

## **MINUTES** **BOARD OF GOVERNORS — REGULAR SESSION**

Thursday, February 17, 2022 — 3:30-5:00 p.m.  
Via Zoom webinar online meeting platform.

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### **ATTENDANCE:**

#### Voting Members:

Keith Kerrigan (Board Chair)	Lindsay McIntyre	Keith Reynolds
Gillian Siddall (President + Vice Chancellor)	Lorcan O'Melinn	Stephanie Schneider
Megan Ellis	Alex Phillips	Charles Simon
Mary Macaulay	Esther Rausenberg	Emma Somers
Carleen Thomas		

#### Guests:

Trish Kelly (Provost + Vice-President Academic), Mark Douglas (Executive Director Financial Services), Kevin Bird (Director, Recruitment, Admissions, International Development + Registrar), Marcia Guno (Vice Provost, Students), Sandeep Sidhu (Chief Information Officer), Andy O'Neill (General Manager, P3 Facility Operations), Heather Sanford (Interim University Secretary), Christen Downie (Associate University Secretary)

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*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 — Keith Kerrigan, Chair of the Board, called the meeting to order at 3:58 p.m.
2. Adoption of the Agenda.

**Moved / Seconded**

**Carried as amended.**

Request to change the order of 'II. Business, 2. For discussion / approval: Budget Update + Tuition Increase 2022/23' after 'III. Reports'.

3. Approval of the Board Regular Session Minutes of December 2, 2021.

**Moved / Seconded**

**Carried.**

### **II. BUSINESS**

1. For approval: Presidential Review for Reappointment Policy + Procedures

**Moved / Seconded that, on the recommendation of the Board Governance Committee, and subject to the approval of Senate, the Board approve the Presidential Review for Reappointment Policy and Procedures as presented.**

**Carried.**

Board members thanked those involved in development and review of the policy, including Senate. A Board member noted a point of clarification discussed at the Board Governance Committee meeting on February 3, 2022, that the “unionized employee” on the Presidential Review for Reappointment Committee is intended to be a unionized employee employed directly by ECU.

### **III. REPORTS**

#### **1. Chair's Report**

The Chair provided an update on the meeting he and Gillian Siddall, President + Vice-Chancellor, had with Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training (AEST) officials on December 7, 2021. ECU's objective with the Ministry was and is to address the university's structural deficit and receive the proper level of funding so as not to require one-time funding from government each year, and to address limitations presented by ECU's current classification as a Special Purpose Teaching University. Ministry representatives reported on a planned sector-wide funding review of all post-secondary institutions in B.C.

A follow-up meeting with the President and AEST Deputy Minister is scheduled for March 2, 2022.

#### **2. President + Vice-Chancellor's Report**

The President invited questions on the circulated report. There were no questions.

#### **3. Vice President, Academic + Provost's Report**

The VP, Academic + Provost invited questions on the circulated report. There were no questions.

#### **4. Vice Provost, Students' Report (verbal)**

The Vice Provost, Students, provided highlights on:

- Work underway to create a direct entry option at ECU, the main goals of which are to support academic planning, student experience and ECU's financial projections.
- Fall 2022 intake: Undergraduate applications are up 7% over the same time last year and Graduate applications are up 17%.
- Supports available to international students include assistance with study permits, post-secondary work permits, healthcare, travel advice, etc.; funding support via entry scholarships and emergency bursary funding; support via the Career Development + Work

Integrated Learning Office; and there are plans to re-establish the International Student Support Office.

- The 'IM Well' mobile app, once fully implemented, will provide students with 24-hour access to a range of supports and resources.
- Training for faculty on gender diversity will be held in April and May.

*Mary Macaulay joined the meeting at 4:16 p.m.*

There was discussion about direct entry.

#### 5. Executive Director, Financial Services Report

M. Douglas, Executive Director, Financial Services, noted that items in the Financial Services Report will also be addressed in the Budget Update ('IV. Other Business'). He invited questions on the circulated report. There were no questions.

#### 6. General Manager, P3, Facilities Report

A. O'Neill, General Manager, P3, Facilities, reported that ECU has received its allocation of rapid COVID test kits and is in the process of distributing to the community. Board members inquired about sound impacts in relation to the Broadway subway project.

### **IV. OTHER BUSINESS**

#### 1. For discussion / approval: Budget Update + Tuition Increase 2022/23

**Moved / Seconded that, on the recommendation of the Board Finance + Audit Committee, the Board approve a 2022/23 tuition fee increase of 2% for domestic undergraduate students, and 6% for new international graduate students.**

The President opened the discussion and reported on the special Senate Budget Committee meeting earlier this week, which included an overview of the Lockie report and a presentation by the Executive Director, Financial Services. The President relayed concerns expressed by Senators on the negative impact of a tuition increase on students.

The President reported that a motion was introduced at the special Senate Budget Committee meeting to recommend that the Board delay the vote on the tuition increase, but the motion was defeated.

The President provided the Board with additional information and context for the proposed tuition motion:

AEST hired consultant P. Lockie to conduct a detailed financial review of ECU. Conclusions of the Lockie report will be beneficial in helping to transform ECU in achieving parity with other institutions. Conclusions from the draft report include:

- That ECU has a structural deficit of \$5 million.

- Proposal that ECU work to decrease its deficit by \$2 million; government to provide \$3 million.
- The need for government to make a permanent increase to ECU's base grant.
- Hiring of key roles that had been deferred previously (e.g., cybersecurity, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, etc.) needs to be a priority.
- Acknowledgement of the importance of research at ECU.
- Importance of addressing ECU's faculty teaching load and lean staffing issues.
- Acknowledgement of ECU's uniqueness in the post-secondary institutional sector.
- Comparators are other national art & design universities.

The Chair emphasized ECU's need to do what it can to reduce the deficit. The importance of understanding the tuition increase as a source of revenue for all universities rather than as a means to reduce the deficit was further emphasized. It was noted that ECU's decision not to raise tuition last year was viewed as unusual by the Ministry; not increasing tuition again may have a negative impact on ECU's relationship with the Ministry.

The Executive Director, Financial Services, provided a financial presentation in relation to the motion to increase tuition.

- ECU is projecting a \$4.5-\$5.5 million deficit in 2022/23; the amount will be dependent on registration levels and potential tuition fee increase.
- A proposed tuition increase would bring the deficit closer to \$4.5 million.
- Even with a tuition fee increase, ECU would continue to have one of the lowest tuition fees among Canadian art & design universities and B.C. institutions and universities.
- \$1 million remains in contingency funds to offset the deficit.
- Completion of AEST funding review of all post-secondary institutions in B.C. expected in 2024/25.
- AEST has confirmed advances in ECU's base grant and annual service payments to assist cashflow challenges.
- One-time funding from the Ministry is unlikely to offset ECU's entire deficit.
- ECU was the only post-secondary institute in B.C. to freeze tuition last year.

A student presented a request on behalf of students for an equitable and inclusive process that considers student input, diversity of opinions and time for student feedback prior to any decision regarding a tuition fee increase at ECU.

There was discussion, including:

- ECU's budget process this year is earlier than in previous years; first time a proposed tuition increase has come forward in February.
- Inquiry about potential impact of a tuition fee increase on ECU's international reputation.
- Recommendation to postpone the motion to increase tuition fees until after a feedback forum has been held with students.

A Board member requested the motion be postponed to a future meeting.

**Be it resolved that the Board consider the 2022/23 tuition fee increase of 2% increase for domestic undergraduate students, 6% increase for international undergrad students and 6%**

**for new international graduate students at a special meeting of the Board to be scheduled before March 2, 2022.**

It was noted this was a motion to delay and that a motion to delay had been presented and defeated in the In Camera Board meeting. The Chair ruled the motion out of order.

A Board Member proposed an amendment to the current motion.

**Moved / Seconded that the Board approve an amendment to the initial motion and approve a 2022/23 tuition fee increase of 2% for current domestic undergraduate students, 2% for new domestic undergraduate students, 2% for current international undergraduate students and 4% for new international undergraduate students.**

**There was discussion.**

**Amendment defeated.**

There was further discussion on the main motion, including:

- Long-term consequences of a second tuition freeze
- Impact of a tuition fee increase on international students
- Call for meaningful consultation with students
- Need for creative alternatives to make up ECU's deficit
- Unpredictability of ECU's revenue streams (e.g., film industry)
- Emphasis on the Board Finance + Audit Committee's support and recommendation of the motion
- Need to continue to build scholarship funds and the need to promote the availability of financial support and scholarships

**The Chair called the question on the Motion**

**Motion Carried.**

The Chair noted that the Board will review and discuss questions and comments from students and participants shared during the meeting via the Zoom 'Q & A' function.

**V. NEXT MEETING:** April 28, 2022

**VI. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.