

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

Friday, March 8, 2024

Following Prologue

Board of Governors Conference Room – CE339 / MS Teams

1 – 5 Opening Information/Discussion

1. Roll Call

Present:

Ms. Denise Allen (Chair), Mr. Kirk Mac Rae (Vice Chair) Mr. David Dingwall (President), Mr. Gordon MacInnis (Treasurer), Dr. Rod Nicholls (Secretary), Dr. Sahand Ashtab, Mr. Colton Burke, Mr. Sahilpreet Singh-Chatha, Mr. Michael Claener, Ms. Melissa Deane, Dr. PJ Devereaux, Mr. Kendrick Douglas, Mr. Michael Henick, Ms. Sarah Hines, Mr. Adam Jamieson, Ms. Sandra Kanchuk, Dr. Janet Kuhnke, Ms. Brandi Jean Lind, Mr. Brett MacDougall, Mr. Keith Maher, Ms. Tara Milburn, Mr. Gideon Otoibhi, Mr. Ian Parker, Mr. Darryl Poirier, Ms. Nancy Samson, Mr. Michael Sandalis, Ms. Ann Sylliboy, Mr. Steve Wadden

Regrets:

Dr. David Gerbasi, Mr. Rany Ibrahim, Ms. Harman Singh

Quorum was declared, and the meeting was called to order at 10:45 am.

Ms. Allen acknowledged that Cape Breton University is located in Unama'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people, who is 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."

Ms. Allen then welcomed the new ministerial appointments: Mr. Kendrick Douglas, Mr. Adam Jamieson, Ms. Sandra Kanchuk and Ms. Nancy Samson.

2 Minutes

2.1 - It was moved by Mr. Claener, seconded by Mr. Maher, to approve the Public Minutes of December 1, 2023. **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

Mr. Henick reported that the Senate has met on December 8th, December 15th, January 19th and February 16th. He highlighted the following from those meetings:

- a special meeting was held to discuss the pre-budget recommendations from the Planning and Review Committee,
- various new and program change proposals,
- a presentation was received on an update of the Cape Breton Medical Campus,
- a Take-Note-Debate was held on microcredentials,
- a presentation on advising with regard to Senate's Strategic Enrolment Management Committee,
- an update on CBU's network transformation process,
- Academic Committee presented proposed changes to the end of the semester, and various policy updates.

4.3 Report of the Students' Union

Mr. Singh Chatha referred to his report circulated during the meeting and highlighted the following:

- Safety and support offered to students from the Union during snowstorms.
- The various meetings held since the last meeting of the Board of Governors.
- A Town Hall was held to provide students the opportunity to voice concerns and share ideas.
- Various events were recently held, including Healthy Living Week, Women's Week, Pride Week, and Lunar New Year celebrations. Preparations are underway for the upcoming Multi-Cultural Fest.
- An online registration has been set up for a drive-home program.
- The 'Mae's Room', a dedicated breastfeeding room in the Women's Centre, was unveiled. This space provides a supportive and comfortable space for nursing mothers and recognizes the diverse needs of our student body. This initiative aims to foster an inclusive and welcoming environment for all women on campus.

4.4 Special Announcements, Questions

President Dingwall thanked the Students' Union for honouring the \$1 million donation to the Capital Campaign.

5 Financial Report

Mr. MacInnis noted that the 2024/25 Operating Budget proposal would normally be presented during this meeting. However, the lack of clarity concerning the impact of federal policy changes regarding international students seeking to study in Canada, combined with CBU's heavy reliance upon the international market, has caused a delay in bringing the 2024/25

operating budget forward for the Board of Governor's consideration. The budget is planned to be presented at the April 26th meeting.

He then referred to the Treasurer's Report to March 8, 2024, as circulated with the meeting package. Responding to comments and questions as they arose, Mr. MacInnis noted the following:

- CBU's cash position remains very healthy thanks to capital financing 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 GICs and favourable banking treasury agreements with a goal of optimizing interest earnings while maintaining fluidity of cash flow.
- The student accounts receivable balance is related to record enrolment levels at CBU for the 2023/24 FW cycle. The overdue amount was collected during the first three months of February. A significant increase in the allowance for uncollected accounts will be required 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.
- General accounts payable balances and HST receivable balances are at elevated levels due to the continued rollout of the 2023 Major Capital Program. This state of elevated balances will continue in future interim reports for the next 2-3 years.
- Liabilities relate to increased capital spending, the timing of the payroll cycle leading to a higher salary accrual, and increased balances for third-party fees driven by enrolment levels. The reported payable balance includes accrued salaries and human resource obligations, monies generated through student union fees owing the CBU Student Union, monies owing student health/dental plan carriers, monies owing regarding meal plan fees, stale-dated student deposits, campus activity fees collected to partially offset costs of student activities and normal trade/capital payables.
- Deferred operating revenue represents a net decrease attributable to the transfer of all capital funding received from the Province of Nova Scotia related to the Special Purpose Fund and increased deferred tuition revenue reflecting increased enrolment levels for the 2023/24 academic cycle.
- Expenditures are materially in line with what would be expected as part of CBU's normal business cycle and approved 2023/24 operating budget, noting the need to scale teaching and academic support services related to increased student numbers.

On the question of the Cape Breton Health Recreation Complex (the Dome), Mr. MacInnis responded that CBU is in consultation with those responsible for the operations of the complex on a communication to be circulated on its status. He also added that the deflation of the Dome was intentional and controlled in the hopes of avoiding catastrophic damage from the significant weather event that was predicted.

6 Committee Reports

6.1 Executive Committee

Ms. Allen reported that the Executive Committee met on March 7th when the Committee approved the agenda items for the meetings today. Most items discussed at that meeting were covered by agenda items, with the exception of a committee that was stuck to perform a review of the president's performance. She noted this is mandated within President Dingwall's contract and an update will be provided during the next meeting of the Board. She also said that she attended a dinner on February 27th at which Mr. Lou Maroun was inducted into the Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame.

In follow-up to a conversation during the Executive Committee meeting, Ms. Allen requested Dr. Ashtab provide details on Cape Breton University Faculty Association's (CBUFA) conversations exploring opportunities to attract potential funding for CBU. Dr. Ashtab responded that CBUFA has been in discussions with the Irving group about programming initiatives. President Dingwall suggested that Dr. Ashtab and the Vice President Academic (Provost) continue the conversation to ensure all parties are aligned.

Ms. Allen referred to correspondence from Dr. Donnie Holland, who resigned from his position on the Board of Governors. He recently received a full-time position at Cape Breton University, which precludes him from continuing his service as a Board member.

6.2 Audit Committee

President Dingwall reported that the Audit Committee met on March 1st, and he served as Interim Chair. During the meeting, Mr. Kirk MacRae was elected Chair. Mr. Chiasson from MNP, Mr. Glenn MacDonald, and Mr. Donnie Hamilton from CBU's Finance Office also joined as the 2024 Audit Service Plan was presented. The Committee also dissolved the subcommittees on Data Protection, Privacy and Artificial Intelligence, and Climate Change and created a new subcommittee on Enterprise Risk Management.

7 Items Requiring Action/Decision – N/A

8 New Business – N/A

9 Presentations – N/A

10 Open Session

President Dingwall noted that today, March 8, 2024, is International Women's Day, and he expressed his gratitude to all the women at Cape Breton University. He congratulated their many invaluable contributions to Cape Breton University and the great community.

11 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Friday, April 26, 2024.

12 Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Sing Chatha, seconded by Mr. Henick, to adjourn the meeting at 11:25 am. **Motion carried.**

Dr. Rod Nicholls
Secretary to the Board