

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF GOVERNORS MINUTES
OPEN SESSION

December 4, 2014

The Open Session of the regular Board meeting was held on Thursday, December 4, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room (F303).

The following members were present:

Dr. T. Bachelder
M. Berubé (vice-chair)
M. Couchie
T. Curry (skype)
C. Dennis (chair)
G. Durnan
J. Evans
D. Forget
C. Miller (videoconference)
S. Portelli (videoconference)
B. Windsor
J. Zimbalatti
S. Minor
M. Shail
G. Black
J Kovacs
M. Saari
J. Scott
C. Burke
M. DeGagné, President & Vice-Chancellor

Board Officers: H. d'Entremont, Provost Vice-President Academic & Research
B. Keech, Vice-President Administration
C. Jenkins, Board Secretary (interim)

Guests: S Rich, C. Richardson, M. Tuncali, J. Graham, I. Hall, C. Sutton, L. Shea,
C. Phillips, K. Charron

Absent with Regrets: Y. Benoit, A. McDonald, C. Piekarski, M. Webster

WELCOME / SPECIAL GUESTS/ INTRODUCTIONS

The Board chair welcomed Kyle Charron from OPSEU.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

Resolution 2014-12-01: Moved by M. Shail, seconded by C. Burke that the minutes of the Open Session of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on October 2, 2014 be adopted as circulated.
CARRIED

CORRESPONDENCE

The Chair indicated he had received letters of concern from a faculty member and a student regarding the two recent accidental lockdowns. The letters have been drafted responding to outlining steps that are being undertaken to resolve this issue.

PRESENTATION

Dr. Sharon Rich, Associate Vice-President Academic, provided Board members with a brief outline of Tri-Council agencies, a significant source of funding for university researchers. The three agencies are: Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC); the Natural Science Engineering Research Council (NSERC); and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). Nipissing University has only recently been approved to apply for funding with CIHR.

Dr. Rich also explained that the Nipissing has qualified for four Canada Research Chairs (CRC). One is already in place and there will be an announcement in the spring regarding another appointment.

Dr. John Kovacs, faculty representative to the Board of Governors, gave an interesting presentation on his research in mangroves. He provided an excellent PowerPoint presentation that captured some of his research work into mangroves, which he pointed out is one of the most carbon rich ecosystems on the planet. Despite its value, mangrove ecosystems are one of the most threatened, being lost at a rate greater than coral reefs and tropical rainforests. The photos that were shown demonstrated how using earth observation satellite symmetry provided easier access to these areas than by foot.

Dr. Kovacs' work has had impacts in the legal, agricultural, space and mining sectors.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Colin Dennis made a brief remark on the financial challenges facing the university. He acknowledged Tom Curry who was recent recipient of a Lexpert Zenith Award in the category of Litigation – Corporate-Commercial. This award celebrates lawyers, who during 2013-14 demonstrated excellence and though leadership in an area of practice setting new standards for the profession. Mr. Curry is recognized as a leading trial and appellate counsel with a long record of success in high profile commercial litigation.

The Chair also acknowledged the President who was the recipient of the prestigious Paul Harris Award by the Rotary Club of Nipissing for his outstanding contribution to community and his belief in service above self.

The Chair made some comments on the Board Retreat. He thanked Gord Durnan for his assistance in getting the venues organized. The presentation on post SMA from the Provost VPAR was insightful. Alex Usher's presentation on *Key Trends in Higher Education in Canada* was interesting. There were lively discussions at the end of each presentation. The Chair indicated a copy of Mr. Usher's presentation was available from the Board Secretary.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

The President provided commentary of the recent restructuring announcements. He indicated it had become necessary for the university to examine key costs and to lobby the provincial government for new funding.

With regards to the job cuts, members were advised that a small group from Executive Administration consisting of the Provost VPAR, the Vice President Administration, the Associate VP Academic with advice from Human Resources, reviewed all areas of the university. The criterion used was to identify people who could cover two positions, or positions that were not deeply involved with services to students. After much analysis, 16 administrative positions were eliminated, which constituted 14 people. This comprises one-third of the management group. The President indicated that once the list was signed off by him, the job eliminations were done quickly. He reminded everyone that this was not a Board decision. Management was empowered to reduce the deficit. The projected savings in this first phase is \$2.4M.

The President indicated we are undertaking a stronger advocacy role with several Ministries. He, along with other members of the Executive Team, will be in Toronto next week visiting Queen's Park. Three meetings have been scheduled including the Premier's Office, Minister Moridi from MTCU and Minister Gravelle from Northern Development and Mines.

Summing up his remarks, the President was pleased to report that the Fall Open House had a 35% increase in attendees from last year. These attendees are potential students who visit the campus. He also had the opportunity to attend the staff awards celebration in October and acknowledge employees who have 5 to 35 years of work history at Nipissing. This shows tremendous dedication to the University.

VICE-PRESIDENTS' REMARKS

Provost Vice-President Academic and Research

The Provost VPAR reported that MTCU has sent out notification of a new process of program approval. Programs in line with SMAs will be expedited through the decision process. He was pleased to report that the Bachelor of Social Work program has made it to the 'expedited' process. The Engineering proposal is still being worked on.

The Decanal search committees have been struck, and the deadline for applications is December 12.

The deadline for budget submissions was mid-November. The Finance office is busy compiling information.

At the Senate meeting of November 14, an ad hoc committee presented four recommendations in regards to ensuring the participation of Senate and elected faculty members in the process of recommending Senior Academic Administrators. A motion was passed at Senate for the President to convey the recommendations to the Board of Governors. The President asked the Provost to comment on the recommendations.

Vice-President Administration

Bob Keech commented on the two recent lockdowns. He emphasized that they were not a test but accidental in nature. Feedback was received from faculty, staff and students and it was recognized that some people were deeply affected by these incidents. Canadore staff triggered the first alarm and Bell technicians triggered the second alarm. A new notification process with Bell the provider has been instituted so it is unlikely to occur again. A consultant has been hired to conduct a complete review and will come back with recommendations for Nipissing. It is expected that Canadore College will invest in this as well. In Brantford, the classrooms are all lockable and in Bracebridge, 50% are lockable. At the North Bay campus, 25% of the doors cannot be locked. Mr. Keech also noted that many locking systems do not adhere to fire codes. Additionally, upgrades to the PA systems are being done as well as window coverings. Once the consultant's report is received, and education campaign will be conducted for all faculty and staff. Faculty will be instructed on how safety features will work

in the classrooms and in turn, they will communicate it to the students. It is hoped that with these changes there will be some reassurances.

DEANS' REMARKS

There were no remarks from the Deans.

QUESTION PERIOD

Chief Couchie had a question regarding the Strategic Mandate Agreement and the two programs going forward. She expressed concerns regarding the community placements. The chief advised that her community had a variety of resources in the area and would like to see an Aboriginal component. The President agreed that the child welfare system has not been kind to Aboriginal people and he, along with the Provost, would like to have a progressive discussion to address concerns. A suggestion was made to forward the BSW proposal to Chief Couchie and Donna Forget.

ENROLMENT UPDATE

Jamie Graham, Assistant Vice President Institutional Planning, provided an enrolment update. The November 1 count date indicated that the forecasted FT FTE of 4696 was accurate.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee

Colin Dennis advised Board members that the Audit and Finance Committee report would be heard in the Closed Session. The Provost will also speak under Other Business regarding Biosafety.

Plant and Property Committee

Brian Windsor explained that the committee was provided with an update on construction and office renovations by David Drenth. Deferred maintenance is presently at around \$10M. This is the cost to bring a building up to the standard of a new build. The Alcan property was also reviewed.

University Governance Committee

Trevor Bachelder wished to draw attention that UGC is undertaking a Board bylaws review. An e-mail was sent soliciting input from board members, Senate members and NUSU with a deadline date for submission of December 11, 2014. No submissions have been received to date.

The Committee Chair conducted a quick poll of external Board members as to whether they would prefer a Monday morning meeting versus the current Thursday evening. External members overwhelmingly preferred Thursday evening meetings.

Two board vacancies currently exist although one will be dealt with in the Closed Session. The Chair reminded members to submit names of potential names, keeping in mind the Board's mandate to address deficiencies in fundraising and community partnerships.

Dr. Bachelder also commented on the interesting CCOU conference he attended in Toronto along with Gord Duran. He learned that Nipissing is not alone in its financial problems. All universities are competing for the same students. COU President Bonnie Patterson spoke at the conference and advised universities to be careful about differentiation as Nipissing was encouraged to specialize in education and the grants were cut by one-third. She acknowledged that Nipissing has been affected disproportionately.

Advancement Committee

Gord Duran advised members that the Advancement Committee did not meet in November. He reminded everyone that last year, the Board gave a contribution to the student aid fund. In light of Giving Tuesday, he asked members to think of commitment to community and support student programs.

BOARD REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER COMMITTEES

Academic Senate

Report included with the agenda.

Senate Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

No report.

Alumni Advisory Board

No report.

The Aboriginal Council on Education

Donna Forget announced that the ACE committee was undertaking a review of its terms of reference with the goal of providing improved guidelines for those sitting around the table.

Brantford Regional Campus

Colleen Miller and Steve Portelli reported that the international practicum placements have been assigned. Also, NUSA placed first in the Santa Claus parade. Ms. Miller was pleased to report that many students attended the open house in partnership with Laurier. The Town Hall meeting conducted by the President was well attended and appreciated.

Muskoka Regional Campus

Report included with the agenda.

Nipissing University Student Union

Chris Burke noted that this is one of the busiest times of the year as students prepare for final exams for fall semester courses. He reminded everyone that the Wall was still open.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Provost circulated a memo indicating that BioSafety is not a committee of the Board and in fact should be rescinded.

Resolution 2014-12-02: Moved by T. Bachelder, seconded by M. Berubé that the Board of Governors rescind the terms of reference for Nipissing University's BioSafety Committee (TOR approved by BOG on February 2, 2012.)
CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

The Open Session of the Board of Governors was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Secretary

Board Chair