

Thursday, March 28, 2024 — 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
ECU Boardroom (D2315) and via Zoom webinar

ATTENDANCE:

Board Members:

Don Avison (Board Chair)	Esther Rausenberg
Trish Kelly (Interim President + Vice Chancellor)	Keith Reynolds
Carleen Thomas (Chancellor)	Sung Van
Lorcan O'Melinn (Vice-Chair)	Parnian Anaa
Mary Macaulay	Brenda Crabtree
Ishika Tripathi	Alex Philips

Regrets: Lindsay McIntyre (joined for closed session), Gaye Fowler, Natasha Tony

Resources and/or Guests: Diyan Achjadi (Interim Vice-President, Academic + Provost), Viktor Sokha (Vice-President, Finance + Administration), Adrian Tees (Associate Vice-President, HR), Mark Douglas (Executive Director, Financial Services), Natasha Himer (University Secretary), Nicole Shin (Associate University Secretary, Recording Secretary), Alexander Muir (IT Support)

We respectfully acknowledge that Emily Carr University is situated on the unceded, traditional and ancestral territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

1. Call to Order — Don Avison, Chair of the Board, called the meeting to order at 2:12 p.m.
2. Adoption of the Agenda

There was a request to add items under Other Business, including a discussion on executive member expenses and a proposed resolution brought forward by a Board member.

MOTION: That the Agenda for the Board Open Session of March 28, 2024 be approved with the addition of the one item under Other Business.

Moved / Seconded

Carried.

3. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes – Open Session

MOTION: That the Minutes of the Board Open Session of February 8, 2024 be approved as presented.

Moved / Seconded

Carried.

II. BUSINESS

1. Chair's Remarks

2. Interim President's Updates

T. Kelly provided the following highlights:

- The newly appointed Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, Lisa Beare, recently visited ECU and met with the Board Chair, the Emily Carr Student's Union and the Faculty Association;
- There have been ongoing community conversations related to food security and belonging on campus, including the Food & Community student exhibition from March 22 – 27; and
- Recruitment is underway for Fall 2024 and offer letters for the foundation program have been sent out in line with the new rules regarding international student visa processes.

3. Interim Vice President Academic + Provost's Updates

In D. Achjadi's absence, T. Kelly reported that there are currently search and selection processes underway for 9 regular, full-time faculty positions.

4. 2024-25 Budget

L. O'Melinn acknowledged the work of the finance team in leading out and developing the draft 2024-25 Budget and the increased focus on community consultation.

V. Sokha noted that the Ministry has confirmed that Emily Carr will not receive one-time funding in advance of the 2024/25 fiscal year but may revisit the possibility of one-time funding closer to the end of the calendar year.

V. Sokha and M. Douglas walked the Board through the 2024/2025 Budget presentation and provided the following highlights:

- The preliminary operating budget deficit was \$3.7M but the University managed to reduce the deficit to \$2.54M;
- There are 9 hires budgeted for new or replacement faculty positions and increases to salaries, in line with the Collective Agreement, that will be funded by the province, per the Shared Recovery Mandate;
- The University will cover the deficit using the unrestricted accumulated surplus; and
- The University has confirmed with the Ministry that advances to base grant and annual service payments will be provided in 2024/25 to assist with cashflow challenges.

MOTION: That the Board, on the recommendation of the Audit + Finance Committee, approve the 2024/25 all funds budget, as presented by management, with a \$1,802,132 deficit.

Moved / Seconded

Carried.

[2 abstentions]

5. Transcript Fee

L. O'Melinn reported that in 2019 ECU suspended transcript fees to students when PayPal services were disrupted and continued to do so during the pandemic. The University is requesting to reintroduce transcript fees.

MOTION: That the Board, on the recommendation of the Audit + Finance Committee, approve the reintroduction of transcript fees at the revised rates, effective April 1, 2024.

Moved / Seconded

Carried.

[1 abstained]

III. OTHER BUSINESS

V. Sokha reported that further to a request by a Board member, the Audit + Finance Committee was briefed on senior executive expenses. He reminded the Board that the senior executive expenses are publicly disclosed and brought to the Audit + Finance Committee in the fall as part of the annual review of the Statement of Financial Information (SOFI) report and then to the Board for approval. The expenses are also submitted to the Ministry and posted online. V. Sokha displayed a breakdown of senior executive expenses as reported in the 2023 SOFI report and responded to questions.

A Board member brought forward a proposed resolution/motion on funding for the Wellness Kitchen as follows:

- Whereas the University expects to realize an extra \$380,000 next year, and an extra \$6.3 million over ten years following February's tuition increases;*
- Whereas the University in 2020 received a \$50,000 three year grant to fund the Wellness Kitchen, and continued to fund it until recently out of operational revenues;**
- Whereas international students presenting to the Board on February 8th reported they had to choose between food and rent, with many going hungry;
- Whereas the Wellness Kitchen's annual cost of \$17,000 is a small investment in ensuring students meet their minimal daily nutrition requirements;
- Whereas \$17,000 represents 0.15% of last year's \$10,655,897 in international tuition;***
- Whereas the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills' Mandate Letter directed the University to develop and implement protections for international students that support their fair treatment;****
- Whereas the University can afford to continue funding the Wellness Kitchen;*****
- Be it resolved that the Board directs the University to continue funding the Wellness Kitchen out of operational revenues to those amounts previously committed, adjusting for inflation.

* Vice-President Finance and Administration's Information Briefing Note, February 1st, 2024

**Interim President's Report to the Board, December 7th, 2023

***2023/24 Budget Presentation to the Board of Governors March 30th, 2023

****Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, June 22nd, 2023

*****According to the 2023 Institutional Accountability Report ECU's top sixteen administrators received \$197,195.88 in expenses among them.

The Chair opened discussion and provided an opportunity for the administration to respond. T. Kelly explained that the provincial government provided a \$50,000 grant over 2-years for a series of programs provided through the counselling and wellness area, one of which was the Wellness Kitchen. The intention of the Wellness Kitchen was to create community through food-based services.

When the 2-year government grant ended, ECU has allocated \$60,000 in the proposed 2024/2025 operational budget:

- \$30,000 to continue with programming that is inline with the wellness area; and
- \$30,000 to the portfolio of the New Executive Director, Student Engagement, Retention + Success to engage student food security programming.

The Administration is taking the following additional steps:

- Partnering with the Student Union in various ways to create funding and/or opportunities for outreach to students who they know that are in need; and
- Examining any barriers that exist to accessing the Emily Cares program that is set up to provide emergency funds that are available for students for rent and food vouchers.

MOTION: That the Board table the proposed motion with the understanding that Administration report back more fully on steps that are being taken to address food security needs of students.

Moved / Seconded

Carried.

The Board requested that the information include a break down of funds and supports that are being provided to students around food security and wellbeing and provide a sense of timing of initiatives underway. It was noted that additional time and details are required so that the Board can make an informed decision in a holistic way.

IV. NEXT MEETING: Next Regular Open Session of the Board has been moved from May 30th to Wednesday, May 29, 2024.

V. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.