
Public Session Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, October 10, 2019
2:00 p.m. to 3:25 p.m.
Videoconference and ERC 3023

Members: Francis Garwe (Chair) (*videoconference*), Laura Elliott (*videoconference*), Kori Kingsbury (*videoconference*), Steven Murphy, Maria Saros (*videoconference*), Trevin Stratton (*videoconference*)

Staff : Jamie Bruno, Becky Dinwoodie, Cheryl Foy, Monica Jain, Lori Livingston, Olivia Petrie, Andrew Sunstrum (*videoconference*)

Regrets: Doug Allingham, Lisa Edgar

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

2. Agenda

Upon a motion duly made by K. Kingsbury and seconded by L. Elliott, the Agenda was approved as presented.

3. Conflict of Interest Declaration

There were none.

4. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first GNHR meeting of the Board year after what he hoped was an enjoyable summer. The Chair reported that he received positive feedback on the new brand over the summer. He also welcomed M. Saros to the committee. As a result of feedback provided during the annual assessment last year, the committee will be allocating more time during meetings for strategic discussions. Upon reviewing today's agenda, the committee is already off to a good start. The Chair encouraged committee members to ask questions.

5. President's Remarks

The President also welcomed everyone to the new academic year. He reported on his recent attendance at the Universities Canada (UC): Building Reconciliation Forum held at Algoma University, which he described as an incredibly powerful event. It served as a reminder that the university must continue to think about ways to be a driver of reconciliation.

The President also discussed the positive reception of the university's new brand during the Forum, since it was the first UC meeting since the rebranding. He received unanimously positive sentiments from institutions across Canada.

The President remarked that it has been a fantastic start to the year fueled by great energy. The new brand is being rolled out across the campus, as well as by the varsity teams. The university's inaugural basketball teams played their first exhibition games last week, which were well attended. Varsity athletics are playing a big role in the university community coming together. The President noted that governors attended several start-up events. The sense of community shows that the university family is here for students in good times, as well as bad.

The President shared that the new Provost and VP Research have hit the ground running, including working on updating the integrated academic and strategic research plans. The President commented on the remarkably positive feeling of start-up.

The Chair encouraged committee members to attend next year's Campus Cup event.

6. Governance:

6.1 GNHR Terms of Reference Review

C. Foy reviewed the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference, which were mostly housekeeping changes.

Upon a motion duly made by T. Stratton and seconded by L. Elliott, the Governance, Nominations and Human Resources Committee (GNHR) recommended the proposed amendments to the GNHR Terms of Reference, as presented, for approval by the Board of Governors.

6.2 By-laws Implementation Update

C. Foy advised that good progress continues to be made on the implementation of the new by-laws. The most substantive impact has been the establishment of Academic Council's Governance & Nominations Committee. She reminded GNHR that the Board has identified strengthening the relationship with Academic Council as a priority, which is reflected in the implementation plan. She responded to questions from the committee. She clarified that the use of Francis & Francis' Democratic Rules of Order is not new but was implemented last year.

6.3 Board Engagement:

(a) Board PD 2019-2020

C. Foy reviewed the proposed Board PD work plan. She discussed the upcoming Colleagues Exchange, an Academic Council strategic discussion that the Board has been invited to attend. She confirmed that the Colleagues Exchange material will be made available to governors who are unable to attend.

(b) Annual Committee Practices Assessment Development

C. Foy discussed the annual Board assessment process and advised that a committee practices assessment is going to be developed. The goal will be to implement the committee assessment this year.

(c) Board Portal Implementation Update

B. Dinwoodie provided the committee with an update on the implementation of the OnBoard portal. Overall, governors have provided positive feedback on the new portal. L. Elliott commented that she likes that all Board related information can be found in one spot.

6.4 Policy:

(a) Proposed Procedures to Investigate & Respond to Allegations of Violence, Sexual Violence, Harassment & Discrimination by Governors & Senior Leaders

C. Foy introduced the proposal to develop procedures specifically for governors and senior leaders of the university. She sought the committee's feedback on whether such a set of procedures are necessary and, if so, what approach should be taken.

C. Foy reviewed how such a complaint would be handled under the university's current procedures, which contemplate that this type of complaint would be made to a person in authority or HR. If the complaint involved a person in HR, it would be reported to the General Counsel (GC). The next step would be for HR or GC to decide on interim measures.

The proposed reporting process for senior leaders and governors would be that the President should receive complaints against members of the senior leadership team (SLT) and the Board Chair should receive complaints that implicate a governor or President. GNHR was asked to consider whether a member of the SLT should be automatically put on leave in the event of an allegation. A committee member asked how other universities would handle a similar situation. C. Foy responded that she would benchmark the policies of other institutions.

C. Foy advised that recommendation from the Navigator panel members was that when managing situations, it is better for the person against whom a complaint is made to have automatic leave because it is standard practice. If the decision to put an individual on leave is discretionary, it could put the individual against whom the complaint was made

in a worse light as it involves a degree of judgment. It is important to consider the reputational impact.

The committee members supported implementing a consistent approach of automatic leave, which acknowledges the need to conduct a preliminary investigation. The expectation would be that General Counsel would be involved in advising the President, Board Chair, or GNHR Chair on handling a complaint.

(b) Policy Against Violence, Harassment and Discrimination in the Workplace 2018-2019 Review Report

J. Bruno provided background to the annual compliance review. He advised that Student Life has been involved in the feedback process. He advised that the results of the review would be reported back in January. J. Bruno discussed the addition of Andrew Sunstrum to the team, detailing his role and responsibilities.

6.5 Strategic Discussion: Student Mental Health

O. Petrie and M. Jain delivered a presentation on the university's approach to student mental health. They responded to questions from the committee. In response to a question about whether the university partners with other institutions, M. Jain advised that the university is able to mobilize supports to help the community through Ontario Shores and other local agencies. Further, faculty members are conducting research regarding collaborating on mental health. The committee was also informed that there is a broad network of colleagues across the sector who collaborate to ensure issues are responded to in a consistent manner across institutions. O. Petrie advised that the university has a relationship with the residence and when there is an incident, the residence brings in an advisor to help support students.

7. Consent Agenda:

Upon a motion duly made by K. Kingsbury and seconded by M. Saros, the consent agenda was approved as presented.

(a) Minutes of the Meeting of May 16, 2019

8. Other Business

9. Adjournment

There being no other business, upon a motion duly made by L. Elliott, the meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m.

Becky Dinwoodie, Secretary