



BOARD OF GOVERNORS - 382

MINUTES

June 26, 2025

3:00 p.m.

PRESENT: William Barker – Board Chair
Jana Macalik – NSCAD Acting President
Kathryn Toope – Vice Chair
Cheryl Hann
Kelly Denty
Sunil Sarwal
Gary Edwards
John Keating
Marco Chiarot
Kim Healy
Dave van de Wetering
Sylvia Parriss-Drummond
Sarah McInnes
Thierry Delva
Dayna Sharkey
Rudi Meyer
Katie Puxley
Ziggy Kirch
Clare Birdsall

REGRETS: Anthony Novac
Gary Edwards
Jess Myra

STAFF: Bruce DeBaie, Chief of Staff
Leanne Dowe, Chief Financial Officer
Kara Holm, Chief Philanthropy Officer
Jennifer Lewis, Director – HR
Dan Harroun, Associate VP - Operations
Andy Murdoch, Director – Strategic Communications
Andrea Hunniford, Senior Project Manager
Katherine Stanley – EA Governance

*The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.
The agenda and supporting documents have been circulated via SharePoint for this meeting.*

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

W. Barker called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m., with the establishment of quorum.

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

2a – Land Acknowledgement

J. Macalik read into the record the Land Acknowledgement, which recognizes the First Peoples on whose traditional territories we live and work.

2b – People’s Acknowledgement

S. Parris-Drummond read into the record the People’s Acknowledgement, which recognizes the loss of the community and heritage of the African Nova Scotia residents of Africville.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST – NONE

4. CONSENT:

The following items were on Consent, were reviewed, and were declared adopted:

8.1, 8.2, 10.4, & 11.1 – 11.7.

5. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA – Accepted

K. Puxley/Carried [BOG-382-13]

6. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES

The following minutes were reviewed by the Board and were adopted, without amendment:

6.1 – DRAFT – Minutes, BOG - March 27, 2025

7. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES – NONE

8. WORKPLAN ITEMS

8.1 – Officers Certificate – Finance – Accepted on Consent

8.2 - Officer’s Certificate – Facilities – Accepted on Consent

8.3 – Q4 Financials

L. Dowe presented variations from the Q4 results.

Income:

Overall, reporting a drop in both domestic and international student enrollment, there was a negative variance to budget for tuition revenue of \$661k. Government grants came in under budget. Investment income was close to last year, budgeting conservatively and ending up with a surplus of \$128k in that category. Rental income remained consistent with budget, though slightly lower than the prior year, primarily due to moving the Treaty Space Gallery to a vacant space on campus. Donations received were significantly lower than expected. NSCAD had budgeted \$63k but came in at \$9k.

Expenses:

For the expense side, academic compensation exceeded last year but remained close to budget. This included increases due to the collective agreement and a few mid-year hires. There were savings of \$90,000 in part-time faculty and \$111k in full-time faculty, but these were offset by an early retirement, which led to an accrual expense equivalent to seven years of salary at 30%. This meant NSCAD came in over budget by approximately \$36k.

Academic operating expenses were consistent with the previous year, with a positive variance of \$123k.

Some equipment purchases were deferred to the current fiscal year. Facilities costs have increased due to rising construction and maintenance costs, along with higher custodial, security, electricity, rent, and common area expenses, up by \$148k. This year saw a full complement of staff in facilities, which contributed to budget alignment.

Administrative costs exceeded the prior year by \$348k. Some savings were found, and further capital equipment purchases were deferred to 2025–26. In ancillary enterprises, extended studies came in over the prior year. The art supply store was \$30k lower due to reduced cost of sales.

The Q4 and year-end financial snapshot shows a variance of \$2.36m.

Discussion:

A question was raised about the drop in operational donations, even with a new department created to manage donations. The response clarified that overall donations were actually up, but many were restricted and thus not reported in this particular category. Last year's higher figure included a large unrestricted donation, which did not recur. Moving forward, donations are expected to be directed more toward the comprehensive campaign, making \$10k a more realistic figure for unrestricted operational donations.

Another question was raised regarding the impact of the one-time early retirement expense on the ending cash position. The response clarified that the hit was just under \$300k. While this was not the ending position hoped for, budget adjustments are underway to help improve the situation.

8.4 - NSCAD Audit Results report, year ended March 31, 2025

L. Dowe reported on the consolidated statement received from the external auditors on NSCAD's financial position, and presented the financial statements as part of the required annual disclosure. A clean audit opinion was received, with fully drafted statements to be finalized shortly. There were no material concerns raised. As a result of the deficit and capital spending during the year, the cash balance is coming up as a downward variance from last year. The total fund balance is down \$2.2m, and is made up of the operating deficit of \$2.1m, the year Capital fund deficit of \$626k, and a Research and Special purposes deficit of \$25k. There is an offset by an endowment surplus of \$482k. L. Dowe went on briefly to explain that these statements of financial position serve as a balance sheet for NSCAD.

Key discussion points covered were interfund payables, and a clarification of internal accounting mechanisms. This happens where there is a payable and a receivable between two funds, and these will balance. This is why it can be seen in the financial statements as payable and receivable, but not as an external payable.

The audit remains in draft, as distributed for this Board meeting, but is 99% complete, with minor adjustments to be made. The recommendation for this item occurs annually at the AGM, which this year directly follows this June Board meeting.

8.5 – Budget 2025/2026

L. Dowe presented NSCAD's projected budget for 2025/2026. Currently NSCAD has a projected deficit of \$1.35m, which is an improvement from a \$2.3m actual deficit in 2024/2025. Revenue and expense are both reduced, but there remains a reliance on continued improvement to enrollment figures, and increasing efficiency. There are some structural constraints, and these are due to capped tuition and only modest grant amounts. For this budget, there have been significant cost reductions across travel, events, staff contracts, professional fees, and facilities costs. The key strategy in this budget is to

maintain operations, while at same time build in sustainability planning for with increased enrollment, and to make the most of any changes in support from the Provincial Government, both of which are anticipated by 2028/2029. Student support remains a priority at NSCAD, with initiatives in this area remaining in place, and will support these plans.

Key discussion points:

The Board spent time discussing the difficult decisions ahead for NSCAD, particularly in relation to the budget, with an extended focus on long-term sustainability. As increased enrollment is seen as a key pillar of NSCAD's strategic planning, concern was raised over a proposed reduction in marketing expenditure. The budget was critiqued for this reduction, given the perceived dependence on student recruitment.

In response, the Director of Strategic Communications assured the Board that the proposed cuts would not compromise NSCAD's ability to recruit students. These assurances were supported by performance metrics showing growth in social media engagement and an additional 43% increase in new users on the website.

Recruitment efforts were also highlighted as an area of strength, particularly in relationship-building. NSCAD has recently invested in new staff roles dedicated to cultivating relationships with prospective students. These roles have improved the conversion of inquiries into enrollments, and early indicators suggest a corresponding increase in the portfolio quality of applicants. In all, the focus of enrollment related investment has shifted more toward academic engagement, while marketing and social media continue to run an effective awareness campaign through NSCAD's platforms.

Additionally, the Director of Marketing emphasized that recruitment, advancement, and institutional reputation are closely linked. At NSCAD, Communications is working in close collaboration with the newly appointed Dean of Students to support this alignment. Proposed marketing cuts will primarily affect areas not directly tied to enrollment, such as certain print publications and bus ads. Remaining funds will be redirected toward sector-specific platforms and a greater investment in dynamic content such as videos, reels, and live advertising. These efforts have already shown success through increased popularity across NSCAD's social media channels.

After due consideration of the Budget on the F&PR Committee, and here on the Board, as presented, the Board agreed that a vote to recommend and approve will be completed by e-vote following this meeting.

9. COMMITTEE Q4 REPORTS

The following intended verbal reports were deferred for time-keeping, with the Board having the opportunity to review the committee annual reports for the AGM, immediately following this meeting.

9.1 – Governance and Human Resources

9.2– Advancement -

9.3 – Financial and Physical Resources

9.4 – Audit and Risk Oversight

10. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEES & ASSOCIATIONS

The following two motions, having already been discussed fully in committee, were brought forward for consideration. There were no comments or questions.

10.1 - G&HR Recommendation for Interim President – Leanne Dowe

Motion: To accept the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee and approve the appointment of Leanne Dowe as Interim President. Effective July 1, 2025 until August 31, 2025. In alignment with common university practices, anyone designated as "acting" or "interim" president assumes all the duties and responsibilities of the president.

D. van de Wetering/Abstention: Z. Kirch/Carried [BOG-382-14]

10.2 - G&HR Recommendation for Interim President – David B. Smith

Motion: To accept the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee and approve the appointment of David B. Smith as Interim President, contingent contract execution. Effective September 1st, 2025. In alignment with common university practices, anyone designated as "acting" or "interim" president assumes all the duties and responsibilities of the president.

D. van de Wetering/Carried [BOG-382-15]

10.3 – G&HR Nominations Report

Motion: To accept the recommendation of the Governance & Human Resources Committee, that the Board of Governors approve the 2025/2026 Nominations Report, as prepared by the Chair of the G&HR Committee. The appointments will take place at the 2025 Annual General Meeting, immediately following this meeting.

D. van de Wetering/Abstention: D. van de Wetering/Carried [BOG-382-16]

10.4 – G&HR Recommendation for Salary Adjustments for Senior Management

Motion: To accept the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee and approve the compensation increases of Senior management, including AVP and above, in accordance with the budget available, at a minimum of the cost-of-living increase of 2% for 2025. In addition, members of Senior Management who successfully meet performance targets, move to the next step on their salary scale effective July 1, 2025.

Carried on Consent [BOG-382-17]

11. IN CAMERA – Appointments & Promotions.

Motions required. All members and guests. Recuse as appropriate or necessary.

OUT OF CAMERA MOTIONS:

11.1 - Promotion - Mark Bovey

Motion: the Board of Governors accepts and approves the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, acting under the Collective Agreement, Article 15.03 (Procedure for Promotion), the promotion of Mark Bovey from Associate Professor to full Professor. *Carried on Consent [BOG-382-18]*

11.2 - Promotion - Mathew Reichertz

Motion: That the Board of Governors accepts and approves the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, acting under the Collective Agreement, Article 15.03 (Procedure for Promotion), the promotion of Mathew Reichertz from Associate Professor to full Professor. *Carried on Consent [BOG-382-19]*

11.3 - Promotion - Rebecca Hannon

Motion: That the Board of Governors accepts and approves the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, acting under the Collective Agreement, Article 15.03 (Procedure for Promotion), the promotion of Rebecca Hannon from Associate Professor to full Professor. *Carried on Consent* [BOG-382-20]

11.4 - Promotion - Sam Fisher

Motion: That the Board of Governors accepts and approves the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, acting under the Collective Agreement, Article 15.03 (Procedure for Promotion), the promotion of Sam Fisher from Associate Professor to full Professor. *Carried on Consent* [BOG-382-21]

11.5 - Change in Status - Patryk Stasieczek

Motion: That the Board of Governors accepts and approves the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee to a change in status for Patryk Stasieczek, from limited Term Pro-Rated Faculty Appointment (66%) to a Limited Term Faculty Appointment (100%), effective July 1, 2025, until June 30, 2026. *Carried on Consent* [BOG-382-22]

11.6 - Limited term sessional faculty appointment in Craft (Ceramics) – Rachel deConde.

Motion: That the Board of Governors accepts and approves the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee to a limited term sessional faculty appointment in craft (Ceramics) to Rachel deConde, effective July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027. *Carried on Consent* [BOG-382-23]

11.7 - Limited term sessional faculty appointment in Media Arts (Animation) – Rebecca Barker.

Motion: That the Board of Governors accepts and approves the recommendation of the Governance and Human Resources Committee to a limited term sessional faculty appointment in media arts (Animation) to Rebecca Barker, effective July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027. *Carried on Consent* [BOG-382-24]

12. IN CAMERA – Board Only - Excluding President and Management

The Board moved In Camera at approximately 4:33 p.m., and out of Camera at 4:35 p.m.

13. NEXT MEETING – TBD – Fall, 2025

14. ADJOURNMENT – 4:36 p.m.

Motion to extend: J. Keating/Carried [BOG-2025-25]

Minutes prepared: K. Stanley, Executive Assistant – Governance