

## **BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY**

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APPROVED minutes of the open session of the 265<sup>th</sup> regular meeting of the Board of Governors of Athabasca University held virtually on Friday, December 8, 2023.

**Present:** Byron Nelson (Chair), Alex Clark, Leo de Bever, Don Gnatiuk, Elena Gould, Jacqueline Hobal, Roger Morrill, Martha Cleveland-Innes, Richard Huntruds, Liam Connelly, Russell Rupok, Chantel Bradley, Dur-E-Najaf Syed and Monica Arcilla

**Governance Staff:** Tyler Tollefson (Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel) and Barbara Kowalchuk (Recording Secretary)

**Others Present:** Matthew Prineas, Dale Mountain, Jennifer Pascoe, Pauline Smeltz, Matthew McCreary, Priscilla Campeau, Shawn Fraser, Megan Hall, Steven Johnson, Manijeh Mannani, Alain May, Andrew Perrin, Bailey Sousa, Lisa Watson, Shauna Zenteno, and Catherine Swindlehurst

**Absent with Regrets:** Larry Spagnolo, Dan Leckelt, Terry Lovelace, Lori Van Rooijen, Wilfred Willier

### **Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. having achieved quorum followed by the delivery of the AU land acknowledgement.

### **1.0 Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda**

**265-01 MOVED** That the Board of Governors approves the open session agenda for meeting 265, and thereby approves the consent agenda including the open session minutes of meeting 264, held September 22, 2023, as presented.

**Clark/Morrill**

**Carried**

### **2.0 Conflict of Interest Declaration**

Subject to the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Guidelines for the Board of Governors, members were asked to declare any conflict they may have with respect to particular agenda items contained within the meeting agenda.

No conflicts were declared.

### **3.0 President's Report to the Board**

The President presented his report and reviewed it with the members.

In response to an inquiry, information was provided in respect of work being undertaken in support of enrolment and retention of learners.

## **4.0 Action, Information / Discussion Items**

### **4.1 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Variance & Year-End Forecast Report**

The President, Provost and Vice President Academic and the Vice President Finance and Operations & CFO presented this item providing an overview of the key drivers behind the second quarter variance and year-end projections.

### **4.2 Motion: End of Near Virtual Strategy**

**265-02 MOVED** WHEREAS the Board approved motions dated December 15, 2017, December 14, 2018 and May 22, 2020 regarding the implementation of a Near Virtual strategy (the 'Strategy');  
AND WHEREAS the Investment Management Agreement signed in December 2022 contained a requirement for the end of the implementation of the Strategy;  
AND WHEREAS our comprehensive analysis of the current AU stance on the Strategy indicates that from a governance stance it cannot be stated formally and definitively that the Strategy or its implementation has expired or is ended;  
AND WHEREAS the Board desires to eliminate any ambiguity or misalignment between public statements and AU's formal institutional stance as inferred from past motions and policies;  
**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Board of Governors of Athabasca University is hereby formally and definitively stating the end of the Strategy and its implementation.

#### **Clark/Morrill**

The Board Chair presented this item noting that the university is currently addressing both the formal and definitive end of the Near Virtual Strategy and establishing a place-based and digital approach to operations. He further noted that the Investment Management Agreement signed in December 2022 contained a requirement for the end of the implementation of the Near Virtual Strategy, and from a governance standpoint it cannot be stated formally and definitively that the implementation of the Near Virtual Strategy has ended. He noted that the motion is being brought forward to eliminate any ambiguity between public statements and AU's institutional stance in this regard.

**Carried**

### **4.3 Strategic Planning Update**

The President and the Chief Growth Officer provided the members with an update in relation to activities that have taken place to date in support of strategic planning as well as next steps in the development of the new strategic plan.

**5.0 Business Arising from the Consent Agenda - None**

**6.0 Board Chair Report and Closing Comments**

The Board Chair expressed his appreciation of the work being undertaken by the President and the Senior Leadership Team.

**7.0 Adjournment**

The open session of Meeting 265 was adjourned at 9:52 AM.