



BOARD NOTES

St. Francis Xavier University Board of Governors
February 20 & 21, 2020

The Board of Governors met on Thursday and Friday, February 20 & 21, 2020. The following is a summary of proceedings at the meetings.

On February 20th the Board participated in a workshop focused on board governance led by Maureen Reid from Boardworks Consulting.

On February 21st the Board proceedings included the following items.

President's Report:

President Wamsley updated the Board on a number of topics:

- Looking at \$1.7 million deficit for the current fiscal period
- 2020-21 Budget preparation is still in progress. Initial drafts of the budget showed a deficit of \$5.6 million. Through a combination of revenue increases and expenditure reductions, this has now been reduced to approximately \$1.7 million.
- Enrolment is strong again this year in both undergraduate and graduate programs.
- We are monitoring the situation in China as it may have a detrimental impact on enrolment.
- Mulroney Hall project is moving slowly towards completion.
- We have been approached by both Federal and Provincial representatives regarding our interest in considering a bio-mass option for our central Heating plant.
- Health Building – continue to finalize the paperwork with our core donor, so that we may begin our asbestos work on Lane Hall
- We have had an incredible season of campus events and speakers this year. Of recent note was an undergraduate Physics and Astronomy conference featuring: a Nobel Prize winner, a prestigious Wolf Prize winner in Physics, and a NASA Engineer who is one of the foremost advocates for women in Science.
- We have just formed a University Sustainability Committee comprised of on-campus and external partners to address the climate crisis with campus initiatives
- Recently met with our regional partners, the Town, County, and Paqtnkek First Nation to develop strategies for addressing the climate crisis regionally. Some quick hits for this group will be a large scale project to mitigate household flood risks. A second project brings the Clean Foundation to campus to develop a volunteer base for nature-based solutions for shoreline restoration and third, we will soon be hosting an electrical vehicle fair on campus
- On February 1, we rolled out our new Sexual Violence Policy – and we have been educating our students and staff on the changes to that policy.
- Dr. Wamsley is heading up a Task Force on University Sport Culture to deal specifically with issues in the conference and to make recommendations to the AUS Board to strengthen the AUS office

- On recommendation of the Student Union alterations have been made to the format of the house hockey cups. There will now be two building based tournaments (male & female), the Father Gary MacPherson and Sister Jovita MacPherson cups respectively.
- Our new VP Students, Elizabeth Yeo is working with residence staff and students to make changes to residence culture for 2020-21.
- The Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents is close to submitting an ask to the Province to specifically address the long term issues of deferred maintenance and infrastructure renewal, in addition to support for the costs associated with conducting comprehensive accessibility audits on our campuses for 2020-21 and an ask to increase our base budget allotment above 1%.

2019-20 OPERATING RESULTS

Mr. Andrew Beckett, Vice President Finance & Administration presented the most recent financial projections for the 2019-20 fiscal year based on actual results to the end of December, 2019. The projected deficit for the year now stands at \$1.7 million. Mr. Beckett discussed the factors that had contributed to the projected deficit growth from the \$700,000 deficit reported to the Board in December.

2020-21 OPERATING BUDGET

Mr. Beckett noted that preparation of the 2020-21 Operating Budget is continuing. Currently, the projected deficit for operations is (\$1,237,000) and the projected deficit for Ancillary is (\$845,000) for a net overall deficit of (\$2,082,000). Efforts to achieve a balanced budget are on-going with approximately \$300,000 in additional cost reductions having been identified thus far.

STUDENT SERVICES UPDATE

Ms. Elizabeth Yeo, Vice President Students introduced herself to the Board and provided an overview of her background and experience related to the student services area.

ENROLMENT UPDATE

Dr. Tim Hynes, Acting Academic Vice President & Provost presented an update on student enrolment for the 2020-21 Academic Year.

- Undergraduate applications are up 9% from previous year
- Confirmations are up approximately 28% from the prior year
- Applications for all major degree programs, with the exception of Nursing, are up
- Applications for new programs (BA PGov, BASc CLEN) are continuing to grow and the BASc Health program continues to be popular
- Direct from High School applications are up 36% across all regions
- Residence applications from first year students are up significantly consistent with the increased direct from high school numbers.

ADVANCEMENT UPDATE

Mr. Murray Kyte, Vice President Advancement reviewed information related to the results being achieved as a result of the increased investment in the Development area over the past 2 years. Information was provided on: New Commitments/Pledges, Total Gifts received; Planned Giving, Alumni Participation and Alumni giving by gift size

COLLEGIAL GOVERNANCE

The four faculty representatives on the Board delivered a presentation on collegial governance. The Faculty members noted that their goals for the session were to build a shared understanding about collegial governance and how it informs the activities and operations of the University

STUDENT UNION REPORT

Cecil VanBuskirk, President of the Student Union and Will Fraser, Chair of Council presented a draft Student Consultation Agreement to the Board. Under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between the University and the Province, we are required to have a Consultation Framework in place by March 31, 2020. The University has had a Student Consultation Agreement in place with the Student Union since March of 2016. The Agreement expired at the end of February 28, 2019

The Board approved the recommendation of the Executive Committee that the Student Consultation Agreement between the University and the Student Union be approved as presented and that the President and Vice President Finance & Administration be authorized to sign the Agreement.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION REPORT

Marc Rodrigue, President of the Alumni Association provided an update on activities of the Association including Chapter Events and actions taken to address insurance coverage for the Association and Alumni events.

Committee Reports:

The Board's Committees presented reports on their activities and motions were passed on the following matters:

- On recommendation of the Governance & Nominating Committee Ms. Karen Gardiner, Ms. Sylvia Paris, and Chief Andrea Paul be appointed to the Board for a three year term commencing July 1 2020.
- On recommendation of the Investment Committee, the Board indemnify the Schwartz School Investment Society and the Society's members "for all acts done in the lawful execution of their duties" as provided for in Article XIV(e) of the University's By-Laws.