



BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Governance, Nominations and Human Resources Committee (GNHR)

Minutes of the Public Session of the Meeting of January 26, 2023
2:00 p.m. to 3:05 p.m. Videoconference

Attendees: Maria Saros (Chair), Laura Elliott, Mitch Frazer, Kori Kingsbury, Steven Murphy, Trevin Stratton

Regrets: Kathy Hao

Staff: Jamie Bruno, Sarah Cantrell, Sara Gottlieb, Krista Hester, Lori Livingston, Brad MacIsaac, Kimberley McCartney, Andrew Sunstrum, Lauren Turner

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and read aloud the land acknowledgement.

2. Agenda

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

3. Conflict of Interest Declaration

There was none.

4. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first GNHR of 2023. She noted several good topics on the agenda and shared that she is in particular looking forward to the Flex Work Strategy discussion.

5. President's Remarks

The President shared a number of good news stories about Ontario Tech including the success of Project Arrow at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, the University's retention as a number one research institution in Ontario and number two in Canada for its size, and the province-leading number of high school applicants recently reported. The President invited Committee members to attend a party this weekend for the classes of 2020 and 2021 who were unable to convocate live. He also noted an upcoming strategic discussion for Academic Council on governance that he will be co-leading with the University Secretary. The President closed by commenting on the unlikelihood of the province's tuition

framework being changed and the ongoing challenges that both the sector and Ontario tech face with respect to sustainability.

Mitch Frazer joined the meeting.

The Committee congratulated the President and the University on the great news stories. A short discussion ensued on application and registration rates; the President recognized the efforts of the J. Stokes in this regard. The Chancellor commented on the increase in name recognition that he sees for the University. The President agreed, noting that the University's reach has expanded with applicants now hailing from northern Ontario.

6. Human Resources

6.1 Strategic Discussion: Flex Work Strategy

J. Bruno presented the Flex Work Strategy, opening with a brief encapsulation of the genesis of the program. He highlighted a number of key considerations for flex work including equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), health and safety, space planning, and sustainability. He reminded the Committee that the planning process started two years ago and has been strongly championed by the President.

J. Bruno described the process by which positions suited to flex work were identified, and the resources that were developed to launch the pilot in March 2022. It was made clear to stakeholders that the program would be an iterative learning process. He described some of the physical office modifications made to enhance collaboration such as ideation and collision spaces. A mid-pilot pulse survey administered in November 2022 yielded high rates of response and positive feedback. J. Bruno reviewed the survey responses with the Committee, noting that they were grouped around the four objectives of the flex work pilot: (1) removing barriers to advance EDI; (2) strengthen employee engagement and a values-based approach to work; (3) support employee health and wellness; and (4) extend the University's reach into talent pools beyond traditional hiring boundaries.

Looking to the future, J. Bruno advised the Committee that developments in the province and nationally are being monitored as they pertain to flex work. He discussed the importance of meaningful interaction when on campus and the University's open-minded approach to different numbers of days in the office. He reported that the University has seen applications from new geographic regions since the strategy was implemented.

The Committee congratulated J. Bruno on a successful pilot with compelling results. The University's flexible approach to flex work was complimented. A discussion ensued on the importance of experiencing the Ontario Tech culture when working remotely and being purposeful with days in the office. In response to a question, J. Bruno clarified that participants in the pilot are administrative staff, not teaching staff. He assured the Committee that student-facing roles have been carefully reviewed to ensure that times and nature of service meet expectations.

In response to questions, a brief discussion ensued on privacy and travel. Sharing their own experiences with flex work, Committee encouraged the leadership to set clear expectations, watch carefully for eroding employee resilience, and to keep equity and fairness foci. Members also noted that some groups or employees may prefer more in-office time and to be sensitive to those nuances.

Trevin Stratton joined the meeting.

7. Governance

7.1 Consolidated Annual Human Rights Office Report

A. Sunstrum presented the Consolidated Annual Human Rights Office Report. He highlighted for the Committee two factors that have impacted the numbers reported this year: (1) the consolidation of the previously separate student sexual violence report generated by Student Life; and (2) the University's vaccine mandate. He noted for the Committee that the data appears to show an increase in student sexual violence, but it is instead attributable to the consolidation of reporting. The University's vaccine mandate was identified as significant driver of creed-based consultations. In response to a question, A. Sunstrum confirmed that the University is working towards a consistent approach to gender-based violence and harassment complaints, disclosure, and reporting. The need for an individual to assist students who disclose sexual violence has been identified and a specialist in gender-based violence joined the University in January 2022. That individual will be the central recipient of disclosure and reports from both students and employees to have a consistent approach moving forward.

8. Policy Update

8.1 Work Refusal Procedures

8.2 Procedures for Accommodating Employees and Job Applicants with Disabilities

J. Bruno provided a brief update on two Procedures, noting that the Procedure for Accommodating Employees and Job Applicants with Disabilities is unchanged, and the Work Refusal Procedures has only editorial update to align with amendments to the *Occupation Health and Safety Act*.

9. Consent Agenda

9.1 Minutes of the Public Session of the Meeting of October 22, 2022

9.2 Elections 2023 – Review of Processes and Key Dates

Upon a motion duly made by L. Elliott and seconded by S. Murphy, the Consent Agenda was approved as presented.

10. Adjournment

Upon a motion duly made by K. Kingsbury, the public session adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Lauren Turner, University Secretary