

University of Waterloo
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Minutes of the Tuesday 27 October 2020 Meeting

Present: Nyla Ahmad, Upkar Arora, Mike Ashmore, Peter Barr, Anne Bordeleau, Luca Bucci, Carol Cressman, Paul Fieguth, Cindy Forbes (chair), George Freeman, Murray Gamble, Martha George, Tony Giovinazzo, Julia Goyal, Susan Grant, Feridun Hamdullahpur, Russell Hiscock, Andre Hladio, Karen Jack (secretary), Sheryl Kennedy, Sabrina Khandakar, Lisa Mak, Ian Milligan, Neil Randall, Sam Rubin, Max Salman, James Schlegel, Abbie Simpson, Jagdeep Singh Bachher, Jeremy Steffler, Berry Vrbanovic, Stanley Woo, En-Hui Yang

Guests: Sheila Ager, Daniel Allen, Jean Andrey, Agata Antkiewicz, Suman Armitage, Sandra Banks, Jean Becker, Alison Boyd, Guy Brodsky, Bruce Campbell, Aldo Caputo, Angela Carter, Jeff Casello, Kris Cates-Bristol, Mary-Anne Chan, Ingrid Cowan, Scott Davis, Charmaine Dean, David DeVidi, Truzaar Dordi, Tia Driver, Yufei Du, Petra Duff, Rob Esselment, Lawrence Folland, Mark Giesbrecht, Mike Grivicic, Sarah Hadley, Patti Hancock, Candace Harrington, John Hirdes, Michelle Hollis, Lee Hornberger, Dennis Huber, Glenn Ives, Lesley Johnston, Andrea Kelman, Jennifer Kieffer, Robert Lemieux, Lili Liu, Peter Lowe, Nick Manning, Kelly McManus, Norah McRae, Christine McWebb, Bessma Momani, Cathy Newell Kelly, Ezgi Ozelcaglayan, Leanne Perreault, William Pristanski, Alice Raynard, Chris Read, James Rush, Beth Sandore Namachchivaya, Emily Schroeder, Alfie Scozzaro, Daniela Seskar-Hencic, Joanne Shoveller, Andrea Sotak, Allan Starr, Kerry Stryker, Sherri Sutherland, Brandon Sweet, Mathew Thijssen, Sean Thomas, David Timms, Olaf Weber, Mary Wells, Tyler Wendland, Rebecca Wickens, Chris Wilson-Smith

Regrets: Dominic Barton, Dave Jaworsky, Karen Redman

OPEN SESSION

1. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Governors were asked to declare any conflicts they may have in relation to the items on the agenda. No conflicts were declared.

2. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

Following the land acknowledgement, the chair welcomed members to the meeting. She introduced and welcomed new Lieutenant Governor in Council members Luca Bucci, Carol Cressman, Andre Hladio, and Lisa Mak, and new undergraduate student governor Sam Rubin.

The chair acknowledged the hard work being done by the entire University community with respect to its response to the pandemic. She offered thanks and congratulations to everyone in managing constant and countless changes in operations over the course of the year. She spoke to the value of the University's strategic plan in setting up Waterloo well for improving rankings. She informed governors that time has been left in the agenda to provide opportunity for questions and comments about strategic activities.

3. AGENDA/ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS

The Board heard a motion to approve the agenda as distributed.

Bordeleau and Steffler. Carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

The Board heard a motion to approve and/or receive for information by consent items 4-8 below.

Freeman and Simpson.

4. MINUTES OF THE 2 JUNE 2020 MEETING

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting as distributed.

5. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Promotion to Professor. The Board received the report for information.

Sabbatical and Administrative Leaves and Administrative Appointments. The Board heard a motion to approve the sabbatical leaves, changes and cancellations, and administrative leaves as presented in the report. The Board received the remainder of the report for information.

Recognition and Commendation. The Board received the report for information.

6. REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Incidental Fee Changes. The Board heard a motion to approve the recommendation that incidental fees to be assessed and collected during the winter term 2021 from full-time and part-time undergraduate and graduate students be modified to reflect the combined “online with some in-person” delivery method.

The Board received the remainder of the report for information.

7. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Building & Properties. The Board received the report for information.

Executive. The Board received the report for information.

Finance & Investment. The Board received the report for information.

Governance. The Board received the report for information.

Pension & Benefits. The Board received the report for information.

8. REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC & PROVOST

Undergraduate/Graduate Admissions Update. The Board received the report for information.

The question was called and the motion carried unanimously.

Regular Agenda

9. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no business arising.

10. REPORT OF THE WATERLOO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The chair invited Abbie Simpson, WUSA president, to speak to her written report. Simpson discussed: ways WUSA supports undergraduate students through support, clubs and student societies; the “WUSA box” initiative to welcome undergraduate students this year; key advocacy work; awards. In discussion, Simpson spoke to: some promising signs of improvement in the student mental health area; the great outcome of work done with the University for returning international students; workload challenges for students in virtual study; the attention being paid by students to the quality of online courses; continuing antiracism work. The chair thanked Simpson and advised that David Billedeau, president of the Graduate Student Association will present to the Board in February.

11. DIVESTMENT AND CARBON NEUTRAL INVESTMENT DISCUSSION

James Schlegel, Chair, Finance & Investment Committee. The chair invited Schlegel to give background information on divestment discussions by the Finance & Investment Committee to date, and the committee's current activities. Schlegel discussed: the history of the Board's Responsible Working Investment Group (RIWG; 2016-2018); its mandate and constitution; the broad and open consultation it undertook; key highlights of the final report (multiple stakeholders must be considered; fiduciary responsibility is paramount; the inclusion of environmental, social and governance factors are a valid lens); its final recommendations which were approved by the Board in 2018; actions and outcomes to date. Schlegel noted that the materials provided to the Board by community members will be considered by the committee at its next meeting, and that members look forward to working with the community through engagement and dialogue.

Olaf Weber, Representative of Faculty and Staff Signatories to Call for Divestment Letter; Truzaar Dordi, Representative of Students and Fossil Free UW. Weber spoke to the letter and petition distributed with the agenda and offered his thoughts about new information since 2018 about fossil fuel investment which suggest to him that University should take a more active approach.

Dordi provided his argument for divestment. He spoke to the energy sector's lag in the market, other universities which have benefitted from divestment policies, and what has changed since 2018.

In discussion: an expression of WUSA's support for the requests; what some governors have heard from colleagues; several expressions of support for making this a priority; the need for more discussion and understanding; an observation that an understanding of long-term impacts on the economy may be worthwhile; the Canadian context; the value in taking time to consult all stakeholders. Members understood that discussions will continue at the Finance & Investment Committee, with an update to the Board in February.

12. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President's Update. The president spoke to various matters, including: recent appointments and honours; fall term admissions details; rankings; an update on the strategic plan and emerging priorities and next steps; recent activities in government relations; a brand expression update with Sandra Banks; a review of the Co-operative and Experiential Education Strategic Plan with Norah McRae; an update on the implementation of student mental health recommendations with John Hirdes; a sustainability update with Mat Thijssen; progress made on the President's Anti-Racism Taskforce and next steps with Charmaine Dean. He concluded with a summary of his goals and priorities for the remainder of his term.

In discussion: some clarity regarding digital learning in light of the pandemic; more detail about ongoing sustainability projects; further information about the cybersecurity institute; agreement that opportunities for governors to get together between meetings to discuss selected topics more fully will occur; work being done in McRae's department re: developing future ready students and assessing lessons learned this year; mental health training for teaching assistants is being looked at; actions being taken to actively reach out to students and ensure they are aware of the range of supports available to them; further detail about carbon offsets and sustainability initiatives in campus operations; a brief review of some of the antiracism pedagogical work being done.

13. REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC & PROVOST

Faculty Name Change – Applied Health Sciences. The Board heard a motion that the Board of Governors approve the following name change: "Faculty of Applied Health Sciences" to "Faculty of Health" effective 1 January 2021.

The chair invited Dean Lili Liu to speak to the motion and respond to any questions. Liu offered commentary on the proposal and spoke to consultation activities she undertook.

Hamdullahpur and Barr.

Following an expression of thanks to Liu for the extra consultation which occurred, and confirmation that associated expenses are minimal, the question was called and the motion carried unanimously.

14. REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

The Board received the report for information.

15. REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ADVANCEMENT

The Board received the report for information.

16. REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, RESEARCH & INTERNATIONAL

The Board received the report for information.

17. REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

The Board received the report for information.

18. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Audit & Risk. The Board heard a motion to reappoint Ernst & Young as the University's external auditors for the fiscal year ending 30 April 2021.

Gamble and Barr. Carried unanimously.

Following a brief review of the report distributed with the agenda, the Board received the remaining items in it for information.

Finance & Investment. The Board heard a motion to approve amendments to the Statement of Investment Guidelines for the University of Waterloo Endowment Fund, as described in Attachment #1 and effective 1 November 2020.

Schlegel and Barr. Carried unanimously.

Pension & Benefits. The Board heard a motion to approve amendments to section 12.01 of the University of Waterloo Pension Plan, as outlined in the report.

Barr and Hiscock. Carried unanimously.

The Board heard a motion to approve amendments to section 2.05 of the Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures, as outlined in the report.

Barr and Gamble. Carried unanimously.

19. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

The Board convened in confidential session.

30 November 2020

Karen Jack
University Secretary