



NORTHERN ALBERTA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Minutes of the One hundred and Sixtieth regular meeting of the Board of Governors

Tuesday, December 8, 2020
4:00 to 7:00 pm

Via Microsoft Teams Meeting

Members	Ray Pisani (Chair)	Valerie Berger (Vice Chair)	Laura Jo Gunter
Present:	Vi Becker	Tara Chahl	Jamie Corfield
	Elise Holden	Yasmin Jivraj	Priti Laderoute
	Alessandra Medeiros	Kris Mauthe	Andy Neigel
	Janet Riopel	Marlea Sleeman	Paul Verhesen
	Kristina Williams	Pan Zhang	
Resources:	Dr. Sue Fitzsimmons	Sandra Marocco	
	Clayton Davis	Jeff Dumont	Michael Haworth
Regrets:	Dr. Annemarieke Hoekstra		
Recorder:	Sandy Timmer		

1 CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Ray Pisani welcomed Board members to the second board meeting of the 2020-21 academic year. The meeting was again held virtually for everyone's health and safety as the Covid-19 cases continue to climb in Alberta and especially in Edmonton.

Mr. Pisani welcomed Mr. Michael Haworth to the meeting as NAIT's new Chief of Staff. Mr. Haworth has been seconded from his role as an Organizational Development Consultant to take on this new position. He will be working closely with Ms. Gunter and the Executive Management team.

As the global pandemic continues to affect how we work in our daily lives as well as at NAIT, there will continue to be minimal activity on campus with only students and staff who need to be here attending for those specific purposes. There have been cases of COVID-19 on campus; however, the cases have not been linked so the risk to NAIT staff and students on

campuses remains assessed as low. The Board is being kept apprised of the status of cases on campus.

NAIT will continue to provide classes primarily online for the Winter 2021 term to minimize on-campus activity.

Mr. Pisani briefly touched on the Alberta 2030 post-secondary review that has been undertaken by the Government and noted that the consultant's report is anticipated towards the end of this year. He thanked Ms. Gunter and Executive Management for their input into the roundtable discussions on this project to ensure the message of the value of polytechnic education and applied research was received and understood. NAIT will play an essential and critical role in helping Alberta's economic recovery.

It was noted that the pandemic continues to impact Alberta's economy and the provincial budget. We will wait to hear from the Government if there are further budget cuts forthcoming.

The key items for the Board's vote at this meeting are the approval of the Annual Report and the approval of the refreshed Campus Development Plan. The campus plan has been updated to reflect some significant changes we have experienced since it was last reviewed by the Board in 2019. Mr. Pisani also noted the motions contained in the Consent Agenda.

There are presentations from Stantec on the refreshed Campus Development Plan, from the Chair of the Campus Development Committee on the many priorities that committee is dealing with, and a presentation on the Collegiate project to update the Board on what stage the planning for that project is at.

Mr. Pisani then moved into the formal part of the agenda.

1.1 Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Pisani asked if Board members wished to declare a conflict of interest with any items on the agenda for today's meeting. No conflicts were raised. There were no changes made to the agenda.

Moved by Janet Riopel that the agenda be approved as presented.

Carried

1.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on October 16, 2020

Moved by Andy Neigel that the minutes of the Meeting of October 16, 2020 be accepted as presented.

Carried

1.3 Business Arising from Minutes

There was no business arising from the previous meeting.

2 CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 Accepting Minutes and Receiving Committee Reports

Board of Governors Meeting – December 8, 2020

It was requested to move item 2.1.4.1 (Automotive Service Technology Diploma) from the Consent Agenda. This item becomes Item 2.2 on the agenda.

2.1.1 Academic Council – Minutes of the Meeting on November 16, 2020 *(Item 4.1.1)*

2.1.2 Academic Council – Termination of the Medical Transcription Certificate Program *(Items 4.1.2 – See Appendix A)*

Moved by Laura Jo Gunter that the Medical Transcription Program (certificate) be recommended for termination by the Board of Governors effective July 1, 2021.

2.1.3 Academic Council – Nanotechnology Systems Name Change *(Item 4.1.3 – See Appendix B)*

Moved by Laura Jo Gunter that Academic Council accepts the name change for the Nanotechnology Systems Diploma program to be changed to “Nanosystems Engineering Technology” and recommends approval by the Board of Governors.

2.1.4 Academic Council – Minutes of the Special Meeting on November 24, 2020 *(Item 4.1.4)*

2.1.4.2 **Advanced Welding Technology Diploma**

Moved by Laura Jo Gunter that the Board of Governors approve the proposed Advanced Welding Technology (diploma) program effective July 1, 2021.

2.1.4.3 **Advanced Plumbing Technology Diploma**

Moved by Laura Jo Gunter that the Board of Governors approve the proposed Advanced Plumbing Technology (diploma) program effective July 1, 2021.

2.1.4.4 **Electrical Installations Technology Diploma**

Moved by Laura Jo Gunter that the Board of Governors approve the proposed Electrical Installations Technology (diploma) program effective July 1, 2021.

2.1.5 Campus Development Committee - Minutes of the Meeting on November 17, 2020 *(Item 4.2.1)*

2.1.6 Campus Development Committee – Naming Grids and Donor Recognition *(Item 4.2.2 – See Appendix C)*

Moved by Paul Verhesen that the Campus Development Committee recommend that the Board of Governors approves the Donor Recognition as presented.

2.1.7 Board Executive Committee – Minutes of the Meeting on October 20, 2020 *(Item 4.3.1)*

2.1.8 Board Executive Committee – Minutes of the Meeting on November 9, 2020 *(Item 4.3.2)*

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- 2.1.9** External Relations Committee – Minutes of the Meeting on November 12, 2020
(Item 4.4.1)
- 2.1.10** Audit Committee - Minutes of the Meeting on November 24, 2020 (Item 4.5.1)
- 2.1.11** Audit Committee - Compliance Certificate—July 1-September 30, 2020 (Item 4.5.2)
- 2.1.12** Finance Committee - Minutes of the Meeting on November 24, 2020 (Item 4.6.1)
- 2.1.13** Finance Committee - Quarterly Financial and Investment Report for the Quarter Ended September 30, 2020 (Item 4.6.2)
- 2.1.14** Governance Committee - Minutes of the Meeting on November 12, 2020 (Item 4.8.1)
- 2.1.15** Governance Committee – Approval of the Terms of Reference for each of the: Board Executive Committee, Campus Development Committee, External Relations Committee, Executive Committee of the Board, Audit Committee, Finance Committee, Governance Committee, and Human Resources Committee (Item 4.8.2 – See Appendix D)

Moved by Yasmin Jivraj that the Board of Governors approves the Terms of Reference for each of the Board Executive Committee, Campus Development Committee, External Relations Committee, Audit Committee, Finance Committee, Governance Committee, and Human Resources Committee.

- 2.1.16** Human Resources Committee - Minutes of the Meeting on November 10, 2020
(Item 4.9.1)

Moved by Vi Becker that the HR Committee recommends the Board of Governors approves the Negotiations Guidelines 2020/2021 as presented.

Moved by Vi Becker that the Consent Agenda items be approved as presented with Item 2.1.4.1 removed to become agenda item 2.2.

Carried

2.2 Automotive Service Technology Diploma

It was noted that the FLE number for this program is below the breakeven point and if it is intended to start below the breakeven point and expect registration to increase. The response indicated that NAIT is moving quickly on the launch of these new diploma programs because of this opportunity from Government. It was acknowledged that while there is some risk with the FLE count below the breakeven point, it is anticipated that these programs will grow in a reasonable amount of time, and the risk is acceptable. The intent is that these programs will grow past the breakeven point.

Moved by Laura Jo Gunter that the Board of Governors approve the proposed Automotive Service Technology (diploma) program effective July 1, 2021.

Carried

3 NAIT EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT REPORTS

3.1 Office of the President and CEO

3.1.1 President's Activities

3.1.2 Strategic Plan

Ms. Gunter spoke to the key highlights in her report. She noted that the COVID numbers on campus are still considered low and notwithstanding the possible linked cases on the Men's hockey team, no other cases have been linked. We have not yet received a confirmation from AHS that the cases on the hockey team are linked and they are coming out of quarantine shortly.

There were no questions for Ms. Gunter on her report.

3.2 VP Academic and Provost

Dr. Sue Fitzsimmons briefly commented on her report. She pointed out the academic direction described in her board report with a document called, "Shining a light on the road we're on" which will also feed into our strategic planning. The document specifies the intention to create a purposeful blend of virtual and physical teaching in reimaging polytechnic education.

We continue to do a significant amount of outreach for Winter term enrolment with a more sophisticated and planned approach with students as they move through the "student funnel".

No questions were raised for Dr. Fitzsimmons on her report.

3.3 VP Administration and CFO

Mr. Jeff Dumont touched on highlights from his report and commented on two key areas in his report. The first was the budget and with the change to the year-end to March 31, work has already begun on our budget which is earlier than previous years. This will provide a good sense of where NAIT is at with the transformative changes that took place in early 2020. As well, the COVID pandemic has created much uncertainty and many unexpected pressures on the budget for the short-term as well as some new long-term changes. The pandemic continues to impact the Province's budget and as a result, there may be further cuts for funding coming from the Government.

As noted earlier, the refreshed Campus Development Plan will be presented in today's meeting and NAIT's new Associate Vice President Facilities Management and Development has been working with Stantec on the revisions to the Plan. The Plan is a framework and we will continue to respond to the many changes we are experiencing at this time and into the future.

No questions were raised for Mr. Dumont.

3.4 VP Industry Partnerships and CMO

Ms. Sandra Marocco referenced two items from her report for the Board's attention. Ms. Marocco was pleased to note that NAIT received a generous \$1M endowment from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous, which is to be used for scholarships for students pursuing technology programs.

The second item for the Board's attention Ms. Marocco pointed out is that her area is paying attention to NAIT's brand attribute of trust and how trust is holding up during these difficult times. It was noted that there is some decline in social sentiment that her department is taking heed of. Some of the decline is related to budget cuts and the shift to online learning and some of the challenges students have had with this form of learning. This will be something that Ms. Marocco's department will be focusing on.

There were no questions for Ms. Marocco.

3.5 Executive Director, Human Resources

Mr. Clayton Davis was pleased to report that NAIT has, for the 10th consecutive year, been recognized as one of Alberta's top employers. This is great news as it has been a challenging year for staff working through the changes caused by the pandemic. That being said, we are mindful to ensure staff have access to many platforms and resources for mental health awareness. There has been a strong uptake on the "headversity" mental health app. We continue to look for other supports and resources in mental health for our staff as well as students.

Mr. Davis' report noted that NAIT's culture is also shifting as staff adjust to working from home and we will likely see that continue once the pandemic is over. Preparations are underway for the transition to back to the workplace; however, it is anticipated there will be some staff who will work both from home as well as at the office.

Board members briefly discussed Mr. Davis' report with him.

Moved by Andy Neigel that the written Executive Management reports be accepted for information.

Carried

4 COMMITTEE REPORTS

4.1 ACADEMIC COUNCIL

- Written Committee Chair's Summary Report as attached

4.2 CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- Written Committee Chair's Summary Report as attached

4.3 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD

- Written Committee Chair's Summary Report as attached

4.4 EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

- Written Committee Chair's Summary Report as attached

4.5 AUDIT COMMITTEE

- Written Committee Chair's Summary Report as attached

4.5.2 Annual Report 2019-2020

Ms. Kristina Williams briefly commented on the Annual Report for the Board's consideration and approval. Management will provide a presentation on the Annual Report. Ms. Williams thanked management and the Finance team for all of their hard work to prepare the Annual Report especially during this time of remote working. Ms. Williams noted that the financial statements were approved by the Board at its meeting on October 16th for inclusion into the Annual Report.

A draft of the Annual Report was presented to the Audit Committee at their recent meeting and it is now being presented for the Board's approval. Ms. Williams invited Mr. Jeff Dumont and Ms. Carole Laplante, AVP of Corporate and Financial Services, to speak to the presentation.

Mr. Dumont advised that the Annual Report is a requirement set out in the *Post-secondary Learning Act* (PSLA) for all post-secondary institutes to complete and send to the Ministry. The Annual Report speaks to the outcomes of the objectives set out in the 2019-20 Comprehensive Institutional Plan (CIP). The CIP will no longer be a document required by Government as it is being replaced by the Investment Management Agreements (IMA) going forward. The Annual Report also sets out NAIT's 13 priority initiatives which also aligns with the five strategic priorities of the Provincial Government.

Ms. Laplante then provided an overview of the financial information and key highlights in the Annual Report. Some of the highlights that were completed which Ms. Laplante noted were:

- Increased support for students identified as at-risk withdrawal or probation
- NAIT's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy was created and launched
- The admissions practices were strengthened to support purposeful growth and operational excellence
- New programs were approved in Cybersecurity and Data Analytics
- The development of NAIT's polytechnic teaching model was completed

Also noted were the goals achieved within the Applied Research portfolio that include:

- Launched the Centre for Grid Innovation and Centre for Applied Disaster and Emergency Management
- Established two NSERC-funded Technology Access Centres (Plant and Seed Technologies, Oil Sands Sustainability). NSERC is the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council which is the major federal agency responsible for funding natural sciences and engineering research in Canada.

- Supported plastics research efforts in partnership with Inter Pipeline Ltd. and Plastics Alliance
- Increased total revenue across applied research by 28% from \$10.4 million in 2018/19 to \$13.3M in 2019/20

Ms. Laplante spoke to the FLE count for the institute and noted that there was a slight increase in the degree, diploma, and certificate programs. FLE counts in apprenticeship continue to struggle mostly due to the challenges facing Alberta's economy. The Apprenticeship and Industry Training (AIT) Board controls the number of apprenticeship seats NAIT is able to offer.

Despite the disruption with the move to online learning for students since March 2020, overall, students continue to be satisfied with the education they are receiving at NAIT and rate their satisfaction in the high 90s.

Ms. Laplante noted that in early 2020, NAIT was on its path to working towards financial sustainability with the transformative changes that were planned. With the onset of the global pandemic, that greatly impacted the changes that were underway and caused NAIT to make further cuts to staff and services. With the reduction in the grants NAIT was receiving from Government and a reduction in enrolments with the uncertainty for students to travel to Edmonton, revenues decreased significantly. However, expenses continued and NAIT was also greatly impacted by unexpected severance costs with the additional staff reductions that were made.

Mr. Dumont reiterated that COVID-19 continues to have a significant impact to NAIT's budget. As it has also had strained the provincial economy, it is anticipated that further budget cuts may be forthcoming. The funding NAIT has received from Government has not kept pace with the costs of instruction and enrolment. However, enrolment is a still key financial driver for the institute. Also to be considered is competition for staff and retaining talent while facing pressures from Government to bring salaries down.

Mr. Dumont concluded that while NAIT continues to work through the challenging effects of the pandemic and Alberta's economy, management also continues to look for opportunities to improve how we operate and ways to increase revenue.

No questions were raised for Mr. Dumont or Ms. Laplante.

Moved by Kristina Williams that the Audit Committee recommend to the Board of Governors the approval of NAIT's Annual Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020 with such non-substantive changes that management of NAIT considers necessary or advisable.

Carried

4.6 FINANCE COMMITTEE (Kristina Williams)

- Written Committee Chair's Summary Report as attached

4.7 FOUNDATION TRUSTEES (Kristina Williams)

The Foundation did not meet this quarter.

4.8 GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (*Yasmin Jivraj*)

- Written Committee Chair's Summary Report as attached

4.9 HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE (*Vi Becker*)

- Written Committee Chair's Summary Report as attached

Moved by Andy Neigel that the Board of Governors accept the written Chair's Summary Committee Reports as presented for information.

Carried

5 PRESENTATION

5.1 Campus Development Plan

Mr. Paul Verhesen, Chair of the Campus Development Committee, invited Ms. Jacqueline McLeod, Director Campus Planning, to introduce the members from Stantec who will provide the presentation on the refreshed Campus Development Plan.

Ms. McLeod introduced Mr. Leo Lejeune and Ms. Nancy MacDonald from Stantec who have been working on the updates to the Campus Development Plan. They worked on the original plan created in 2012. A refreshed Campus Plan ("Plan") was a requirement of the Blatchford Land purchase. Ms. McLeod noted that the City has accepted the Plan per the condition of the Purchase Agreement.

Ms. MacDonald commented that the Plan required updating to reflect the changes being made to the Blatchford Lands owned by the City, which include changes to the LRT station. The current location of the station will be moved further into Blatchford and an additional station will be added. Ms. MacDonald noted that the Plan is a guiding and living document and serves as a framework to bring strategies together. It will allow for growth in a logical and cohesive manner. The refreshed Plan has a sense of community and a place for students to thrive.

The new Plan also addressed the recent changes NAIT has experienced due to the global pandemic. Classroom needs are being considered with the move to online learning. As well, technology is also a priority as it will have a greater impact to how students learn going forward.

The refreshed Plan also takes into consideration the fact that Edmonton is a winter city and the majority of the student year takes place over winter. It was essential that the new Plan align with NAIT's vision and mandate as a polytechnic. As well, the Plan must integrate with the surrounding community so that NAIT continues to be a good neighbour.

Board members discussed the presentation with Mr. Lejeune and Ms. MacDonald.

After discussion, Mr. Pisani requested the motion to approve the updated NAIT Campus Development Plan.

Moved by Paul Verhesen that the Campus Development Committee recommend the Board of Governors approves the Campus Development Plan 2020 as presented with such non-substantive changes as management deems necessary or advisable.

Carried

Mr. Pisani then thanked Mr. Lejeune and Ms. MacDonald for their time and work on the project and they departed the meeting.

5.2 Overview of Campus Development Committee

Mr. Pisani advised that going forward at each Board meeting, there will be a brief presentation from one of each of the Board's committees to inform Board members what are the responsibilities and current considerations that that committee is dealing with. The first presentation is from the Campus Development Committee ("CDC"). Mr. Pisani invited Mr. Verhesen, Chair of that committee to provide the Board with an overview.

Mr. Verhesen was joined by Jeff Dumont as they provided a short presentation on the CDC.

This committee is responsible for facilities management (including land and building acquisition/disposition; maintenance), planning and architecture, capital projects, and procurement of consulting and construction services for NAIT.

It was noted that the recent major strategic plans the CDC will be working on in the coming years are the Campus Development Plan (as just discussed), the Master Energy Strategy (reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions), and the Space Management Policy and Procedure.

The Committee oversees the Capital Renovation Program, the Major Maintenance Program, Special Projects, and the Concept Planning for upcoming projects.

The Board then briefly discussed the committee with Mr. Verhesen and Mr. Pisani thanked him and Mr. Dumont for their presentation.

5.3 Collegiate Update

Mr. Pisani then introduced the discussion on the Collegiate. Mr. Pisani noted that this is not a new concept. It was introduced several years ago by the PC Party in government at that time. It was also supported by the NDP Party when they came into government in 2015. It was then paused, and was reintroduced by Premier Kenney as an election promise in his campaign in 2019.

Mr. Andy Weiler has been seconded to NAIT from the Advanced Education in the Provincial Government and he has been assisting management with the collegiate project.

Mr. Pisani asked Mr. Weiler, Ms. Gunter and Ms. Fitzsimmons to provide the presentation.

Ms. Fitzsimmons commented that this is a complex project with many stakeholders including NAIT, Government, other partners and educators.

A project charter has been developed to assist with the planning of this project. An Advisory Committee will also be struck to help support the project. The Advisory Committee will report to NAIT's Executive Management Committee who will oversee the project and the delivery of the key milestones.

The Board of Governors will be responsible for the strategic guidance and leadership on items of materiality or governance.

The idea of the collegiate was initially started to support anticipated labour market gaps but to also increase parity of esteem with skilled trades. It was intended to provide pathways into NAIT programs.

As part of the election promise from Premier Kenney, funding for the collegiate was announced. In July 2020, NAIT received a commitment from Education Minister LaGrange and Advanced Education Minister Nicolaides on the collegiate. However, with the current Alberta post-secondary system review (Alberta 2030), there are some unknowns with this project to be considered.

Market research consultations with stakeholders on the need for a collegiate is underway to help inform decisions. It is intended that the collegiate will be a charter school and a partnership is being considered. A high school diploma would still be the end result for students completing their grades in a collegiate.

With the current economy, one of the biggest risks is the funding for this project. Management is in discussions with Government on this topic.

Discussion briefly ensued with the Board. Mr. Pisani advised that NAIT will need Government's engagement on this project and the Board will be kept apprised as it moves along.

6 IN-CAMERA SESSION WITH BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Mr. Pisani then asked all guests to depart the meeting as the Board moved into an *in-camera* discussion.

Moved by Andy Neigel that the Board move to an in-camera session.

Mr. Pisani asked for any declarations of conflicts of interest with the in-camera items. Ms. Pan Zhang and Mr. Jamie Corfield both advised they would depart the discussion for the Labour Relations Update as they have a conflict of interest with that item. Mr. Pisani thanked them for the acknowledgement.

6.1 Alberta 2030 Review Update

Ms. Gunter discussed this item. It is expected that changes to the PSLA and the *Apprenticeship Act* will come this spring. The report from the consultants for this review is anticipated by the end of this year. The Board will be kept apprised.

6.2 Short-Term Priorities for the President and Executive Management Committee

Ms. Gunter discussed the short-term priorities for the President and Executive Management. A draft of the Strategic Plan for NAIT should be ready by late spring.

6.3 Labour Relations Update

Mr. Corfield and Ms. Zhang departed the meeting.

Mr. Clayton Davis provided an update to the Board on labour relations.

Moved by Andy Neigel that the Board exit the in-camera session.

Carried

7 CORRESPONDENCE

For information.

8 BOARD MEMBER CONTACT LIST

For information.

9 NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next Board Meeting will be Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 4:00-7:00 p.m., to be held virtually.

10 ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pisani thanked management for all of their hard work this year and for shifting so quickly on many competing priorities. We will look forward to seeing what the new year will bring.

Moved by Elise Holden that the Board of Governors meeting be adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Carried



Ray Pisani – Chair, Board of Governors



Sandy Timmer – recorder