeting convened by Mayor).

8. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is Friday 15 March 2023, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.; NH3318.

15 February 2023

Kathy Winter, PhD, CPsych,
Assistant University Secretary