



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Friday, October 21, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.
Keating Centre Conference Rooms

- Present:** Dennis Flood (Chair), Lisa Raitt (Vice-Chair), Andy Hakin, Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick, Monica Foster, Simone Abbass, Paul Ash, Denton Anthony, Bill Burke, Ron Chisholm, Amanda Cockshutt, Karen Gardiner, James O'Reilly, Joshua Kroker, Peter Ludlow, Paul McFarland, Violet Silva, Sylvia Parris-Dummond, Brendan Roberts, Marc Rodrigue, Kathleen Sheridan, Chris Gilham, Peter Marzlin, Lynda Harling Stalker, Cynthia Dorrington, Eileen Alma, Marie Walsh, William Sweet, Duaine Devereaux
- Regrets:** Marc Furlotte, Deborah Gillis, Andrea Paul, John Peacock
- Guests:** Elizabeth Yeo (Vice-President, Students), Ms. Lisa Craig (Director, Finance)
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1. WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

D. Flood called the October 21, 2022 meeting of the Board of Governors to order at 9:00 a.m. Roll Call was taken followed by a Land Acknowledgement from A. Hakin and then W. Kirkpatrick offered a prayer to open the meeting.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The following motion was moved, seconded and **CARRIED:**

That the agenda be approved as circulated.

D. Flood asked if any Governors had an actual, potential or apparent conflict of interest with any of the agenda items and none were declared.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The following motion was moved, seconded and **CARRIED:**

That the minutes of the Board of Governors meeting held on June 17, 2022 and October 4, 2022 be approved as circulated.

4. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A. Hakin updated the Board on several topics:

- Homecoming took place October 14-16, 2022. There was a strategic emphasis on community building to reduce harm and provide alternatives for students. Messages of caring and respect for our community and for each other have been a regular part of our communications. In addition, there was a fulsome schedule of events planned, including awards for distinguished alumni granted by the Alumni Association.
- Extensive wind speeds and heavy rainfall from Hurricane Fiona left the university without power for several days and caused considerable damage to our campus infrastructure. The damage to Marguerite Hall in the Mount St. Bernard complex was significant and resulted in the emergency relocation of 106 students to other residences across the campus. As well, faculty and staff within the Rankin School of Nursing were relocated and some classes moved to nearby St. Ninian's Place.
- The Maple League has redesigned its governance model. This will include transferring operational leadership from the Maple League Presidents Council to a Governing Board composed of the Vice-Presidents Academic/Provosts of the four institutions: Acadia University, Bishop's University, Mount Allison University, and StFX University. The Governing Board will lead the operations of the consortium.

- The Congregation of Sisters of St. Martha showed their incredible generosity with a gift to StFX to honour Sister Dorothy Moore and Sister Veronica Matthews. The donation of \$250,000 was matched by the Jeannine Deveau Educational Equity Endowment and will support Indigenous people in their chosen field of either nursing or education.

5. ACADEMIC VICE PRESIDENT AND PROVOST UPDATE

A. Cockshutt, Academic Vice President and Provost, provided an update on two areas of focus: (1) student enrollment and recruitment; and, (2) academic & program renewal. A few highlights included:

- Undergraduate full-time enrollment increased by 0.8% increase reflecting strong continuing student numbers and a smaller entering class than last year (but stronger than the previous year). Full time undergraduate enrollment is the highest it has been over the past 5 years.
- Full time graduate student full time numbers decreased, partly due to issues with student visa processing at IRCC (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada). Part time graduate students, largely MEd students, increased to their highest level over the past 5 years.

6. FINANCIAL UPDATE

6.1 2022-23 Financial Projections

L. Raitt, Chair of the Finance Committee, introduced M. Foster to provide the financial update. The first set of financial projections for the 2022-23 fiscal period have been completed based on actual results to September 30, 2022. Operations is currently projecting a deficit of \$5.068m along with a projected deficit in Ancillary of \$3.338m for an overall deficit of \$8.406m.

6.2 Borrowing Resolution

The Board was provided with a copy of the most recent Commitment Letter from Scotiabank, dated December 10, 2021. M. Foster advised that the credit facilities provided by Scotiabank are renewed annually through a Letter of Commitment. To ensure transparency with regards to the University's credit facilities, moving forward the Commitment Letter will be brought to the Finance Committee and the Board for approval.

The following motion was moved, seconded and **CARRIED**:

That the Board that the University be authorized to enter into credit facilities from the Bank of Nova Scotia subject to the terms and conditions contained in the Commitment Letter from the Bank of Nova Scotia dated December 10, 2021.

7. UNIVERSITY ACT

K. Gardiner, Chair of the Governance and Nominating Committee, provided an overview of next steps concerning amendments to the StFX University Act. These included:

- On October 14, the Bill was introduced in the House of Assembly by the Honourable Michelle Thompson. The second reading took place on October 18. Following the Second Reading, the Bill and proposed amendments will be referred to the Private and Local Bills Committee.
- The Rules of the House of Assembly require the promoter of a Private Bill to publish a notice, stating the nature and purpose of the Bill, in a newspaper circulated in the area in which persons affected by the Bill may reside. An ad has been written and will appear in the Chronicle Herald on October 21.
- A Meeting of the Private and Local Bills Committee will take place 48 hours after the ad has been published. The presentation will be an opportunity for members of the Private and Local Bills Committee to raise questions, comments or concerns regarding the Bill and proposed amendments to the Act.

W. Kirkpatrick provided a summary of efforts to advance the fourth object, including assembling an ad hoc committee to discuss the role of the Vicar of the Founder and efforts the university could take to demonstrate respect for its Catholic heritage and character.

8. VP STUDENTS UPDATE

E. Yeo provided an overview of the material that was sent to the Board. She provided updates on the work of the President's Action Committee on Anti-Racism (PACAR), the Residence Renewal Project, and the development of the Student Experience & Opportunity Plan in support of the StFX strategic planning process and integrated planning framework. The intention is to identify the initiatives that can be accomplished with existing resources, and where additional funding may be needed.

9. STUDENTS' UNION REPORT

B. Roberts, President of the Students' Union, highlighted a few points from a written report submitted to the Board.

10. ALUMNI REPORTS

K. Sheridan, President of the Alumni Association briefly reviewed points from a written report submitted to the Board. The Association's governing Council met on October 13-14 in Antigonish. Highlights included: a presentation from A. Hakin on the StFX Strategic Plan; discussions with members of StFX's leadership team and the Students' Union; the consideration of new wording in the Association scholarship application; and efforts underway for diversity and inclusion training. The Alumni Association is continuing work on its next strategic plan with Barrington Consulting Group. The plan is expected to be launched in the new year.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Board's Committee presented reports on their activities.

11.1 Executive Committee

D. Flood introduced M. Foster to provide an overview of the StFX Accessibility Plan.

The following motion was moved, seconded and **CARRIED:**

That the Board endorse the StFX Accessibility Plan as presented.

In response to discussion. M. Foster noted that some of the initiatives identified in the Plan are identified as for completion outside of the 3-year timeframe. The intention is for all actions to be initiated in the next three years. The approval of the StFX Accessibility Plan provides a roadmap that we can leverage to seek additional funding, recognizing that implementing some initiatives may require additional resources. The Board noted that this should be captured in the final StFX Accessibility Plan.

11.2 Audit and Investment Committee

The following motion was moved, seconded and **CARRIED:**

That the Board approve the Investment Committee Report for the Quarter Ended June 30, 2022 as presented.

M. Foster reviewed the content of amended Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures (SIPP), which was circulated to the Board in advance of the discussion.

The following motion was moved, seconded and **CARRIED:**

That the Board approve amendments to the Statement of the Investment Policies and Procedures for St. Francis Xavier University Endowment Funds (October 2022) as presented.

11.3 Governance and Nominating Committee

Ms. Karen Gardiner, Chair of the Governance and Nominating Committee, discussed priority initiatives that the committee will aim to develop over the coming months. These include: (1) a joint meeting with the Senate Steering Committee to discuss initiatives to improve the Board/Senate relationship, as outlined in the Governance Review; (2) developing a process for declaring conflicts of interest, as discussed at the Special Meeting of the Board on October 4; (3) developing an EDIA policy/statement of values; and, (4) a Board evaluation process. In addition, the Governance and Nominating Committee has initiated the board recruitment process, to fill two vacancies as of July 1, 2023. Ms. Gardiner called for expressions of interest from Board members interested in participating in a Board Buddy/Mentorship program.

11.4 Finance Committee

M. Raitt, Chair of the Finance Committee, noted that the items discussed at the most recent committee meeting had been covered in earlier items on the Board's agenda. In addition, she noted that the Finance Committee received an orientation session, similar to the specific orientations delivered to other committees.

11.5 Property and Risk Management Committee

On behalf of M. Rodrigue, Chair of the Property and Risk Management Committee, M. Foster provided an overview of the impacts of Hurricane Fiona, including damage to campus infrastructure, preparation efforts made to mitigate risks prior to the storm, and relocation efforts. The committee reviewed the current project plans, completed accessibility audit of the built environment, and discussed next steps in the implementation of the Enterprise Risk Management system.

11.6 Advancement and External Relations Committee

On behalf of D. Gillis, Chair of the Advancement and External Relations Committee, Dr. Andy Hakin noted that many of the items discussed by the Advancement and External Relations Committee had been covered as part of the President's Update.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Flood noted that the next regular meeting of the Board would be on December 12, 2022. The meeting will take place virtually.

13. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the session of the October 21, 2022 meeting of the Board of Governors adjourned at 12:30pm.