



ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the Thursday, October 7, 2021 Meeting

Present: Michael Pautler (Chair), Mark Wendland (Vice Chair), Roberta Cauchi-Santoro, Cheri Chevalier, Mary Ellen Cullen, Cynthia Davis, Ernie Doyle, Melanie Garaffa, Anne Jamieson, Carol Ann MacGregor, Ted McKechnie, Peter Meehan, Alan Rego, Bruce Rodrigues, Toni Serafini, Andrew Turczyniak, Fr. Tim Uniac, Brendan Whittle

Resources: Mike Gourlay, Executive Director, Finance and Administration; Christine Schwendinger, Acting Recording Secretary

Guest: Sue Brubacher, Saphron Moule

Regrets: Frank Boerboom, Benjamin Mathew

The meeting was conducted using Zoom, a video and teleconference service.

OPEN SESSION

1. PRAYER & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The prayer was provided by M. Pautler.

M. Pautler provided an acknowledgement that the land on which the University resides and does business is located on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral), Anishnaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University campus is situated on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to the Six Nations, which includes six miles on each side of the Grand River. St. Jerome's University commits to the ongoing work of reconciliation.

2. CHAIR'S REMARKS

On behalf of the Board of Governors, the Chair thanked and acknowledged staff, faculty, senior leadership, and student leaders for their efforts in ensuring a smooth start to the 2021-2022 academic year. Given ongoing challenges we face, this is clear evidence of their hard work and skill and the Board is appreciative of the critical roles all have played.

The Chair welcomed Dr. Carol Ann MacGregor, who began as Vice President Academic and Dean (VPAD) on August 16, 2021, and joins the Board table for the first time. The Board looks forward to working with MacGregor. St. Jerome's University has returned to the prior structure whereby the VPAD serves as a member on the Board, as opposed to a resource person.

As previously announced, Ms. Martha Fauteux, retired Director of Campus Ministry, will be awarded the Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice. The Papal Distinction will be presented by Bishop Crosby at a ceremony at the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King, Hamilton, Ontario, November 21, 2021. The Board is happy for and proud of Fauteux on her well-deserved recognition.

Rev. Dr. David Perrin, former president of St. Jerome's University and professor of Religious Studies, officially retired on October 1, 2021. The Board wished Perrin all the best in retirement.

The Chair welcomed Ms. Sue Brubacher, who will be formerly appointed in the confidential session as the staff member on the Board.

After waiting for an appropriate opportunity, the installation date for President and Vice Chancellor Peter Meehan has now been scheduled for November 4, 2021. Bishop Crosby will

officiate the ceremony. It will be a small-scale event, recognizing public health regulations. Board members will be invited to participate; the selection of the president is one of the Board's primary responsibilities and the installation of the president is one of its major celebrations.

The Chair offered congratulations to the President, Director of Advancement and Donor Relations, and all staff who were involved in organizing the St. Jerome's Feast on October 2, 2021. The successful event featured the Honourable Graydon Nicholas as the guest speaker.

There will be a special Board meeting on October 28, 2021, to provide members the opportunity to consider, discuss, and provide comments on the draft strategic plan that will guide the University for the next five years. It is anticipated that another special Board meeting will be scheduled late January/early February to formally approve the strategic plan.

3. PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

The President reported that the University is still exercising caution. The possibility of holding larger meetings (e.g., Board of Governors, Senate Council) in hybrid mode in the new year is being looked at. St. Jerome's University is in alignment with the University of Waterloo's messaging that we are returning to normal mode by January, depending on public health regulations.

The Campus Response Team has been meeting weekly throughout the pandemic to anticipate what will happen, troubleshoot various aspects, and communicate monthly to the community with updates. We are grateful for their work. The University opened up this fall in a very prudent fashion. Similar to the University of Waterloo, 10% of our course offerings are in person. Approximately 250 students are in residence. The library is open. The worshipping community is back. Certain staff are active on campus and others and some faculty will start gradually returning, to be ready for January. Most meetings are still happening virtually, with some smaller meetings face-to-face, socially distanced. Compliance with COVID-19 regulations is looking very strong. A Town Hall was held on September 2, 2021, and the SJU Assembly will meet on October 29, 2021, to discuss the return to campus (there remains concerns about returning, e.g., those who are health compromised). We are happy to see the campus return to life.

The President thanked the Director of Advancement and Donor Relations and staff for their efforts in organizing this year's Feast of St. Jerome, held virtually on October 2, 2021. The Honourable Graydon Nicholas and the 2021 Sweeney Award winner Steven Lubczuk were the speakers. Their words were profound.

Strategic planning is in phase three of the four-phase process, which is consultation with the community on the draft plan and its goals and objectives. Feedback will be solicited from the Board, Senate Council, Administrative Leadership Group, SJU Assembly, Students' Union, and alumni.

The President introduced Dr. Carol Ann MacGregor, VPAD as of August 16, 2021. Her commitment and vision are already clear. The President invited the VPAD to provide a brief report on academic matters (a regular VPAD report will be on the agenda moving forward). The VPAD noted that faculty are designing new courses, applying for big grants, and publishing books. She is interested in seeing the completion of the strategic plan and the work of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Group, which will result in action plans that give additional direction in academic and student affairs. We are looking forward to returning to on-campus operations in January. In the Winter 2022 term, approximately 90% of our course offerings are scheduled to be in person (but we will be prepared to pivot to remote delivery if public health guidelines require us to). The VPAD commended faculty on their extraordinary creativity on making the experience positive for

students, no matter the delivery format of their course. The University will be sensitive and support our students if there are any issues with returning. Conversations are happening with Student Affairs re: the residential experience, bringing back service learning opportunities, etc. The VPAD will provide a more substantive update at the next meeting.

4. EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) UPDATE

The President's Advisory Group on EDI has reconvened after a summer hiatus with the new VPAD as co-chair. The Group has covered three of the five focus areas on EDI (campus culture, hirings, facilities are completed; curriculum/programming, outreach/marketing/recruitment to be done). The hope is to have an action plan by the end of term.

5. AGENDA REVIEW, DECLARE CONFLICTS, ADDITIONS, CHANGES

No conflicts, additions or changes.

Motion: To approve the agenda as presented.

Moved: A. Turczyniak, **Seconded:** A. Jamieson, **Carried.**

Consent Agenda

6. MINUTES OF THE JUNE 10, 2021 BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING

7. MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 8, 2021 AD HOC BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING

8. ANNUAL BOARD 2021-2022 WORK PLAN

9. ANNUAL COMMITTEE 2021-2022 WORK PLANS

10. 2021-2022 BOARD MEMBER TENURE CHART, SELF-ASSESSMENT SKILL MATRIX SUMMARY

11. UPDATE ON 2021-2022 BOARD WORKSHOP TOPIC

12. CHARTER REVISIONS:

A. FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE CHARTER

B. GOVERNANCE AND NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE CHARTER

C. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHARTER

Motion: To approve and receive for information by consent items 6 to 12 above.

Moved: C. Davis, **Seconded:** M. Wendland, **Carried.**

Regular Agenda

2. AUDITOR'S REPORT AND AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, YEAR ENDED APRIL 30, 2021

The Executive Director, Finance and Administration was invited to give the Board an overview of the auditor's report and audited financial results for the year ending April 30, 2021. The audit was completed by the University's auditors, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), and was once again fully digital (first time last year). There was good engagement with PwC and it was a smooth process. The audit was found to be clean with no issues. The financial statements note a dip in revenue due to COVID-19 (ancillary revenue was down with less students in residence and no conference activity) but investments are up with good market performance. The University also still captured revenue from students taking classes remotely. Therefore, the University is under the deficit originally budgeted (predicted \$2.4 million deficit in June 2020, and ended up being under \$1.3 million). High interest savings accounts were used and, fortunately, the University did not have to

dip into unrestricted investments to fund the deficit. The University is proud that we were able to keep the community whole in the past year with no layoffs. The University is cautiously optimistic that ancillary revenue will start to return to profitability in 2022.

The Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee noted the committee met with PwC on September 21, 2021, where the auditor presented the auditor's report and financial statements. The auditor noted they completed substantive testing with a high level of assurance and confirmed they do independently verify the various balances on the balance sheet and seek to identify any contingent liabilities. The auditors also gave very strong endorsement of the staff at the University doing this important work. The Executive Director, Finance and Administration and Director, Finance and Accounting were thanked for their very capable work, which gives the Board assurance on the finance and accounting operations at the University.

Motion: To approve the Auditor's Report and Audited Financial Statements for the year ended April 30, 2021, as presented.

Moved: M. Wendland, **Seconded:** E. Doyle, **Carried.**

3. RETURN TO CAMPUS RISK UPDATE

The President had given an overview previously in the meeting about return to normal campus operations in January. The Executive Director, Finance and Administration reported that a lot of time and energy has gone into ensuring the health and safety of those who come on campus. The Campus Response Team's ongoing work is to ensure that we are mitigating any risks as best as possible. We are going into this year feeling more confident, versus a year ago, on being able to deal with the pandemic and the protocols, even with increased activity on campus; this is primarily due to the vaccine mandate and strong compliance among the community. Feedback received indicates a general excitement to return to campus. The financial side is more positive than predicted, having not had to touch unrestricted investments. Similar to the University of Waterloo, St. Jerome's University has installed MERV-13 filters (recommended by experts) within our HVAC systems and has tested all spaces to ensure adequate ventilation.

The Board conveyed its appreciation for the great work and commitment that has been done to ensure the safety of faculty, staff, and students.

4. FINANCIAL UPDATE AND FORECAST

The Executive Director, Finance and Administration gave a financial update on the 2021-2022 fiscal budget as of September 1, 2021, highlighting student enrolment numbers, government grants, academic fees, ancillary operations, and university operations expenses. Overall, the University is tracking well on where we had forecasted to be in the budget.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Members were invited to save the date for the Board Christmas Social on December 4, 2021. The host hopes to have the event in person, depending on regulations closer to the date.

Motion: To adjourn Open Session and move into Confidential Session.

Moved: T. Serafini, **Seconded:** E. Doyle, **Carried.**

October 7, 2021
/cs

Michael Pautler
Chair of the Board of Governors