

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

Friday, April 25, 2025

Following Prologue

Board of Governors Conference Room – CE339 / MS Teams

1 – 5 Opening Information/Discussion

1. Roll Call

Present:

Ms. Denise Allen (Chair), Mr. David Dingwall (President), Mr. Gordon MacInnis (Treasurer), Dr. Rod Nicholls (Secretary), Ms. Harsimran Kaur Antaal, Dr. Sahand Ashtab, Dr. Mathias Bierenstiel, Ms. Sophie Butler-Doucette, Mr. Michael Claener, Ms. Melissa Deane, Dr. PJ Devereaux, Mr. Kendrick Douglas, Ms. Eva Graham, Mr. Michael Henick, Ms. Sarah Hines, Mr. Rany Ibrahim, Ms. Sandra Kanchuk, Mr. Terry Kelly, Ms. Lori Kennedy, Mr. Keith Maher, Mr. Olbodie Peters Olaniran, Ms. Monette Pasher, Mr. Ian Parker, Ms. Nancy Samson, Mr. Bill Smith

Regrets:

Mr. Kirk Mac Rae (Vice Chair), Dr. David Gerbasi, Mr. Adam Jamieson, Mr. Brett MacDougall, Ms. Harman Singh, Ms. Anne Sylliboy, Mr. Steve Wadden

Quorum was declared, and the meeting was called to order at 9:50 am.

Ms. Allen acknowledged that Cape Breton University is located in Unama'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people, who are acknowledged as the past, present, and future caretakers of this land. Our relationship is based on a series of Peace and Friendship treaties between the Mi'kmaq Nation and the Crown, dating back to the early 18th century. We recognize that "We are All Treaty People." She also acknowledged that people of African descent have been in Nova Scotia for over 400 years, and we honour and offer gratitude to those ancestors of African descent who came before us to this land.

Ms. Allen also reminded members that they are expected to abide by the Chatham House rules with regard to information received in the course of the Board of Governors meetings, including any committee meetings and are prohibited from engaging in audio or video recording of the Board of Governors meetings, including committee meetings.

2 Minutes

2.1 - It was moved by Mr. Claener, seconded by Ms. Dean, to approve the Public Minutes of March 7, 2025. **Motion carried.**

3 Business Arising – N/A

4 Reports

4.1 Report of the President & Vice-Chancellor

President Dingwall referred to his report, circulated in advance of the meeting, and welcomed any comments or questions.

4.2 Report of the Senate

Dr. Bierenstiel reported that the Senate met on March 21, 2025, where the following items were discussed/approved:

- CBMC Program Director Darryl Kyte, provided an update on the status of the Cape Breton Medical Centre.
- HATM3509 – pre-requisite change
- MATH1216 – description change
- MATH1211 – number change to MATH2409
- Minor Changes to BBA with concentration in Human Resource Management Program – expanded list of available courses for required courses list
- Bachelor of Science Quality Assurance Review was approved
- SEH Transfer Credit Policy was approved

4.3 Report of the Students' Union

Ms. Harsimrna Kaur Antaal gave an overview of the Union's work throughout their term, and highlighted the following:

- Transition with the incoming executive team. Harsimran & Rebecca will be returning in their current roles. Ms. Simran Sharma will join as the Vice President of Finance and Operations, and Ms. Destiny Dawn Tobin as the Vice President of Student Services. Ms. Angelica Bermudez Herra will also be joining as the Vice President of Promotions. A retreat will be held in May to begin the process.
- The Father Paul Abbass Award presentation will take place on April 30th.
- The Capers Helping Capers cheque presentation will take place on April 28th, and next year's charities will be announced on that date as well.
- The Students Nova Scotia Transition was hosted at CBU.
- High school outreach will begin on May 12th and is intended to introduce potential students to the Student's Union and encourage them to run for a freshman seat on the Student Council.
- The various initiatives undertaken during their term which were directly tied to the planned strategic priorities.

In conclusion, she thanked the Board for their support and encouragement during their term.

4.4 Special Announcement

President Dingwall reported that over the last few months, CBU has been working with Nova Scotia Power on the power supply for the campus, particularly for the med campus and clinic. After consultation with the Lingan Golf and Country Club, the line will now run parallel to the club. CBU has purchased the right and will assume responsibility for a new storage building and the removal of the current one. Once that is complete, the entrance to the CBU campus will be the new entrance for the golf club.

Ms. Allen received correspondence on Mr. Rany Ibrahim's induction into the Atlantic Canada Immigrants Leaders Hall of Fame. This Hall of Fame celebrates leaders across Atlantic Canada who have demonstrated outstanding service and impact within our immigrant communities. This honour, Mr. Ibrahim says, it is both humbling and deeply meaningful, particularly as a CBU alumnus.

5 Financial Report

Mr. MacInnis referred to the Treasurer's Report, which was circulated with the meeting package. Responding to comments and questions as they arose, he highlighted the following:

- CBU's cash position, while beginning to track downward, remains very healthy thanks to capital financing advances received from the Province of Nova Scotia, deposits from international students seeking to study at CBU, and CBU reserve balances. The cash management strategy consists of a series of laddered GI C's and favourable banking treasury agreements, with the goal of optimizing interest earnings while maintaining the fluidity of cash flow.
- Budgeted revenue from interest earnings is deliberately based upon normalized cash flow so as not to build unsustainable budget reliance on interest earnings, given that such earnings will decline sharply once the capital program is advanced. This indicates that a significant positive variance is expected for 2024-25, which is intended to serve as an additional source of financing for the capital program. Effective April 1, 2025, such interest earnings will be used as "one-time" bridge funding to assist the university in addressing a significant structural deficit.
- The student accounts receivable balance remains high at high but shows signs of stabilizing. Collections of have occurred and thee allowance for uncollected accounts is sufficient to offset all receivables greater than one year old while also providing a level of coverage on current year receivables. An adjustment to the allowance balance is planned as part of year-end closing procedures.
- The book value of the CBU Endowment has increased due to the progress reported in the Forever CBU fundraising campaign. Volatility of the endowment's market value is expected in the coming months.
- Reported expenditures are materially in line with what would be expected as part of CBU's normal business cycle and approved 2024-25 operating budget.
- Work pursuant to the 2023 Major Capital Program continues. Cost certainty is at a high level for 50% of the planned capital spend with continued potential risk for the CDI project. Progress continues on the Forever CBU campaign which has now reached 72% of its goal. By March 31, 2025, the risk mitigation framework in place for the 2023 Capital Program will generate sufficient financial capacity to offset known cost escalation/scope increase for the program.

6 Committee Reports

6.1 Executive Committee

Ms. Allen reported that the Executive Committee met on April 24th, and most items have been or will be, covered by other agenda items. President Dingwall noted that the University has hired an outside consultant to initiate the succession planning process.

7 Items Requiring Action/Decision

7.1 Ratification of NSGEU Local 18B Renewal of Collective Agreement

Ms. Myles referred to the NSGEU Local 18B Collective Agreement. She noted that the Negotiations Advisory Committee met on April 23rd, where they reviewed the proposed agreement and voted in favour of it being presented to the full Board for ratification. She then asked if there were any questions. She would ask any member who may be in conflict to excuse themselves from the room. With no comments or questions, it was moved by President Dingwall, seconded by Mr. Claener, that the CBU Board of Governors accept and ratify the recommendations as presented in the NSGEU Local 18B Collective Agreement. **Motion carried. Abstentions: 4**

7.2 Tartan Downs Funding - Approval of Mortgage

Ms. Myles referred to the resolutions sent in advance of the meeting. She noted that this is in regard to the Tartan Downs project and is best practice to approve the mortgage by resolution. Mr. MacInnis provided members with an update on the project and advised that a third-party not-for-profit organization will oversee it; the Urban Neighbourhood Development Association and CBU will have representation on their Board. **It was moved** by Dr. Devereaux, seconded by Mr. Claener, that the following resolution be approved:

BE IT RESOLVED by THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF CAPE BRETON UNIVERSITY (the University) a body corporate constituted under the Cape Breton University Act R.S.N.S. c.484, as amended from time to time, having its principal offices at 1250 Grand Lake Road, Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Province of Nova Scotia:

1. **THAT** the University is hereby authorized to borrow the amount of Two Million Three Hundred Fourteen Thousand and Eight Dollars (\$2,314,008.00) of lawful money in Canada from His Majesty the King in right of the Province of Nova Scotia, represented in this behalf by the Minister of Growth and Development ("DGD") secured by a Mortgage to secure the capital contribution to assist with the development costs for Student Housing Project – ICM#3656630 on properties located AT Upper Prince St., Sydney, NS PIDs #15667991, #15546724, #15546732, #15548142, #15667983, #15890767, and #15122781 (the "Mortgage").
2. **THAT** the University authorizes and empowers the President and the Vice President of Finance & Operations to execute and deliver the Mortgage as aforesaid.

3. **THAT** the President and the Vice President of Finance and Operations be, and they are hereby authorized to fix and determine the form and contract and execute on behalf of the University, such documents of security including deeds, mortgages, guarantees, instruments, writings and supplements for ancillary documents and instruments, if any, to give effect to the Mortgage and to do all other things which they may consider necessary, desirable or useful for the purpose of carrying out the terms thereof.

4. **THAT** all documents, instruments, writings, act, or proceedings connected with or pertaining to the said Mortgage, which may have heretofore been executed, made, done, or taken on behalf of the University by the Officers or Directors, be and there hereby expressly approved, ratified and confirmed.

5. **THAT** this resolution may be executed and delivered by original or electronic means and in counterparts, each of which when so executed and delivered shall be an original, and all of which when taken together shall constitute one and the same instrument

Motion carried.

7.3 CBU 2025/2026 Budget Proposal

Mr. MacInnis referred to a copy of the proposed 2025/26 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 deficit budget proposal. He drew particular attention to the fact that the budget process has been challenging due to rapid growth over the last few years, followed by a steep decline, especially with the impacts of the IRCC decision. He noted that the budget being tabled is a deficit budget, and is the first step of the back to balance by 27/28 approach. Unfortunately, despite all the efforts and progress made, job losses are still expected. He provided specifics on the University's business model, current national and provincial models, and how they pertain to CBU, including enrolment trends and compositions, risk mitigation strategies, CBU's revenue projections, tuition and fee policies, proposed expenditures, and the alignment of each of these with the SEM Plan. After providing a history of program enrolments, he detailed how the SEM will continue to provide geographic and programmatic diversification. He also provided potential disruptive forces with respect to international and domestic markets. In conclusion, **it was moved** by Mr. MacInnis, seconded by Mr. Parker, the approval of the proposed 2025-26 Operating Budget Proposal, reflecting \$106,508,617 in gross expenditures and a \$6,777,489 budget deficit. **Motion carried. Nays: 6**

8 New Business

8.1 Bilateral Agreement 2025-2027

In a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Myles provided members an overview of the 2025-2027 Bilateral Agreement. She noted the agreement assumes a 2% increase versus a 1% as in previous years. She detailed the various requirements to avoid any holdbacks, the strategic alignment actions, the financial indicators and the provincial admission policy. She also noted that a press release is expected today and more information will likely be in that release.

9 Presentations

Ms. Allen recognized retiring Students' Union representatives, Ms. Harsimran Kaur Antaal, Ms. Sophia Butler-Doucette, Ms. Ava Graham, and Mr. Olabode Peters Olaniran. They were thanked for their contributions and presented with a parting gift.

Ms. Melissa Dean was also thanked for her time and dedication to the Board as it was her last meeting as a representative of the NSGEU and was also presented with a parting gift.

10 Open Session – N/A

11 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on **Thursday**, June 19, 2025.

12 Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Claener, seconded by Mr. Henick, to adjourn the meeting at 12:25 am.
Motion carried.

Dr. Rod Nicholls
Secretary to the Board