



**UPEI BOARD OF GOVERNORS
BOARD OF GOVERNORS' MEETING
Tuesday, May 27, 2025
Alumni Hall, Room 102 and Via Teams
4:00 pm**

DRAFT OPEN MINUTES

Members Present: Shannon MacDonald, Chair; Wendy Rodgers, President; Kateri Coade; Karen Creighan; Lynn Ellsworth; Gary Evans; Hon. Diane Griffin; Geraldine Johnston; Erica Kyalo; Christian Lacroix; Alex MacBeath; Alexander (Sandy) MacDonald; Don MacKenzie; Kevin Magee; Mary Anne McMahon; William Montelpare; Pam Montgomery; Luciana Quiroa Paredes; Ajay Sahajpal; Carolyn Simpson; Brian Thompson; Sara Underwood; William Waterman

Invited Guests: Kelly Drummond, Associate Vice-President, Human Resources; and Kate Richard, Project Manager, UPEI Action Plan

Staff Present: Jane Ngobia, Vice-President, People and Culture; Tim Walker, Vice-President, Administration and Finance; Greg Naterer, Vice-President, Academics and Research; Doug Burton, Acting Chief Information Officer; Pascal Robichaud, University Secretary; Pam Trainor, Advisor to the Board of Governors; Willow Anderson, Administrative Assistant; and Kim Porter, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement

Chair, S. MacDonald called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm and acknowledged the land.

The Chair welcomed new student Board members Erica Kyalo, Vice President External of the UPEI Student Union, and Luciana Quiroa Paredes, President of the UPEISU to the meeting.

On behalf of the Board, the Chair welcomed Jane Ngobia, the new Vice-President People and Culture, and Tim Walker, the new Vice-President Administration and Finance, to their first Board of Governors' meeting.

It was noted that the Executive Committee agreed to a new consent agenda format. There being no request to move any of the consent business to the deliberative agenda; the consent agenda items were deemed approved and received.

2. Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts declared.

3. Closed Session

MOVED by W. Montelpare, SECONDED by W. Waterman to move to a closed session. CARRIED.

MEETING RETURNED TO OPEN SESSION

S. MacDonald noted that in the closed session Governors received an update on a project to improve human resources systems. This presentation was received in closed session, as not all elements have yet been communicated to employee groups and, thus, are not yet ready to be made public.

4. Operating Budget for the 2025–2026 Fiscal Year

The 2025-2026 Operating Budget proposal was circulated in advance of the meeting.

The Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, A. MacBeath, reported that the Committee had an extensive review of the Operating Budget at their meeting and is recommending that the Board of Governors approve the 2025-2026 Operating Budget as presented. Before deliberating on the approval of the budget, the Committee Chair called on the President of the University and the Vice President Administration and Finance to present the budget proposal, after which the floor will be given to members for questions.

President Rodgers and VP Walker gave a presentation on the steps taken to deliver a balanced budget. This will be achieved by increasing domestic tuition rates by 6.5%, increasing international tuition rates by 7.5%, and by additional revenue generation and cost reductions. With the proposed tuition increases, PEI remains an affordable and competitive destination in Canada and the Atlantic region.

UPEI priorities will continue to be supported by focusing on recruitment and retention, revenue generation, process improvements, and supporting the Action Plan.

As the budget presentation is evolving to provide more information to the Board and the University Community, it has been significantly enhanced, and it is still being refined with the expectation that it will provide greater detail in the future.

MOVED by A. MacBeath, SECONDED by K. Magee that the Operating Budget for 2025 – 2026 be approved. CARRIED.

5. UPEI Strategic Plan 2025-2030 Update

W. Rodgers provided an update on the development of the UPEI Strategic Plan, outlining the steering committee's work. It is expected the Plan will be on the Board agenda in Fall 2025.

6. UPEI Action Plan Progress Update

K. Richard, Project Manager for the UPEI Action Plan, provided an update to Governors on the progress towards completion of Year 0 and Year 1 goals. A detailed progress report for Years 0 and 1 was circulated in advance with the meeting material, which will also be posted on the UPEI website. The first annual audit is in progress and results will be finalized and made available by November 1, 2025.

Members took a break at 5:34 p.m.

7. Employee Engagement Survey Results

K. Drummond gave a presentation on the Employee Engagement Survey results. The Survey is one of the activities in the Action Plan under Year 2. UPEI decided to complete the survey in Year 1 to understand employees' opinions and to receive baseline results. The survey will be conducted for each of the next five years. Governors asked why the survey was completed in November. From a faculty perspective, it was determined that November was the best month. It was suggested that completion of the survey at a different time of year may result in more responses.

8. Chair's Report

9. President's Report

The President's Report was circulated in advance of the meeting. W. Rodgers noted a town hall on the topic of the Action Plan is organized for tomorrow, May 28th, and all Governors are invited.

10. Student Perspective Update

L. Quiroa Paredes and E. Kyalo provided a verbal report. Highlights from the report include:

- Financial pressures include affordable housing and the rising cost of living.
- A recent Assessment of Student Housing Need on PEI indicated that 46% of students reported that housing costs are negatively impacting their academic success, with 20% abandoning their studies due to housing-related stress.
- Living expenses including groceries have increased by 72% since 2023 and 119% since 2022.
- School-related costs such as textbooks have increased by 24% in one year.
- It is critical to consider the student pressures in planning and decision-making to ensure UPEI remains a place where all students can succeed.
- The availability of the student food bank needs to be communicated to the entire campus.

11. Senate Report to the Board

M.A. McMahon provided a verbal report on April 11, 2025, and May 2, 2025, Senate meetings.

April 11th:

- President Rogers reported on the following items: the University had engaged with students to identify needs and innovations in the delivery of services; the resolution of the incident with the display of artwork at the Atlantic Veterinary College; the Government of PEI had tabled the 2025-2026 Provincial Operating Budget in the House; and work continues with implementation of the Action Plan.
- The Senate approved 96 motions related to calendar entry changes, course deletions, prerequisite changes, new course proposals and course description changes across several faculties from the Seventh Curriculum Report.
- New Scheduling procedures were considered, following the approval of the Scheduling Policy. As a result of Senators continuing to have concerns about the proposed procedures, there will be further discussion on the procedures.
- The Chapman Group facilitated a second consultation of the draft Strategic Plan Framework.
- In a closed session, Senators approved a proposed candidate for Professor Emerita.

May 2nd:

- Dr. Naterer reported on the following items: the importance of the Research Support Fund which includes tri-agency funding supporting the indirect cost of research at UPEI; changes to the English Academic Preparation program; an external review of graduate admissions; and a student advisory initiative with student engagement and retention being important objectives.
- A revised Course Materials Policy was tabled for consultation with Senators. Following considerable discussion, it was determined that further work is required, with the policy returning to the Senate, prior to the Board for approval.
- Senators received a proposal to establish an Ad Hoc Committee to create a policy on Academic Units which would provide structure on role, establishment, merging or discontinuation of an academic unit.
- An update was provided on the status of the Faculty of Medicine.
- In a closed session, Senators approved the awarding of more than 1200 degrees to graduates.

12. Establishment of Cleantech Leadership & Transformation Program

G. Naterer informed Governors of the new Cleantech Leadership and Transformation Program which has been approved by the Senate and the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission. Funding for the new program has been approved by the Government of PEI and is included in the main campus restricted grant for the 2025-2026 Budget. This unique program will offer a 60-month graduate course base, through the Faculty of Graduate Studies, with an expected cohort of 20-24 students.

MOVED by W. Waterman, SECONDED by W. Montelpare that the Master of Cleantech Leadership and Transformation be established within the Faculty of Graduate Studies with immediate effect. CARRIED.

13. Annual Report under the Fighting Against Forced Labour and Child Labour in Supply Chain Act for 2024 – 2025

A. MacBeath informed Governors that the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee reviewed the report and recommended the annual report be approved and posted as presented.

MOVED by A. MacBeath, SECONDED by G. Evans, that the Annual Report under the Fighting Against Forced Labour and Child Labour in Supply Chain Act for 2024 - 2025 be approved, that the Chair of the Board be authorized to submit the report to Minister of Public Safety and that the University Secretary be authorized to post the report on the University's website. CARRIED.

14. Approval of Policies

B. Thompson, Chair of GNAC, noted a change has been made to the materials that Board members will receive in relation to policies. Board members will now receive a briefing note for each policy along with a comparative table indicating changes made to an existing policy. Material for each policy was circulated in advance of the meeting.

a. International Student Fee Policy

B. Thompson noted there are no substantive changes to the policy. It was clarified that the International Student Fees were removed from the policy and added to the procedures.

MOVED by B. Thompson, SECONDED by K. Creighan to approve the revised International Student Fee Policy. CARRIED.

b. Signing Authority Policy

B. Thompson noted that the Signing Authority and Spending Authority are two separate policies. However, as they are related, the same briefing note was prepared for each policy. The comparative table for each policy outlines the changes.

MOVED by B. Thompson, SECONDED by C. Lacroix to approve revised Signing Authority Policy. CARRIED.

c. Spending Authority Policy

MOVED by B. Thompson, SECONDED by W. Waterman to approve revised Spending Authority Policy. CARRIED.

d. Selection of the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Board of Governors Policy

B. Thompson noted this is a new policy developed to appoint the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Board.

MOVED by B. Thompson, SECONDED by C. Lacroix to approve Selection of the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Board of Governors Policy. CARRIED.

15. Appointment of Student Members to Committees

B. Thompson noted the new student Board members need to be appointed to Standing Committees.

MOVED by B. Thompson, SECONDED by C. Simpson to approve the appointment of Erica Kyalo to the Campus Culture Oversight Committee and the appointment of Luciana Quiroa Paredes to the Development, Fundraising and External Relations Committee. CARRIED.

16. MOVED by W. Montelpare, SECONDED by K. Creighan to move to an in-camera session. CARRIED.

MEETING MOVED TO AN IN-CAMERA SESSION.

17. MOVED by W. Montelpare, SECONDED by K. Creighan to return to an open session. CARRIED.

MEETING RETURNED TO OPEN SESSION.

S. MacDonald acknowledged W. Waterman’s term on the Board is ending June 30, 2025, and C. Lacroix term expires in August 2025. The two Alumni representatives, Betty Anne Younker and Sara Underwood, end in June with the potential for their reappointment at the Alumni Association Annual General Meeting. These members were thanked for their commitment and time to the UPEI Board.

The Chair also offered thanks to all Board members for their commitment to the Board and to the University; to the President and her team, for their support and dedication to task; and to the Secretariat office in developing and supporting governance over the last year.

18. Adjournment

MOVED by W. Waterman, SECONDED by C. Lacroix that the meeting adjourned at 7:04 pm.