

# Minutes of a meeting of the USask Board of Governors

**April 29, 2020**  
**Via Teleconference**

**Present:** Shelley Brown (chair), Joy Crawford, Grant Devine, Jay Kalra, Ritu Malhotra, Grit McCreath, Regan Ratt-Misponas, Peter Stoicheff

**Resource Officers:** Karen Chad, Greg Fowler, Debra Pozega Osburn, Tony Vannelli, Melissa Just, Chelsea Willness (secretary)

**Also in attendance:** Cheryl Carver, Terry Summers, Wade Epp, Dara Hrytzak, Sheena Tait-Rowan

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## 1. Roll Call

The secretary conducted a roll call, as the meeting was conducted via teleconference due to COVID-19 physical distancing protocols. The meeting was called to order by the chair at 9:03 am, noting that the meeting was properly constituted for the transaction of business, with the chair as chair and the university secretary as secretary.

## 2. Identification of Conflicts of Interest

The chair called on members to identify any conflicts of interest. A Board member declared a potential conflict of interest but the circumstances were deemed acceptable by the Chair and Board.

## 3. COVID-19 update

### 3.1 President's remarks

President Stoicheff thanked the board for making time for a special meeting and acknowledged the need for updates and more regular information sharing given the COVID-19 circumstances. He acknowledged that many Board members are also spending extra time outside of Board meetings, serving the university in other capacities.

A number of highlights regarding the university's response to the pandemic were provided, including the work of the Crisis Management Team (CMT) and Crisis Operations Team (COT); the university's successful move to entirely remote delivery of winter courses/exams; and spring/summer terms to be entirely remote.

President Stoicheff further noted that all pandemic related decisions have been made in line with the SHA and the Chief Medical Officer; and the university has been working closely with all levels of government, as well as accreditation bodies/boards, and other Saskatchewan post-secondary institutions.

### 3.2 COVID-19 financial update

VP Finance & Resources, Greg Fowler, introduced the item, stating that the purpose was to provide interim reports that will give the Board some early estimates of COVID-19 impacts. His team is continuing to forecast and manage the circumstances as they unfold. Modeling will be continually refined and updated. They are also reviewing operational budgets and multi-year plans from Responsibility Centres, and are seeing good progress.

#### **4. Increase to operating line of credit**

VP Finance and Resources introduced the agenda item, noting that the university normally relies on investment income to support cash flows during lower revenue periods, but that we do not want to withdraw due to investment losses given the circumstances. In addition to normal cash flow fluctuations, we anticipate other reductions in cash flow because we are not charging late fees to students, and we are providing more outflow in student supports.

The university is asking for approval to authorize a revolving credit facility.

The following resolution was moved and seconded.

**That the Board of Governors approves the credit resolution authorizing the Vice-President, Finance & Resources to negotiate a revolving demand credit facility.**

**CARRIED  
(one abstention)**

#### **5. Learning Management System (LMS) renewal project**

VP Fowler stated that the current LMS, "Blackboard," is near the end of its cycle, and there is increased need for enhanced online platform. Therefore, the university needs to move up the implementation of this system due to the circumstances created by the COVID pandemic. There is a project team working with colleges and schools to develop appropriate implementation process for them.

The following resolution was moved and seconded.

**That the Board of Governors approves the Learning Management System Renewal project.**

**CARRIED**

#### **6. Kenderdine Campus**

Associate vice-president Services, Wade Epp, reported that the Montreal Lake First Nation was extremely pleased about the support from the university and Board regarding the cabins that were allocated to them; they are using them for housing. It has been an incredible benefit for their community, and the process is almost completed.

The recommended action is to demolish the dining hall to mitigate safety concerns. Once restrictions are relaxed, this site would be accessible to the public, and we need to have it removed before summer. There is no capability to renovate it. There is an iconic copper chimney that we will be attempting to preserve, if possible.

VP Fowler indicated that the site is used mostly for nature walks, and that the campus itself is not used for any sort of residence or dining facilities.

The following resolution was moved and seconded.

**That the Board of Governors approves the demolition of the dining hall at Kenderdine Campus.**

**CARRIED**

**7. Appointment of Dean, College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies**

Provost and VP Academic, Tony Vannelli spoke to this item. He stated that the document provided for the Board outlines the recommendation of Dr. Debra Burshtyn as the next Dean of CGPS.

This following resolution was moved and seconded.

**That the Board of Governors approves the appointment of Dr. Debra Burshtyn as Dean, College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for a five-year renewable term effective July 1, 2020.**

**CARRIED**

The Chair noted the next meeting date of June 3 2020, and that the Minister has requested time on the July 6/7 2020 agenda. The Chair then requested a brief in-camera session.

**The meeting was adjourned to in-camera at 10:23 am.**