

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

---

APPROVED minutes of the open session of the 274<sup>th</sup> regular meeting of the Board of Governors of Athabasca University held virtually on Tuesday, December 16, 2025.

**Present:** Byron Nelson (Chair), Alex Clark, Larry Spagnolo, Don Gnatiuk, Leo de Bever, Lori Van Rooijen, Elena Gould, Jacqueline Hobal, Terry Lovelace, Roger Morrill, Dan Leckelt, Martha Cleveland-Innes, Anshuman Khare, Jan Lehmann, Dave Roy and Brittany Hollett

**Governance Staff:** Tyler Tollefson (Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel & Acting Vice President University Relations) and Barbara Kowalchuk (Recording Secretary)

**Others Present:** Catherine Swindlehurst, Stuart Johnston, Ray Welshman, Pauline Smeltz, Matt McCreary, Steven Johnson, Richard Dixon, Manijeh Mannani, Ramses Ilarraza and Shauna Zenteno

**Absent with Regrets:** Brenda Kuzio, Diana Ramirez and Will Willier

The Chair provided the AU land acknowledgement.

### **Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. having achieved quorum.

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

**274-01 MOVED** That the Board of Governors approves the open session agenda for meeting 274, and thereby approves the consent agenda, as presented.

**Cleveland-Innes/Van Rooijen**

**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 Approval of Minutes**

**274-02 MOVED** That the Board of Governors approves the minutes of the open session of meeting 273 held September 23, 2025, as presented.

**Lovelace/Khare**

**Carried**

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

The President presented his report to the members.

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

### **5.1 Review 2025-26 Second Quarter Variance Report**

The President, the 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 report and year-end forecast.

### **5.2 Motion: Approve Amendment to 2025-2026 Tuition & Fee Matrix**

**274-03 MOVED** That the Board of Governors approves the amendment to the 2025–26 Tuition and Fee Matrix to incorporate the Master of Business Administration 6 credit capstone course fee, effective January 1, 2026.

#### **Gnatiuk/Morrill**

The Chair, Finance & Property Committee confirmed that this item was reviewed by the Finance & Property Committee at the meeting held December 2, 2025 and was recommended for approval.

The President and the Provost and Vice President Academic presented this item, noting that recent changes to the Master of Business Administration program include a capstone fee effective January 1, 2026, necessitating an amendment to the current tuition and fee matrix.

**Carried**

### **5.3 Motion: Approve 2026-27 Tuition and Fees**

**274-04 MOVED** That the Board of Governors approves the 2026–27 tuition and fees, as outlined in the 2026–27 Tuition and Fee Matrix effective September 1, 2026 (unless otherwise noted), subject to non-substantive edits.

#### **Hollett/Van Rooijen**

The Chair, Finance & Property Committee confirmed that this item was reviewed by the Finance & Property Committee at the meeting held December 2, 2025 and was recommended for approval.

The President, the Provost and Vice President Academic, and the Vice President Finance and Operations & Chief Financial Officer presented the proposed 2026-2027 tuition and fees to the members.

It was noted that the tuition and fees strategy includes a commitment to balancing student affordability with the university's financial sustainability and ensuring continued improvement in our student experience and success.

An overview of the development process was provided, noting that the proposal is in alignment with the overall 2% cap on domestic tuition and fees, and further that consultation sessions were held with representatives of the Athabasca University Students Union and the Athabasca University Graduate Students Association.

It was further confirmed that the proposal increases permanent funds for student bursaries and accessibility supports, continues the existing 10% tuition reduction for Indigenous undergraduate students, and will also include a 10% tuition reduction for Indigenous graduate students.

In response to inquiries, clarification was provided in relation to initiatives in support of the student experience, as well as administrative efficiencies.

**Carried**

#### **5.4 Motion: Rescind Use of University Legal Services Policy**

**274-05 MOVED** That the Use of University Legal Services Policy be rescinded, effective December 16, 2025.

##### **Gould/Van Rooijen**

The Chair, Audit & Risk Committee confirmed that this item was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee at the meeting held December 2, 2025 and was recommended for rescindment.

The Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel & Acting Vice President University Relations noted that a review of Board policies is currently underway. He noted that this policy was approved in 2001 and the purpose was to identify positions with the authority to retain legal counsel. He noted that as the inhouse General Counsel position now exists, this policy is no longer required.

**Carried**

#### **5.5 Motion: Approve Revisions to The Governors of Athabasca University Remuneration Policy**

**274-06 MOVED** That the Board of Governors approves the revisions to The Governors of Athabasca University Remuneration Policy, as presented, effective December 16, 2025.

##### **Gould/Lovelace**

The Chair confirmed that this item had been reviewed by the Governance Committee at the meeting held December 3, 2025 and had been recommended for approval.

The Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel & Acting Vice President University Relations noted that the policy had last been revised in 2011, and further that the proposed revisions reflect updated language only, with no changes to the intent of the policy.

**Carried**

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

**7.0 Board Chair Report and Closing Comments**

The Chair noted that since the last meeting Member Arcilla had accepted a new position at the University that exempted her from eligibility to serve as the non-academic member and had subsequently resigned her position. He thanked Ms. Arcilla for her contributions to the Board while she was a member.

The Chair noted that this would be the last Board meeting for members Spagnolo and Leckelt, and thanked them both for their contributions to the Board while they were members.

**8.0 Adjournment**

The open session of Meeting 274 was adjourned at 9:18 AM.