

**Cape Breton University  
Board of Governors  
Public Meeting**

**Friday, March 5, 2021  
Following Prologue  
Royal Bank Lecture Theatre/MS Teams**

Mr. Sampson began with the acknowledgement that Cape Breton University is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) people first signed with the British Crown in 1726. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

He then welcomed new members Ms. Valery Bobyk and Ms. Kate Oland as the Board's two newest members appointed in the Ministerial category.

**1 – 5 Opening Information/Discussion**

**1. Roll Call**

**Present:**

Mr. Robert Sampson (Chair), Ms. Denise Allen (Vice Chair) Mr. David Dingwall (President), Mr. Gordon MacInnis (Treasurer), Dr. Richard MacKinnon (Secretary), Mr. Bill Burke, Ms. Carol Beaton, Mr. Michael Claener, Ms. Melissa Deane, Dr. Ann Frances D'Intino, Dr. Donnie Holland, Mr. Terry Kelly, Mr. Keith MacDonald, Mr. Bernie MacLennan, Mr. Ryan Magee, Mr. Keith Maher, Mr. Kirk MacRae, Ms. Tara Milburn, Mr. Jim Mustard, Mr. Darryl Poirier, Dr. Scott Rodney, Mr. Michael Sandalis, Mr. Tom Joseph Scaria, Ms. Harman Singh, Ms. Ann Sylliboy

**Regrets:**

Ms. Courtney DeGiobbi, Ms. Angela Houston, Mr. Pierre Jean

**Absent:**

Mr. Calvin Howley

The Chair declared quorum and called the meeting to order.

**2 Minutes**

**2.1 - It was moved** by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Claener, to approve the Public minutes of December 4, 2020. **Motion carried.**

### **3 Business Arising – N/A**

## **4 Reports**

### **4.1 Report of Senate**

Mr. MacLennan referred to the circulated report and highlighted the following:

- Senate received the Report of the Committee on Academic Advising
- A presentation on a Volunteer Advantage Program Report was given which is proposing a centre to coordinate the activity and research associated with volunteerism
- The Planning and Review Committees presented the Pre-Budget Brief with eight recommendations for considerations for the upcoming budget, all of which were endorsed by Senate.
- A new articulation agreement was signed between Holland College and Cape Breton University.

### **4.2 Report of the Students' Union**

Student's Union President, Mr. Singh reported that the Union continues to advocate for equal grant assistance, from all levels of government, for international students. He was happy to report that in working with CBU, funds have been allocated to assist with 50% of student self-isolation costs. With regard to bursary applications, he noted that due to the low number of applications and lack of a full promotion of the process, the deadline was reopened to allow more time to apply. The Union met with numbers government officials to continue their advocacy for MSI coverage for international students. In efforts to be more accessible to student, the Union has extended their services, including bus passes, at the New Dawn location. A video was created to celebrate student academic champions and those who made the Dean's List and certificates are being distributed. Although student engagement has been challenging this year, the Union continues to plan online events and small gathering where permitted. He congratulated Ms. Madelyn O'Brien who was elected the Student's Union President for 2021/22 and Mr. Logan Collins as Executive Vice President for 2021/22. He also referred to a topic he brought to the Executive Committee during the March 4<sup>th</sup> meeting; to have consent training mandated. He suggested that because of the many cultures and backgrounds at CBU, a mandatory training course for all students should be implemented. He noted that this suggestion was accepted and a follow up will be brought to a future meeting.

### **4.3 Special Announcements, Question – N/A**

### **4.4 President's Report**

President Dingwall reported that CBU and the Medical Advisory Group are working on a joint proposal to the Minister of Health and the Deputy Minister of Health on the need for MSI coverage for all students in Nova Scotia, as they do in several jurisdictions across Canada. Referring to Mr. Singh's suggestion for mandatory consent, he advised that a taskforce will be populated next week to identify best practices and develop a roadmap to move forward. He also offered comment on the troubling situation as it relates to the COVID-19 vaccination with regard to

production, distribution and the associate health protocols.

On the request for an update on the Creative Arts Strategy, President Dingwall identified three pillars that are vital for the reputation of Cape Breton University, 1) academic, 2) athletic, and 3) the creative arts. He advised that a report has been commissioned and an individual has been identified to lead the process to enrich the student experience as it related to the creative arts and he will have more information to come as that process progresses.

Mr. Magee and Mr. Singh expressed thanks for President Dingwall's commitment to developing a task force on mandatory consent.

With regard to the Centre for Discovery and Innovation, Mr. Sandalis congratulated all those involved for creating so much awareness and engagement on the project, and asked what are the next big steps and how Board members might be able to help. President Dingwall responded that there are three major steps ahead; the Government of Canada is expected to announce a special infrastructure program for post-secondary institutions in the country, the Atlantic Provinces Ministers of Education have all signed on to a proposal whereby they would support a federal program on infrastructure and would also provide support, and he has also had meaningful discussions with the new Minister of Education as it relates to the CDI.

## **5 Treasurer's Report**

### **5.1 Financial Statements**

Mr. MacInnis referred to the Financial Statements circulated with the meeting package and the following key items were highlighted and discussed:

- CBU's cash position remains healthy and is influenced by (1) continued pre-payment of tuition fees by international students, (2) prepayment of the 2020-21 operating grant, and (3) CBU's practice of not segregating cash related to funded reserve and special purpose fund balances.
- 2020/21 Fall/Winter tuition as of January 31st is lower than the 2020 comparative figure. While the recorded revenue figure reflects a significant decline, the rate of loss of the revenue is not as quick as what was contemplated in the budgeted \$27 million loss in revenue for 2020/21. This will result in more revenue than anticipated and will be helpful to offset the otherwise budgeted deficit.
- All Nursing and Education grants have recently been received.
- Prepaid student deposits reflect a combination of monies paid by accepted students who may be awaiting student visas and travel clearance to attend CBU, and, payments for registered students where initial deposits/payments exceed fees associated with their current level of registration.
- The official \$6.1 million deficit budget approved by the board in June, 2020 has been regularly amended, reflecting updated information in the COVID-19 environment. The management working budget presented in this report currently contemplates a deficit of \$9.9

million with key areas of adjustment being anticipated residence revenue losses, increased financial aid to students, fee waivers, costs associated with transitioning to on-line learning, and cost saving initiatives to date.

- CBU received special COVID related funding support of \$2.2 million from the Province of Nova Scotia. This revenue was not anticipated in the 2021/22 budget which will have the impact of positively impacting the otherwise budgeted deficit. Of importance, the allocation of the available provincial funding of \$25 million for the sector was allocated based upon estimated additional costs incurred by universities as a result of COVID-19. Loss of revenue related to COVID, by far the most significant financial impact for CBU, was not recognized in the allocation model developed by provincial officials.
- Residence operations have been negatively impacted due to COVID-19 with about only 40 students residing in residence at this time.
- The 2021/22 budget process is now underway with the budget scheduled to be presented to the late April meeting of the Board of Governors. Financial planning for the 2021/22 budget will continue to be characterized by uncertainty related to enrolment levels, particularly as it relates to international students.

## **6 Committee Reports**

### **6.1 Executive Committee**

Mr. Sampson, reported that the Executive Committee met on March 4<sup>th</sup> when the Committee approved the agenda items for the meetings today. All items discussed have been, or will be covered by other agenda items.

## **7 Items Requiring Action \ Decision – N/A**

## **8 New Business – N/A**

## **9 Presentations – N/A**

## **10 Open Session**

On the question of the status of the project with Via Talente, President Dingwall noted that, of course, due to geography and COVID-19 the project is not moving as quickly as first anticipated but nevertheless, is proceeding. He has discussed with them the Chair of Precision and

Agriculture and they have advised they have been dealing with contractors, from afar, but is proving to be difficult as they cannot be on site at this time. He has virtual meeting with Via Talente on Monday, March 8<sup>th</sup> and hopes to have more detailed information on the status.

On the question of the impact, if any, CBU experienced with respect to the Laurentian University situation, President Dingwall responded that CBU was not at all impacted as the financial situation at Laurentian is much different than that of CBU. He did note that CBU will continue to monitor the situation as there may be some valuable lessons to take away and confirmed that there are no longer CBU programs offered at Laurentian.

### 11 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Friday, April 23, 2021.

### 12 Adjournment

**It was moved** by Dr. D'Intino to adjourn the meeting at 11:24am. **Motion carried.**



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**Dr. Richard MacKinnon, Secretary to the Board**