

## **BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY**

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APPROVED minutes of the 230<sup>th</sup> regular meeting of the Board of Governors of Athabasca University held Friday, December 15, 2017, Room 1222, AU-Edmonton.

**Present:** Vivian Manasc (Chair), Neil Fassina, Lynn Hamilton, Cheryl Hunter Loewen, McDonald Madamombe, Debby Kronewitt Martin, Sharon Anderson, Brenden Hunter, Tracey Maguire, Doug Schindel, Michael Mauws, Derek Briton, Paulette Patry, Liam Connelly, Jamie Czerwinski, Shawna Wasylyshyn and Julian Teterenko

**Governance Staff:** Carol Lund (University Secretary) and Barbara Kowalchuk (Recording Secretary)

**Others Present:** Matthew Prineas, Jennifer Schaeffer, Rick Harland, David Head, and Anixa Patel

**Absent with Regrets:** Rob Balay

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 8:39 A.M.

### **1.0 Approval of Agenda**

#### **1.1 Approve Agenda for Meeting 230**

**230-1 MOVED** That the Board of Governors approves the agenda as amended for Meeting 230, and thereby approves the consent agenda as amended including the minutes of meeting 229, held September 15, 2017.

#### **Madamombe/Hunter Loewen**

Amendments:

- Consent Agenda Item CA3 is removed from the consent agenda and placed on the meeting agenda as item 3.1
- Consent Agenda Item CA8 is removed from the consent agenda and placed on the meeting agenda as item 3.2
- Consent Agenda Item CA9 is removed from the consent agenda and placed on the meeting agenda as item 3.3

**Carried**

### **2.0 Conflict of Interest**

#### **2.1 Conflict of Interest Statement**

Subject to the Conflict of Interest Guidelines set out in the Code of Conduct and Ethics for Members of the Board of Governors of Athabasca University, and the Board of Governors of Athabasca University General By-laws, members were asked to declare any conflict they may have with respect to particular agenda items contained within the meeting agenda.

No conflicts were declared.

### **3.0 Business Arising from the Consent Agenda**

### **3.1 Report of the Chair – Audit Committee**

Clarification was provided regarding the deferral of three internal audits to the next audit year leading into the transition to the new internal audit model. It was noted that although these audits were being deferred, a number of activities have taken place in support of these areas. It was further noted that the internal audit prioritization process will also be reviewed over the next few months to ensure it is in line with current planning.

The members also discussed the two remaining external audit recommendations (Office of the Auditor General) and received a status update from management.

### **3.2 Brand Communications Strategy**

The members reviewed the Brand Communications Strategy and provided feedback. The “Athabasca University Core Story” as contained in the strategy document was discussed and members expressed their support for how it encapsulates the essence of who we are and how we see ourselves in the world.

### **3.3 Strategic Enrolment Management Indicators**

The members reviewed the report and discussed undergraduate student satisfaction rates, the number of new applications in relation to the interest, as well as the increase in first time visits. Clarification was also sought from management regarding the existing application fee.

### **4.0 Report of the Chair**

Further to the written report, it was noted that a Board Orientation session will be held in January.

### **5.0 Report of the President**

Further to the written report, the President provided a PowerPoint slide as a visual representation of the current state and progress made to date in terms of institutional planning. He further provided an overview of historical activities, as well as a summary of current priorities, advocacy, government reviews and legislative changes.

In response to inquiries, clarification was provided in regard to the ongoing course and program review, the status of the implementation of recommendations made in the Third Party Review Report as well as the reaffirmation of Athabasca University’s accreditation with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education . The members also provided feedback in relation to the proposed changes for convocation 2018.

### **5.1 Accountability Dashboard**

It was noted that the format and content of the report would change moving forward to reflect the new strategic plan “Imagine – Transforming Lives, Transforming Communities”.

### **5.2 2nd Quarter Variance & Year-End Forecast Report**

It was noted that a recommendation had been brought forward from the Finance & Property Committee to reinstate the \$180 undergraduate Learning Resource Fee effective January 1, 2018, and should this be approved by the Board (agenda item 7.2 on the Board agenda) it would have an impact on the year-end projections.

## **6.0 Student Reports**

### **6.1 Athabasca University Students' Union (AUSU) Report**

The members noted the importance of endorsing the activities of AUSU regarding the position policy on tuition tax credits. The President advised that institutions are in support of this item, and further that it has been discussed with government.

### **6.2 Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association(AUGSA) Report**

The members discussed AUGSA's top priorities and opportunities as identified in the report.

## **7.0 Action Items**

### **7.1 Approve Athabasca University Strategic Plan – “Imagine: Transforming Lives, Transforming Communities”**

**230-02 MOVED** That the Board of Governors approves the “Imagine: Transforming Lives, Transforming Communities” strategic plan.

**Kronewitt Martin/Wasylyshyn**

**230-03 MOVED** That the Board of Governors moves to an In Camera session with management to discuss Item 7.1.

**Mauws/Teterenko**

**Carried**

*During the In Camera session it was proposed that the question be called on Motion 230-02. Members were advised that they must exit the In Camera session prior to the question being called.*

**230-04 MOVED** That the Board of Governors exits the In Camera session with management.

**Mauws/Teterenko**

**Carried**

The Chair called the question on Motion 230-02.

**Carried**

**Opposed – Hamilton, Schindel, Hunter Loewen, Kronewitt Martin, Teterenko and Mauws**

**Abstained – Hunter and Anderson**

### **7.2 Approve Undergraduate Learning Resource Fee effective January 1, 2018**

**230-05 MOVED** That the Board of Governors approves the reinstatement of the \$180 undergraduate Learning Resource Fee, effective January 1, 2018.

**Mauws/Hunter Loewen**

The members discussed this item at length noting as part of the 2017-18 budget, the Board had approved a reduction in the undergraduate learning resource fee from \$180 to \$130, effective January 1, 2018 as part of an overall budget initiative to split course material costs from the learning resource fee. It was noted that the effective date of January 1, 2018 has been determined

to be infeasible and the recommendation is to reinstate the \$180 fee effective January 1st, and further if a course has no third-party learning resources, an automatic \$50 learning resource fee refund would be issued.

It was further noted that the plan is still to achieve the outcome that we originally agreed to (a reduced learning resource fee coupled with choice for students as to where they purchase their course materials) and the proposed motion is about finding the best alternative in the mean time.

Member Wasylyshyn acknowledged the work that had been undertaken to date, however spoke in opposition to the proposal.

Members continued to discuss the proposal in terms of timelines, risk, sustainability, institutional reputation, as well as assurances that this project will be given a top priority.

**Carried**

**Opposed – Wasylyshyn, Teterenko**

**8.0 Other Business**

**9.0 In Camera Session – Members Only**

**9.1 Motion to Move In Camera**

**230-07 MOVED** That the Board of Governors moves to an In Camera session (Members Only).

**Mauws/Schindel**

The President exited the meeting. The University Secretary was asked to remain in the room.

**Carried**

**9.2 Motion to Exit In Camera**

**230-08 MOVED** That the Board of Governors exits the In Camera session.

**Madamombe/Schindel**

**Carried**

**10.0 Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 P.M.