

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

**Friday, April 23, 2021
Following Public
Royal Bank Lecture Theatre/MS Teams**

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), Ms. Valerie Bobyk, Mr. Bill Burke, Ms. Carol Beaton, Mr. Michael Claener, Ms. Courtney DeGiobbi, Ms. Melissa Deane, Dr. Ann Frances D'Intino, Dr. Donnie Holland, Mr. Calvin Howley, Mr. Terry Kelly, Mr. Keith MacDonald, Mr. Bernie MacLennan, Mr. Ryan Magee, Mr. Keith Maher, Mr. Kirk MacRae, Ms. Tara Milburn, Mr. Jim Mustard, Ms. Kate Oland, Mr. Darryl Poirier, Dr. Scott Rodney, Mr. Michael Sandalis, Mr. Tom Joseph Scaria, Mr. Amrinder Singh, Ms. Harman Singh, Ms. Ann Sylliboy, Mr. Steve Wadden

Regrets:

Ms. Angela Houston, Mr. Pierre Jean, Ms. Amanda Mombourquette

The Chair declared quorum and called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. He welcomed the incoming Students' Union executive attending as spectators; Ms. Madlyn O'Brien, President, Mr. Logan Collins, Executive Vice President and Ms. Mandy Nguyen, Vice President Promotions; returning to the Executive is Ms. Courtney DeGiobbi as Vice President Finance & Operations.

Before proceeding, he acknowledged 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.

2 Minutes

2.1 - It was moved by Dr. D'Intino, seconded by Mr. Poirier, to approve the Public Minutes of March 5, 2021. **Motion carried.**

3 Business Arising – N/A

4 Reports

4.1 Senate

Mr. MacLennan referred to his circulated report and noted there was nothing further to add but welcomed any comments or questions.

4.2 Student's Union

Mr. Singh provided an extensive report of the works of the Union for their year in office. The full report can be found attached to these minutes.

Board members commended the Students' Union on their many accomplishments in what has been a very challenging year.

4.3 Special Announcements, Questions – N/A

4.4 President's Report

President Dingwall referred to his written report and highlighted the following from it:

- Efforts with regard to the Centre for Discover and Innovation continue and a booklet titled, Case for Support, will be distributed to members present and electronically for those joining virtually. The community support for the projects has been tremendous; the target of 3,000 online signature for the petition has been surpassed and currently stands at 4,100.
- The decision made by the Government of Canada to close flights from India for 30 days will have an impact on CBU.
- He thanked Mr. Pierre Jean for his contributions to the CBU Board of Governors during his tenure at the Canadian Coast Guard College and wished him well in his pending retirement.
- He noted that annually, the Students' Union, presents the Fr. Paul Abbass Award to individuals for their dedication to the vision of student empowerment at Cape Breton, and on April 21st, they presented Mr. Gordon MacInnis with this award.
- On April 22nd a virtual Annual Awards Event was held, and of particular note, past Students' Union President, Parteek "Gunny" Brar, was presented with the International Alumni Award. Gunny graciously accepted the award from a virtual table with his parents and brother who were in India and it 3:00 am in India at the time.
- Succession planning continues as directed by the Audit Committee. He was pleased to announce that Ms. Sara Salter-Burke is now the Vice President, Development, Ms. Stephanie Myles has been retained as University Counsel, and during May, Ms. Amy Campbell will begin as the Assistant Manager of Facilities Management, and Mr. Louis Hannem as the Chief Information Officer.
- He noted the various options and resources available to students and staff with regard to mental health, a new dedicated space in the Max Bell Health Centre, and a strong and detailed plan which has been approved by Dr. Robert Strang and his officials.
- He too thanked the Students' Union and their support staff for all their good work during the past year. Through reasonable, thoughtful and informative exchanges, their efforts have resulted in many resolutions and for that, President Dingwall expressed sincere appreciation and thanks.

On the question of the project with Via Talente, President Dingwall reported that unfortunately due to travel restrictions, the plan for them to be on site in early May is no longer possible.

They have obtained a contractor for the purposes of the development of the facility but the global pandemic has greatly impacted the project.

Mr. Claener urged President Dingwall, or any other members who may have contact with government officials, to strongly impress the importance of reinstating travel to and from India, not only for CBU and Cape Breton Island but for Canada as a whole.

On the question of reinstating the shuttle service connecting student with employment opportunities in Victoria, Inverness and Richmond Counties, President Dingwall confirmed that the service will be available should public health guidelines permit.

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 quite healthy due to the holding of deposits from future students and the pre-payment of the 2020/21 provincially funded operating grant.
- An increase in student receivables was anticipated for the summer of 2020, at which time, a special COVID-19 student receivable reserve was established out of concern of the collectability of fees billed in 2019/20 (pre-pandemic).
- With a lesser rate of-loss of tuition revenue, the receipt of unbudgeted provincial government COVID-19 support, and expenditure control initiatives undertaken by CBU, the institution may be able to conclude the 2020/21 fiscal period with the Operating Reserve, originally planned to be fully exhausted in 2020/21, largely intact. As such, and with continued uncertainty regarding future enrolment levels, the Operating Reserve becomes available as a risk mitigation tool for the 2021/22.
- As planned, the official \$6.1 million deficit budget approved by the Board in June of 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.
- Expenditures with regard to academic teaching, research & academic support, central charges, and administrative support units.

6 Committee Reports

6.1 Executive Committee

The Chair, Mr. Sampson reported that the Executive Committee met on April 22nd and most items discussed have been, or will be, covered on the Prologue or Public agendas.

President Dingwall added that with the onset of COVID-19 in the spring of 2020, CUPE indicated their wish to defer collective bargaining discussions as per the normal schedule; the group's collective agreement expired March 31, 2020. A proposed Extension Agreement to the CUPE Collective agreement covering the period of April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2022 was drafted and includes economic increases of 1.7%, April 1, 2020 and 1.8% April 1, 2021. **It was moved** by Mr. Poirier, seconded by Mr. Kelly, to accept the recommendations of the Negotiations Committee as presented. **Motion carried.**

6.2 Investment Committee

Mr. MacRae reported the Committee met on April 22nd to examine the annual review with Eckler representatives. He was pleased to advise that the annualized returns to December 31st are reporting quite positively. He also noted the changes being brought in to the fixed income portfolio. The Committee will also be reviewing their fee structure with SunLife.

6.3 Audit Committee

Mr. Kelly reported that the Audit Committee normally does not meet at this time of year, but did so on April 22nd to discuss risk management. Mr. John MacMillan, and instructor in the Department of Health Sciences, will lead the process for Enterprise Risk Management at CBU. He has a certificate in risk management and has experience in the field. This is in effort to respond to the recommendation from the Parsons Report.

7 Items Requiring Action \ Decision

7.1 2021/2022 Proposed Budget

Mr. MacInnis referred to a copy of the proposed 2021/22 budget circulated with the meeting package. Responding to comments and questions as they arose, in a PowerPoint presentation, he provided a detailed account of considerations for the budget proposal. He gave extensive detail of the university model with respect to tuition, grants, revenues, expenses and wages. He also detailed sector information with regard to enrolments, tuition environment, and the provincial policy framework. He also provided information on the impacts COVID-19 has had, and are expected to have, on the University along with risk mitigation strategies. He then gave an overview of the proposed expenditures, revenue projections, and key issues for 2021/22. He drew particular attention to the fact that no contingency allowance is presented but that an expected remainder from the operating reserve could serve this purpose if needed.

It was moved by Mr. MacInnis, seconded by Ms. Beaton, approval of the proposed 2021/22 Operating Budget Proposal, reflecting \$80,939,309 in gross expenditures and a \$175,865 deficit.

Mr. Howley offered that term contract for faculty members could be problematic for high enrolment areas and that full-time hires do take some time to complete. He also suggested that Senate should be closely consulted to ensure the academic pressures are being identified and that they are also part of the conversation with regard to micro-credentials. Mr. MacInnis thank Mr. Howley for his comments and responded that the faculty hire situation is one that is top-of-mind but can not be rushed because of a sudden spike in a few particular areas of study. He noted that the trend is being closely monitored. President Dingwall added of particular

concern is the market, and moving to quickly with full time hires could result in quite a bad situation.

Ms. Bobyk questioned if the budget contains an allowance for alumni, to which Mr. MacInnis confirmed this is realized through the Development Department.

In response to Mr. Sandalis' question on what the online learning and remote working environments might look post-pandemic, Mr. MacInnis responded that a committee, led by Dr. Brann-Barrett, has been working diligently with the shift to remote working and online learning. He noted that at this point, it would be premature to speculate how these two items will evolve but that they are certainly on the committee's radar.

Motion carried. Nays: 6

8 New Business – N/A

9 Presentations

Mr. Sampson recognized retiring Students' Union representatives, Mr. Amrinder Singh, Mr. Tom Joseph Scaria, Mr. Ryan Magee and Ms. Courtney DeGiobbi. They were presented with a parting gift and were thanked for their many contributions to the Board during what has been an unprecedented year due to the global pandemic.

Before adjournment, Dr. D'Intino wanted to share that during this time of unpredictability and the unknow of what is to come, she has seen great leadership and strengths from senior administration, faculty and staff at CBU. She added that we all have an individual responsibility to ourselves and each other to control the factors we can, and that the entire CBU community is doing just that, and wanted to pass on her sincere appreciation to everyone at CBU.

10 Open Session – N/A

11 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Friday, October 22, 2021.

12 Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Wadden to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 am.

Dr. Richard MacKinnon, Secretary to the Board

CBUSU Year-End Report 2021



Cape Breton University
Students' Union



By Amrinder Singh
President & CEO
CBU Students' Union

“The only way to do great work is to love what you do.”
— Steve Jobs

First and foremost, I would want to thank everyone for doing a wonderful job this year. Thanks to all the SRC members for bringing their perspective to the meetings, the coordinators for putting in a tremendous amount of work to make 2020-2021 a very productive term. A huge thank you to the full-time staff Dawn MacDougall and Alex MacNeil for always being there and providing the absolute support any executive could ask for. A very special thank you to all the three VPs, Tom, Ryan and Courtney for their incredible leadership during the most unprecedented times the world has ever seen. And last, but not least all the students who believed in us and put their confidence in us for representing them and leading the CBU Students' Union. Last but not the least, thank you to the CBU administration for always sitting down with us and working on student issues and to all the members of this board for always coming forward for a very healthy discussion about any issue we have raised here.

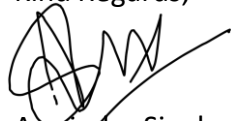
The last 12 months have been the most different we all have ever seen. When we started at Students Union last, our plans were very different as compared to what we have done during the year. Where we were planning to host some of the biggest student events CBU has ever seen, working with the municipality to better the transit and more student representation around the region, we ended up fighting for issues like better online delivery of courses, financial needs, safety and food insecurity for students.

Wins:

1. Perseverance Covid-19 Relief Fund of \$200,000 which helped approx. 400 students with financial support ranging from \$500 to \$750.
2. \$750 one-time Covid-19 grant from the provincial government that helped almost 12,000 students across Nova Scotia with technology like computers and tablets required for online learning.
3. Chaired the committee formed to review our governance documents which were long due to being reviewed and updated this year since 2016.
4. Successfully advocated and implemented the inclusion of Post-Bach students for in-course scholarships which provides semester-based scholarships ranging between \$300-\$500 based on academic performance.
5. Set up the first-ever CBUSU downtown location in downtown Sydney which included our Foodbank, Women's Center, Pride & Ally Center and also provided bus pass services to students.
6. Successfully advocated the provincial government to have mandatory Covid-19 testing for all the students coming to Nova Scotia which took place in January.
7. Expanded the use of the Foodbank through receipt reimbursement program, home deliveries, and mobile foodbank setups that was able to help almost 1500 students.
8. Supported the student by decreasing the Students' Union fee during the fall 2020 semester when Covid-19 was at its peak.
9. Under the leadership of Ryan, thrived our local newspaper Caper Times to put out a record number of articles and increased readership which went up to 5,000.
10. Also, held the grad gown program where students could come to borrow grad gowns
11. Under the leadership of Tom, we supported a record number of students with academic issues, appeals, and registrations.

12. Under the leadership of Courtney, we reached our yearly Capers Helping Capers goal of \$10,000 for four local charities.
13. One of the first stakeholders in the community to start advocacy work for the J.A. Douglas McCurdy airport which brought together different groups. It is great to see our airport thriving once again.
14. Even though times were tough and student engagement was less, we did some great in-person and online events that engaged students ranging from 10 to 100.
15. Our advocacy efforts for Open Educational Resources led almost 12 professors to use them which makes us the leaders in that area. We have been applauded on various platforms and will save thousands of dollars for our current and future students.
16. \$235,500 for the subsidy to support international students self-isolating in which has supported 306 students to date and will continue to support students until its depleted.
17. This also led to the \$300,000 allocation to the CBU budget-2022 to support students coming to CBU during the pandemic.
18. Additional funding of \$180,000 in the form of Special Covid-19 bursary which is helping almost 400 students ranging from \$600 to \$1000.
19. Following our work on Open Education, we recently made a recommendation in the CBU Budget Committee to have funding allocated for the development of OERs which lead to the investment of \$50,000 for next year.
20. For students of CBU who could not afford to attend conferences and competitions due to financial restrictions, we made a recommendation in the CBU's Budget Committee for funding allocation which resulted in the funding of another \$50,000 for the next year.
21. Created the first-ever Indigenous Student Center in the CBU Students' Union building to create a safe space for the indigenous community.
22. To make CBU a better and safer place, we advocated the Board of Governors for mandatory Consent Training for every student before they set foot on campus. This led to the forming of a task force by President Dingwall which has made the recommendation of adopting the policy, and if adopted soon, will make CBU the first school in the Atlantic provinces to undertake such a policy.
23. Increased SU scholarships and expanded the program to include more students.
24. Was involved in more than 50 interviews with media such as Cape Breton Post, CTV, CBC, Caper Times to bring out our work to the community.
25. Met with more than 30 MLA's MPs across Nova Scotia to work on post-secondary issues such as MSI, breaking the barriers to Post Secondary Education and more support

Kind Regards,



Amrinder Singh

President and CEO (2020-2021)

CBU Students' Union