
Thursday, February 13, 2025, 2:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

Present: Simon Chan (Chair), Shelley Boettger, Ling Chu, Rachel Dann, Scott Davey, Catharine Dutt, Paul Elliott, Adam Grogan, Chantal Huinink, Abas Kanu, Lindsay Lawrence, Kristine Lund, Deb MacLatchy, Ken Maly, Robert McLeman, Janis Monture, Ife Odeleye, Avvey Peters, Jim Phillips, Patricia Polischuk, Michael Ras, Marc Richardson, Ken Seiling, Reina Stewart, Cynthia Sundberg, Doug Treleaven, Jin Wang

Regrets: Royce Bodaly, Chinyere Eni, Miguel Gonzalez, Nadir Patel, Peter Urquhart

Secretariat: Ana Juhik, Anna Kornobis, Anne Lukin, Phil Marfisi

A. OPEN SESSION

1. **Call to Order**, Simon Chan

- a. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest: None.
- b. Movement of Consent Items to the Main Agenda

Motion (Jim Phillips/Ling Chu): That the Board of Governors approve the Consent items listed for approval under Item C.1. Carried.

2. **Chair's Report and Meeting Roadmap**, Simon Chan

The Chair welcomed new Board members Rachel Dann, Scott Davey and Robert McLeman, joining mid-year. He noted that a new process is being piloted to allow board members to submit questions before the Board meeting, using a shared form based on the meeting agendas. The Chair also noted recent provincial Directives on Anti-Racism/Anti-Hate and on Student Mental Health, reporting that Laurier is in compliance, with some policy adjustments and enhancements to existing frameworks.

3. **President's Report**, Deb MacLatchy

The President commented on: the 100th anniversary of the Faculty of Arts; the 25th anniversary of the Brantford campus with a party and mural reveal; the 25th Anniversary of the Faculty of Science; a pause in advocacy to the provincial government during this current election period; that work on SMAs continues and is anticipated to be finalized by end of March 2025; that priorities for Laurier include advocacy on Bachelor of Education spots, unfunded STEM enrolment and Milton infrastructure; that the Council of Ontario Universities is consulting with member institutions on their priorities; appreciation for the Laurier teams who worked hard to meeting January deadlines for submissions to comply with provincial Directives; that federal advocacy is focused on international student caps, with Ontario numbers now known for provincial attestation letters (PALs);

that the Wilfrid Laurier International College (WLIC) is moving from the Brantford campus to Waterloo to help maximize marketing; that Laurier senior searches and reviews underway should be finalized by Summer 2025; and federal election fever, Trudeau stepping down, the Liberal leadership race and the proroguing of Parliament.

STRATEGIC DISCUSSION/DECISION ITEMS

4. **Strategic Research Plan**, Jonathan Newman

The VP: Research presented the Strategic Research Plan for 2025-2029 recently approved by Senate. This Plan is designed to be flexible to align with and allow for emerging research, and will help Laurier qualify for access to federal funds. Research is a critical component of the University's mission and helps shape Laurier's reputation and rankings globally. One example of leading research is a virtual reality training platform for police for incidences involving mental health. Laurier is the only approved provider for this mandatory police training, which has received funding of \$1.5M over two years.

Members discussed: commercialization as a provincial priority; opportunities to align with research in what's new; start-up company Profound Impact whose AI-based platform connects researchers with possible funding sources, noting that Laurier is a partner; and that research at Laurier does not generate a big volume of Intellectual Property.

FOR DECISION

5. **Finance, Investments & Property Committee**, Jim Phillips

a. **2025-2026 Tuition Fee Report**

The Board is mandated to approve tuition and recommended tuition fees are brought annually for approval. Members received a Fee Report outlining proposed changes for the coming year. Tuition remains frozen by the province for domestic students. Management is recommending increases to international and out-of-province tuition rates, based on market comparisons and program demand. The University can set rates for cost recovery programs and is recommending 0-10% increases for these, with no increases for non-credit courses.

Members discussed: International BBA rates, noting that the provincial increase to address tuition anomalies was for domestic tuition only; differential rates for out-of-province students, noting that while the revenue impact will not be large, the University needs to use all levers at its disposal, as the province will be looking at institutional efforts to address structural deficits; and that as tuitions increase, so do scholarship dollars.

Motion (Jim Phillips/Avvey Peters): That on the recommendation of the Finance, Investments & Property Committee, the Board of Governors approve the 2025-2026 Tuition Fee Report, as

proposed. Carried.

6. Governance Committee

a. Delegation of Authority for Convocations and Notice of Proposed Amendment to Board By-Law #1

The WLU Act mandates that the Chancellor has authority to confer degrees, with the President & Vice-Chancellor as alternate if the Chancellor is not available for a Convocation ceremony. Staff proposed a standardized delegation going forward in the event the Chancellor and President were not available, based on the presidential succession plan already approved by the Board.

If approved, staff will bring forward a proposed change to the Board By-Laws in April, to document this delegation of authority.

Motion (Ling Chu/Patricia Polischuk): That on the recommendation of the Governance Committee, the Board of Governors, in circumstances where neither the Chancellor nor President & Vice-Chancellor is available, delegate the authority to confer degrees at Convocation to a designated individual, as identified in the following order:

- **the Provost & Vice-President: Academic, or if not available;**
- **the Vice-President Research, or if not available;**
- **an individual as determined by the Board Chair in consultation with the Chancellor, President and/or AVP, Governance & Policy, where available. Carried.**

FOR DISCUSSION

7. Joint FIP/Pension, Abas Kanu, 3:00 p.m. (5 min)

a. UPP Update, Pamela Cant

The Chief Human Resources & Equity Officer reported that consent has been obtained from all members of the WLU Pension Plan to move to the sectoral University Pension Plan. Staff are moving ahead with an application to the Financial Services Regulatory Authority of Ontario, requesting that agency to approve the transition to the UPP.

8. Finance, Investments & Property Committee, Jim Phillips

a. 6-Month Fiscal Update, Zeynep Danis / Christine Dale

Staff reported that at the end of the second quarter, Operating and Ancillary performances were reporting favourable variances to the budget. A detailed report and presentation were provided.

Members discussed: gapping adjustments in salary and benefits; a higher amount spent on scholarships; that FY 24/25 is forecasted to end with a projected overall surplus of \$6.1M; and that the positive variance

is the result of a combination of one-time-only inputs, interest rates, and cumulative measures of cuts over time.

- b. 2025-2026 Budget Development Update, Lloyd Noronha/Heidi Northwood
The 25/26 budget is projected to be a deficit budget balanced through reserves. Expenses continue to be negatively impacted by inflation and collective agreements, with income constrained by the earlier tuition cut and on-going freezes while grant income remains stable. Staff reported on structural deficit challenges, essential requests for University priorities, austerity measures and budget targets of a variable 1% decrease across departments. A Budget Town Hall will update the University community, with a draft budget coming to FIP on March 20th.

Members discussed: a current balance in the operating stabilizing fund of \$11.6M which will hopefully continue to be available for 25/26; that revenue is growing by 2.8% while salaries are growing by 6.1%; and appreciation for faculty and staff across the institution for working to control the deficit.

9. **Other Business:** None.

B. IN CAMERA SESSION

Motion (Ken Maly/Paul Elliott): to move the meeting *in camera*. Carried.

C. CONSENT ITEMS

The Agenda, Minutes and items noted for Approval were approved by consent during Item A.1.b.

1. Items for Approval

- a. Agenda
- b. Minutes, Board of Governors, November 14, 2024
- c. Policy 13.5, Naming of University Assets
Motion (/): That on the recommendation of the Development Committee, the Board of Governors approve Policy 13.5, Naming of University Assets, as revised.
- d. Policy 8.17, Employee Indemnification
Motion (/): That on the recommendation of the Human Resources Committee, the Board of Governors approve Policy 8.17, Employee Indemnification, as revised.

2. Items for Information

- a. Updates on Recent Activity of the Standing Committees
- b. Government Submitted Audit Reports – Direct Loans
- c. Debt Update
- d. Q3 Summary, Investment Performance – Hub Proteus
- e. Thank You Video
- f. Report on Senate Activities, November 27, 2024 & January 27, 2025
- g. Research Funding Update

Note: If you need assistance or have a question about this agenda or the Board of Governors, please contact the University Secretariat office, by email to alukin@wlu.ca.