



DURHAM COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY PUBLIC MEETING OF THE GOVERNANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, November 10, 2020

Location: Via Video Conference (MS Teams)

Members Present: Jim Wilson, Committee Chair
Elizabeth Cowie, Committee Vice-Chair
Christine Kozminski
Kenneth Michalko (joined the meeting at 6:33 p.m.)
Ian Murray
Gary Rose
Michele James, Chair of the Board (joined the meeting at 6:59 p.m.)
Don Lovisa, President

Staff Present: Melissa Pringle, Corporate and Board Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

With quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS & ROUNDTABLE INTRODUCTIONS

Governor Michalko joined the meeting.

New Governors Christine Kozminski and Ian Murray were welcomed to the meeting, and the Committee participated in roundtable introductions.

3. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Chair introduced Allison Hector-Alexander, Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

4. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

5. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

None.

6. PRESENTATIONS

None.

7. DECISION ITEMS

None.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

8.1 Collection of Demographic Data & Sample Survey Used by Nova Scotia Community College

The Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion provided an overview of the diversity self-identification survey the College is intending to implement to better understand who is on campus in terms of diversity and to understand if individuals feel included on campus. This data collected will be used to identify gaps, to develop targeted outreach and programming, to comply with measures in the dimensions charter and BlackNorth initiative pledge, to measure the College's success of equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives, and to support research and grant applications.

Governor Kozminski temporarily left and re-entered the meeting.

The Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion reported that the survey would be accompanied by a detailed communication plan to explain why the data is being collected, the purposes it will be used for, and how the data will be protected and stored.

The Committee questioned the Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion about the self-identification project and discussed the importance of being transparent about why the data is being collected, how the data will be used, and how it will be protected.

Governor James joined the meeting.

Following discussion, the Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion confirmed the intent would be that students, employees, and Board members would be asked to voluntarily complete the survey. Further, the Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion advised the College is exploring best practices and has obtained survey

tools and questions used successfully by other organizations (e.g., Sheridan College, Ryerson University) to ensure the best possible outcome.

The Committee concurred that pending implementation of the College's self-identification survey, no further action was required by the Board at this time.

8.2 Recent Suggestions for Enhancing Board Meetings & Supporting Diversity and Inclusion Efforts

The Committee explored various suggestions (e.g., reading a diversity statement, saying the indigenous land acknowledgment, updating the Board report template) offered by various Governors over the past couple of months to enhance Board meetings and support diversity and inclusion efforts.

The Committee discussed the importance of all the College values and considered the best way to ensure that decision-making at the Board reflected the College's mission, vision, and values without becoming an exercise in "checking a box," ultimately losing the impact of the action.

The Committee questioned the Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion regarding some of the suggestions presented. In response, the Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion stated that in her opinion, the most significant impact would come from weaving the College's values into decision-making and reviewing materials presented to the Board through various lens's rather than engaging in specific actions at the beginning of every meeting. Further, the Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion advised that the College recently approved an anti-black racism statement that is now included in the College's strategic documents.

Following discussion, the Committee decided that it was the responsibility of every Governor to read and consider materials presented to the Board through the lens of the College's values and to question staff, where appropriate.

Action: The Corporate and Board Secretary to ensure that future Board meeting packages include the Board values on the front page of the agenda to remind the Board of their importance in decision-making.

8.3 Handling of Conflicts of Interest in Virtual Meetings

The Committee discussed the current practice of asking Governors to leave the meeting during a vote on an item to which they have a conflict and discussed whether the practice should change given the pivot to virtual meetings.

The Corporate and Board Secretary advised that it was best practice for a Governor to leave the room while a vote is taken on a matter in which they have a conflict.

Following discussion, the Committee concurred that the current practice of asking a Governor to leave the meeting during a vote on a matter to which they have a conflict should continue, and the fact that the meetings have shifted to a virtual format is not relevant.

8.4 Board Goal re Continuous Improvement

The Committee discussed the Board's current meeting assessment process and the suggestions put forward by the Executive Committee to improve the process. Further, the Committee discussed what issue, if any, the purpose of reviewing the meeting assessment process was trying to address.

Following discussion, the Committee concurred that the Board was high functioning but that there is always room to improve and challenge the status quo. The Committee also discussed the different personalities at the Board table and how Governors may not feel comfortable speaking up to offer areas of improvement.

As no consensus was reached on what suggestions to pursue to enhance the meeting assessment process, the Committee requested more information on the best practices related to meeting assessments.

Action: The Corporate and Board Secretary to research the best practices for meeting assessments and bring the matter back for discussion at the next Governance Review Committee meeting.

9. MEETING CRITIQUE

The Committee conducted a roundtable meeting critique and agreed that the meeting was different than members were used to because the conversation was generative in nature, but acknowledged that everyone had the opportunity to participate and voice their opinions. The Committee commended the Chair for facilitating the meeting and recommended that in the future, to ensure clarity, that the Chair be more aggressive at confirming action items. The Committee also concurred that having the Director of Equity, Diversity and Transitions in attendance was a valuable resource.

10. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting ended at 8:11 p.m.