

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF GOVERNORS MINUTES

OPEN SESSION

May 1, 2014

The Open Session of the regular Board meeting was held on Thursday, May 1, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room (F303). The following members were present:

C. Dennis, Chair
Dr. T. Bachelder
M. Berubé
Dr. M. Couchie
T. Curry (videoconference)
G. DuCharme
G. Durnan
J. Evans
C. Miller (videoconference)
S. Portelli (videoconference)
B. Windsor
J. Zimbalatti
G. deBruyn
C. Phillips
M. Shail
Dr. T. Campbell
Dr. J Kovacs
Dr. J. Scott
Dr. R. Vernescu (videoconference)
Y. Benoit
C. Burke
Dr. M. DeGagné, President & Vice-Chancellor
Board Officers: Dr. H. d'Entremont, Vice-President Academic & Research
R. Onley, Vice-President Finance and Administration
B. Keech, Vice-President Operations
S. Robineau, Board Secretary
Guests: Dr. C. Richardson, L. McLaren, J. Graham

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: R. De Bernardi, D. Forget, A. McDonald, Dr. J. Dellandrea

WELCOME / SPECIAL GUESTS/ INTRODUCTIONS

The Board Chair welcomed everyone to the annual meeting which he noted had a full Agenda. He acknowledged Colleen Miller, Steve Portelli, Tom Curry, Dr. Roxana Vernescu and Janet Zimbalatti who participated in the meeting via videoconference. Mr. Dennis extended a cordial greeting to the new NUSU representatives and welcomed Laurie McLaren's return to the university.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

Resolution 2014-05-01: Moved by G. Durnan, seconded by M. Berubé that the minutes of the Open Session of the regular meeting of the Board of Governors held on February 6, 2014 be adopted as circulated.

Carried

CORRESPONDENCE

Board members were informed that a thank you card was received from Rob Boulet, President, OPSEU, Local 608 expressing appreciation from the NU support staff for the Christmas closure. The note stated, "Our members enjoyed the time to be with family and friends and having the opportunity for some relaxation after a hectic Fall semester."

PRESENTATION

There was no presentation.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Mr. Dennis stated that the Board picture, outside the Board Room, had been updated to depict the 2013-2014 membership. Individual copies of the composite are available from the Board Secretary.

The Board Chair announced the new student representatives for 2014-2015: Yannick Benoit (NUSU President) and Christopher Burke (Vice-President External). Student observers on the Board for the next academic year will be: Ian Hall, Vice-President Internal and Christopher Piekarski, Vice-President Student Life.

Committee Chairs were asked to submit their Annual Report to the Board Secretary no later than May 19. External Board members were reminded to submit their committee selection sheets to the Board Secretary. All Board members were asked to notify the Board Secretary of any changes to their contact information so that the resumés for the Board binders could be prepared for 2014-2015.

The Board Chair noted that handouts were available at the back table including the Board Bulletin that lists events occurring at the university in May. A 2014 Convocation schedule was also provided. He encouraged Board members to attend Convocation noting how significant it was for students and guests to see Board representation. Confirmation of attendance can be expressed to the Board Secretary.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Dr. DeGagné announced that the three Vice-Presidents would be delayed in attending the Board meeting because they were listening to a COU briefing that outlined the impact of the budget on the university system.

The President shared updates from the COU meeting held recently at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay. Some of the items discussed included taking stock of the SMA process; funding formula review; major infrastructure framework; impact assessment of "Research Matters" and 2014-15 proposals. At the joint COU Executive Heads and Council meeting, online education was the major discussion topic.

The President reported that Nipissing's strategic mandate agreement (SMA) had been signed on Monday with Deputy Minister, Deborah Newman from MTCU. He outlined some of its basic elements. The Preamble states the role that the university currently performs in the university environment and how it builds on its current strengths. The Ministry has not authorized distribution yet, but is awaiting response from all universities. The President stated that all Board members would receive a copy. NU's key differentiation consists of: the Schulich School of Education; excellence in undergraduate teaching and learning; and the significant role the university plays in the community. The President explained that the strategic mandate does not offer budgets or program approvals, but it does wrestle with the issue of graduate programs. Dr. DeGagné noted that Nipissing University has been approved for additional PhD spaces.

In reference to the strategic plan, the President stated that he had received approximately eight submissions recommending changes to the copy that was circulated at the Board Retreat. The President stated that Board members would be given a revised strategic plan 10 days before the next Board meeting to allow time for review and study before the June Board meeting.

Dr. DeGagné advised Board members that he had been a judge at the Robotics Competition held at Nipissing on March 28 and 29. Nipissing University will host the event again next year since it presents a great opportunity to showcase our facilities to students and parents from across the province. The President commented on how impressed he was with the quality of the high school participants and he highly recommended that Board members attend next year's event.

Dr. DeGagné stated that no definitive information could be shared yet regarding our enrolment. He commented that the university is anxiously waiting to see how our intensive marketing efforts have paid off, but it may take a year to see fruition. Numbers released from MTCU indicate that for 2012-13, the graduation rate for Nipissing was 88.3%, the second highest in the province after Queen's University. The system total rate is 81%. The graduate employment rate at six months is 86.90% compared to the system average of 86.50%. The graduate employment rate at two years is 92.8% (system average: 92.2%).

The President reported that the Annual Donor Awards Social was held on March 14, 2014. Nipissing University will provide more than \$2 million to students in the form of academic-based and needs-based scholarships, bursaries and awards to approximately 325 students.

The 6th annual undergraduate research conference occurred on March 21 and 22, 2014. It was a very successful event with a total of 44 papers and 26 poster presentations given by Nipissing students and students from other Ontario universities.

On April 29th, Nipissing University hosted “Forest of Reading” in partnership with the Near North District School Board, Schulich School of Education, the Ontario Library Association and Whitehats to bring students from Grades 3-8 on campus to interact with 10 contemporary Canadian authors.

Nipissing University also hosted the Northern Ontario Guidance Counsellors and University Recruiters on April 30 that was attended by 34 guidance counsellors and 21 recruitment representatives from universities across the province. It was an opportunity for guidance professionals and university representatives to discuss and learn about key topics in provincial education. Dialogues were coordinated through the Ontario University Application Centre.

The President expressed his appreciation to the Vice-Presidents for their hard work in setting real targets and plans with regard to budget planning. He stated that there must be concrete efforts to return to an era of 0 budgets. Dr. d'Entremont stated that some high level discussion would occur at the next Audit & Finance Committee meeting to project ahead what can be done to achieve this goal. Greg DuCharme commended management for the seriousness with which budget deliberations were approached and for providing the important information requested by the committee.

VICE-PRESIDENTS' REMARKS

Dr. d'Entremont stated that the program prioritization process is slowly coming on with the quantitative phase (enrollments and costs) nearly complete. Scoring committees, composed of faculty members, have been set up to provide feedback on the relevance and opportunity criteria. He also informed the Board that the Northern Policy Institute held a board meeting at NU a few weeks ago. The NPI visit included a meeting of representatives of the Mathematics and Sociology departments with the NPI CEO to discuss possible research collaborations.

The VPAR reported that of the research grants proposal applications, NU has received approval for five in Science and Engineering and two in Social Sciences. He announced that the deadline for accepting university offers is June 2nd. More accurate data on admission rates for next year will be available in time for the next Board meeting.

Richard Onley informed Board members of several items reflective of what had been proposed in the recent Liberals budget. He stated that Nipissing University was recognized, along with three other universities, to be given additional funding for Aboriginal teacher education and First Generation. In addition, \$6 million was made available across the system for students with disabilities. The VPFA spoke of the cuts to Education and BIU grants; he stated that the impact NU is expecting next year will be spread out over three years. More information needs to be gathered about the interpretation; it could represent \$2.5 – 5 million dollars. The Liberals budget was not approved.

Bob Keech stated that the government had reaffirmed its previous announcement for facilities deferred maintenance. The government has increased its commitment over a five-year period which will be very helpful in fixing things that normally would have to be taken from operating grants.

DEANS' REMARKS

Dr. Richardson stated that applications to the Schulich School of Education remain open; however, she was pleased with the current numbers for North Bay and Brantford that stand at 484. Last year's figure was 503. The Dean reported on an excellent external review and commented that SSE is looking forward to a Master of Science degree program in Kinesiology. She stated that much energy and effort have been directed towards planning the implementation of a two-year BEd program. A modernized and enhanced BEd program will take effect in 2015-2016.

QUESTION PERIOD

Dr. Campbell raised a question on behalf of Dr. Geden concerning the School of Fine Arts. The inquiry was made based on a faculty report on the situation of the Jane Street building. In response to Dr. Campbell's request for an update on construction, Bob Keech stated that there is a conceptual model for the building, but progress still awaits financing. He added that there was never a plan to have the building operational by September.

Dr. Scott received clarification of the NU policy regarding Professor Emeritus. Unlike other institutions, awarding of the designation at NU adheres to strict criteria to preserve the value and significance of such an honorific title.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the decision to cancel the 2014 Board Dinner was made due to financial considerations.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee

Colin Dennis spoke briefly in reference to the meeting held on April 22. He noted that the revision to the Biosafety Terms of Reference had been returned to the VPAR for review. The Executive Committee reviewed meeting dates for next year and discussed some of the challenges in obtaining quorum for some committee meetings. It was decided to call meetings when needed, rather than schedule regular meetings. The matter was referred to University Governance to discuss both HR and Governance attendance and quorum.

The following resolutions were presented:

Resolution 2014-05-02: Moved by C. Dennis, seconded by G. deBruyn that the Board of Governors accept the recommendation of the Executive Committee to approve the list of dates for Board and Executive Committee meetings for the 2014-2015 academic year.

1 Opposed
Carried

Resolution 2014-05-03: Moved by C. Dennis, seconded by M. Berubé that the Board of Governors accept the recommendation of the Executive Committee that the firm of Valin & Partners be reappointed as Solicitor for Nipissing University for 2014-2015.

Carried

Audit & Finance Committee

Greg DuCharme stated that everyone was fully engaged in the budget process and it was patently clear that NU is taking it very seriously. The university has provided the materials needed for fiduciary oversight. Committee members received a detailed and complex model about projecting tuition revenue and detailed information on the cash reserves and accounting reserves of the university. Mr. DuCharme stated that it appears that NU has sufficient cash reserves to stem the \$12 million deficit of the 2014-2015 period. A descriptive analysis of the type of endeavours in which NU is engaged to grow out of the deficit was also provided. Administration was responsive to the committee's request for a five-year projection plan. Information was received about the inertia of the salaries that permeate the institution and other universities and the amounts generated if cuts were made. Mr. DuCharme noted that the Audit & Finance Committee is proceeding cautiously. He stated that the tide would be stemmed when we enrol another 1000 students. All budget planning has dealt with worse case scenarios. The university could be facing a deficit of \$20 million in 2015-2016 with no reserves. Much work and energy are being expended by many people on the entire budget forecast.

The following resolutions were presented:

Resolution 2014-05-04: Moved by G. DuCharme, seconded by Dr. T. Bachelder that the Board of Governors accept the recommendation of the Audit & Finance Committee that the Nipissing University Student Union Ancillary Fees be accepted as presented.

Carried

Resolution 2014-05-05: Moved by G. DuCharme, seconded by Y. Benoit that the Board of Governors accept the recommendation of the Audit & Finance Committee that the Nipissing University Ancillary Fees be accepted as presented.

Carried

Resolution 2014-05-06: Moved by G. DuCharme, seconded by G. deBruyn that the Board of Governors accept the recommendation of the Audit & Finance Committee that the Protocol Agreement Statement and Guidelines for Compulsory Ancillary Fees be accepted as presented.

Carried

Plant and Property Committee

Marianne Berubé stated that two meetings of the Plant & Property Committee had occurred since the last Board meeting. The majority of the discussions focussed on the numerous building projects at the university. She commented on the former Library space/Health Centre renovations and Phase II and III of the Centre for Physical and Health Education. She stated that no other major renovations are planned at the moment for the Fine Arts building. Any future plans for development of the facility have been deferred until funding is in place. Ms. Berubé reported that plans are progressing with regard to building a new Student Centre; NUSU is working with a local architect.

University Governance Committee

Dr. Bachelder stated that the University Governance Committee had met on March 17; he added that several Agenda topics would be reflected in resolutions presented in both the Open and Closed Sessions. Difficulty obtaining meeting times with quorum continues to be an issue for the Governance Committee.

Dr. Bachelder announced that the Board Bylaws are due for review in 2015. This will be an opportunity to complete a more thorough revision of the current document. He spoke briefly about the motion to extend the length of term for the Board Chair and noted that there is a steep learning curve for this position. The Board Chair works closely with the President. The VPAR stated that the committee charged with reviewing the Nipissing Act has proposed that the Act be revised to change Board members' term to a total of nine years.

Colin Dennis excused himself from the room for the presentation of the following resolution:

Resolution 2014-05-07: Moved by Dr. T. Bachelder, seconded by M. Berubé that the Board of Governors accept the recommendation of the University Governance Committee to revise the Board Bylaws, February 2014, Section VIII. Elected Officers of the Board. #3 Chair, second sentence to state: "The Board Chair shall assume responsibility for this role for a maximum period of three (3) years."

Carried

BOARD REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER COMMITTEES

Academic Senate

Janet Zimbalatti reported on the last two Senate meetings that she had attended. Many motions were passed to approve course changes and add new courses, the results of much work done in advance of final approval by Senate. She shared four points that had made an impression on her:

- There is an increase in cross listed courses which can be credited to more than one discipline and also other courses which may be taught by professors from different disciplines. This allows increased choice for students (within strict guidelines) and great use of university expertise.
- Consideration has been given to crafting courses which may be popular with students based on expressions of interest in the past...thus aiding in retention.
- Several course outlines mention the instructor sharing their research interests and enthusiasms.
- New programs are making their way through Senate in a series of stages e.g. Bachelor of Arts Program in Human Rights and State Violence, MSc in Kinesiology.

At each Senate meeting, senators have the opportunity to raise questions about university affairs. Recent questions were posed about Concurrent Education changes; the number of administrative staff needed; the process for program prioritization, and faculty involvement in website development. There were also questions about, and strong opinions on, following transparent processes for decisions which affect Senate business and other university affairs.

Alumni Advisory Board

Genevieve deBruyn announced that she has assumed a staff position at Nipissing and will end her term as President of the Alumni Advisory Board. She will host her last meeting of the season soon. Genevieve thanked the President for entertaining fellow Alumni at his home in Ottawa. A new President, Mark Webster, has been elected. He is a graduate of NU and is very keen to join the Board.

Aboriginal Council on Education

A written report was made available at the back table.

Brantford

Colleen Miller reported that some Brantford students have travelled to Africa and Italy for study. NUSA hosted a great carnival last month that was very successful and generated excellent community involvement. June 17 was identified as the date of Brantford's Convocation and Board members were encouraged to attend.

Bracebridge

A report from the Muskoka campus was made available at the back table. Gord Durnan stated that a bench had been created and placed on the Muskoka campus property in memory of Lindsay Wilson. Board members were informed that the third annual Muskoka Summit would be hosted at the campus on May 9 & 10. This year's theme is Environment vs. Economy and features Robert Bateman as the keynote speaker. Nipissing University will be well represented along with many high school students. Mr. Durnan stated that he had encountered three people in the community who had taken their dogs to visit students during the exam period to relieve stress.

Nipissing University Student Union

Yannick Benoit introduced the new NUSU team. He informed the Board that NUSU had decided that more representation was needed in their organization. As a result, new positions have been added including a VP Satellite, Ruth Cortez. It is hoped that she may be an observer on the Board. Yannick stated that there were many projects booked at the Wall for the summer. The NUSU President stated that a survey of the Larocque property is currently being conducted. A full reference plan for the property should be completed by October. NUSU is working with the city to have city sewer up College Drive in connection with the new building. He noted that the Wall is a big part of student life; currently the management team is working diligently with Canadore College to assemble a very solid operation agreement that will remain in effect until the new building is acquired.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolution 2014-05-08: Moved by G. deBruyn, seconded by Dr. M. Couchie that the Open Session of the Board of Governors' annual meeting now adjourn: 7:05 p.m.

Carried

Secretary

Board Chair