



## BOARD OF REGENTS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2025

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS

Thursday, February 13, 2025, 4:00 p.m.,  
in Wymilwood Lounge, Goldring Student Centre, 150 Charles Street West

---

#### PRESENT:

Keith Thomas (Chair), Robert Pemberton\* (Vice-Chair), Vas Rao\* (Treasurer), Rhonda McEwen (President), Alex Hernandez (Principal, Victoria College), HyeRan Kim-Cragg\* (Principal, Emmanuel College), Cynthia Crysler\*, Brian Johnston\*, Deepak Bhandari\*, Peter Politis\*, Kate Cassaday\*, Mark Austin\*, Brandon Bailey\*, Christer Bruun\*, Nevin El-Tahry\*, Julia Forgie\*, Jonathan Hamilton-Diabo\*, Lauren Hodgson\*, Doug Houston\*, James Janeiro\*, Adam Kilner\*, Ari Kopolovic\*, Anemone Van Leeuwen\*, Justin Liou\*, Pamela Marchant\*, Judith Newman\*, Mark Solovey\*, Valerie De Souza\*, Ephraim Stulberg\*, Rebecca Woods\*, Juhyung Yun, Shane Joy

#### REGRETS:

Nick Saul (Chancellor), Jane Huang, Amy Mann, Jason Meyers, Julian Munro, Marga Vicedo

#### IN ATTENDANCE:

Louise Yearwood (Executive Director, Alumni Affairs & Advancement), Anthony Yeung (Interim Bursar), Vikas Mehta (Interim Chief Operations Officer), Kelley Castle\* (Dean of Students, Office of the Dean of Students), Lindy Chan\* (Director, Office of the President), Leslie Shepherd\* (Interim Director, Communications), Roma Kail (Interim Chief Librarian), Jessica Todd (Record Manager/Archivist)

#### SECRETARIAT:

Anwar Kazimi (Secretary), Kevin Chong (Governance Coordinator)

\* *participated remotely*

---

## OPEN SESSION

### 1. Chair's Remarks

The Chair opened the meeting with a territorial acknowledgement and extended a warm welcome to members and guests to the second Board of Regents' meeting of 2024-2025 governance year, both attended the meeting virtually and on-site.

The Chair noted that on February 4, 2025, the following motion had been approved by the Board of Regents through an electronic ballot:

Be It Resolved

THAT Jennifer Ankrett be appointed as Bursar and Chief Administrative Officer of Victoria University in the University of Toronto in a continuing appointment effective March 10, 2025.

### 2. Report of the President

President McEwen gave a presentation to the Board covering three main areas:

#### a. 2024-2025 Presidential Priorities

President McEwen initiated a comprehensive review of the University's organisational policies, locating 117 policies, guidelines, and procedures. The objective was to create a standardised template for all policies and organise them into categories for easier access. The President aimed to complete the reformatting policy instruments by May 2025. Once policies had been fully reviewed, the objective was to host them on an online public library. President McEwen also discussed the application of artificial intelligence (AI) in assisting the review and its limitations in comprehension and standardisation.

Another priority was to enhance data analytics capabilities across major departments or units of the University to improve decision-making. Institutional data dashboards had been created to support key areas such as strategic enrollment management, financial forecasting, and Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA).

The President discussed the development of the Campus Master Plan – *Vic Vision 2060*, including its planning process and implementation. The plan would focus on real estate, academic and housing strategies, and address legal and budget considerations, spanning over five years or more.

#### b. Revenue Models

President McEwen informed the Board of the plan to continuously diversify revenue streams to reduce reliance on any single source. This included real estate, student meal plans, and the annual draw on the endowment fund. The administration aimed to

increase revenue from ancillary services such as event bookings and parking, explore opportunities for micro-credentials and skill development programs, and investigate partnerships to increase housing capacity and affordability.

### **c. Key Topics from Universities Canada**

President McEwen reported on Universities Canada's regular discussions regarding strategic planning and institutional renewal, addressing financial constraints and planning for future challenges. Canadian universities were preparing for changes in government policies and funding, which would impact their operations and initiatives. The President also emphasized effective communication strategies in social media and public outreach, as well as understanding shifting audience dynamics.

### **Discussion**

A member suggested updating the binary gender language during the policy review to make the University's policies more inclusive. The President agreed with the recommendation and mentioned that once all the policies were in the same format, it would be easier to locate and update relevant University's policies.

A member questioned the University's presence on one of the social media platforms (X) and inquired if any assessments had been conducted on that platform. President McEwen confirmed that the University was exploring alternatives, including reducing its presence on, or even a complete exit from, the platform in question.

A member observed a notable increase in the total headcount working at the University over the past year and inquired about the reason. The President clarified that the increase included the addition of casual staff members and student workers, not just permanent employees. The rise was due to more events and a higher use of student workers instead of external contractors.

## **3. Alumni Affairs & Advancement – A Brief Review**

Louise Yearwood, Executive Director, Alumni Affairs & Advancement, was invited to provide a brief presentation regarding the department's mandate, team structure, alumni engagement and fundraising results, and current campaign priorities.

Louise Yearwood highlighted the alumni engagement and year-to-date campaign results for *Defy Gravity: The Campaign for Victoria University*, which formed part of the University of Toronto's Defy Gravity campaign.

Louise Yearwood also outlined the current campaign priorities which include scholarships for students of Victoria and Emmanuel Colleges; Opportunity Awards and the VOLT (Victoria Opportunity for Leaders of Tomorrow) program; the Indigenous Healing Garden; The Dr. Jean Augustine Professorship in Transformative Education, and *Vic Vision 2060*.

Board members praised Louise Yearwood and the Office of Alumni Affairs & Advancement for their excellent work in aligning fundraising initiatives with donor interests and achieving notable results.

#### **4. 2025-2026 Ancillary Operating Budget**

Anthony Yeung, Interim Bursar, was invited to present the Ancillary Operating Budget for the year 2025-2026, which included the Ancillary Academic Budget (residence beds and meal plans) and the Ancillary Events and Space Sales Budget (summer camps, catering, events, room rentals, film shoots and parking), in addition to the memorandum and written report.

Anthony Yeung discussed the budget development framework, emphasising a measured approach with reasonable budget assumptions, while taking into account the recovery framework outlined in the multi-year financial recovery plan and the impact of inflation on both the Canadian and global economy over the past several years.

The combined Budget projected a surplus. The administration highlighted the continuous high demand for residence spaces, despite economic uncertainties and inflation risks.

The Chair indicated that the proposal received recommendations from the Finance, Pension and Audit Committee (FPA). Vas Rao, the FPA Chair, commented on the matter as discussed in the FPA meeting on January 30, 2025, and put forwarded a motion for the approval of the proposal. Vas Rao informed the Board that the proposed budget had received support of the FPA.

On motion duly moved, seconded, and carried,

IT WAS RESOLVED

THAT the 2025-2026 Ancillary Operating Budget, as provided in the memorandum dated February 13th, 2025 be approved.

#### **5. 2025-2026 Non-Academic Ancillary Fee Schedule**

Anthony Yeung briefly introduced the proposed 2025-2026 Non-Academic Ancillary Fee Schedule, in addition to the memorandum and written report.

Anthony Yeung advised the Board that the proposed an increase in Non-Academic Ancillary Fee was to cover the rising costs of providing residence and meal plan services, particularly the increase in food and utility costs. The administration further clarified that the fee did not include student tuition fees, which was to be determined by the University of Toronto.

The Chair indicated that the proposal received recommendations from FPA. Vas Rao, the FPA Chair, commented on the matter as discussed in the FPA meeting on January 30,

2025, and put forwarded a motion for the approval of the proposal. Vas Rao informed the Board that the proposal had received support of the FPA.  
On motion duly moved, seconded, and carried,

IT WAS RESOLVED

THAT the proposed 2025-26 Non-Academic Ancillary Fee Schedule, dated February 13th, 2025, be approved.

**6. Highlights of the Proposed 2025-2026 Non-Deferred Maintenance Capital Projects for Ancillary Buildings and Deferred Maintenance Capital Projects for the Isabel Bader Theatre**

Vikas Mehta, Interim Chief Operations Officer, and Anthony Yeung were invited to provide an overview of the proposed Non-Deferred Maintenance Capital Projects (for Ancillary Buildings) and Deferred Maintenance Capital Projects (for Isabel Bader Theatre).

Vikas Mehta briefly provided details on the capital projects to be undertaken at Burwash Dining Hall, Annesley Hall, Burwash Lower Residences, and the Isabel Bader Theatre, as well as the installation of digital signages for campus parking.

**7. Highlights of Campus Access Controls and Security Solutions Modernization Project**

Vikas Mehta and Anthony Yeung were invited to provide an overview of the proposed Campus Access Controls and Security Solutions Modernization Project.

The administration advised that, after reviewing its infrastructure requirements over the past two years, the University identified the need to modernize campus access control system and security solutions, planned to be implemented over next five years. The Project included replacing outdated wireless locks in residences and installing new wireless locks in academic sites to enhance access control and emergency response capabilities as well as cameras around the campus to enhance monitoring for security purposes. An open market procurement process had been undertaken.

**8. Minutes of the Previous Meeting on October 10, 2024**

On motion duly moved, seconded, and carried,

IT WAS RESOLVED

THAT the minutes of the Board meeting held on October 10, 2024, be approved.

**9. Business Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

There was no business arising.

## **10. Report of the President of Victoria University Students' Administrative Council (VUSAC)**

Juhyung Yun presented a semi-annual report to the Board, summarising VUSAC activities and updates for Fall 2024. Key events included the Home for the Holidays market, programming for the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, the Fall 2024 Caucus, and the Gardiner Gala. The VUSAC Chair also updated on monthly Executive Office Hours, the Winter 2025 Budget ratification, and the launch of VUSAC Reels. Upcoming projects and events included Life After Vic: Pathways to Success, the VUSAC Office Renovation Project, the Student Office Reorganization Project, the Student Events Calendar Project, the VUSAC Spring Election, and Highball.

## **11. Report of the Chair of Emmanuel College Student Society (ECSS)**

Julian Munro sent regrets for being absent from the meeting, and a report was submitted to the Board in advance. The report highlighted increased investment in student support initiatives, ECSS's positive financial position, the preparation of the 2025-2026 budget, and the successful Holiday Tea and Awards Banquet. High usage of the Needs Nook (student food bank) was noted. Upcoming events included the EC Formal Dinner and Dance, weekly Spiritual Life Events, and a Dean's Advisory Committee meeting. Julian Munro also expressed gratitude to Emmanuel and Victoria Colleges' leadership and administration.

## **12. Report of the Committees**

### **a. Finance, Pension and Audit Committee (FPA)**

Vas Rao, the FPA Chair, indicated that all matters as discussed in the FPA meetings on December 12, 2024, and January 30, 2025, had already been addressed earlier in the current meeting.

### **b. Governance and University Affairs Committee (GUA)**

Cynthia Cryslar, the GUA Chair, advised that there had been no updates since the last Board meeting in October 2024.

### **c. Property Committee (PC)**

Brian Johnston, the PC Chair, provided a report on matters as discussed in the last PC meeting on January 28, 2025. Discussions included a potential tenant for the Lillian Massey Building, a space utilization audit, and restoration work at the Birge-Carnegie Building. Progress updates were given on capital projects like Burwash Hall Residences, air-conditioning installations, Goldring Student Centre renewal, Indigenous Healing Garden, Holography Lab, and Victoria College Chapel. The proposed Presidential advisory committee for the Campus Master Plan was discussed. Gordon Thompson's resignation was acknowledged, and gratitude was expressed for 18 years of service.

#### **d. Investment Committee (IC)**

Robert Pemberton, the IC Chair, provided a report on matters as discussed in the IC's meetings on November 13, 2024, and December 11, 2024, including the review of performance of the endowment and pension fund assets, both of which had performed well over the past year. The committee was also making progress in discussions with the investment consultant and addressing the logistics to meet the Board's requirement to divest from fossil fuel-producing companies, with two sub-committees established to review these matters.

### **13. Other Business**

The Chair advised that the governance review was currently in progress.

Kelley Castle, Dean of Students, highlighted the achievements of the ECSS, which added two dedicated seats for Muslim and Buddhist students to foster a sense of belonging. The Dean of Students also announced that Shane Joy, the student Board member, received the John H. Moss Scholarship, and Helen Li received the University of Toronto Alumni Association Scholars Award. Kelley Castle congratulated all students on their awards and achievements.

---

### ***IN CAMERA SESSION***

The Board moved *in camera*.

#### **14. Proposed 2025-2026 Non-Deferred Maintenance Capital Projects for Ancillary Buildings and Deferred Maintenance Capital Projects for the Isabel Bader Theatre**

On motion duly moved, seconded, and carried,

IT WAS RESOLVED

THAT the proposed 2025-2026 Non-Deferred Maintenance Capital Projects for the Ancillary Buildings and Deferred Maintenance Capital Projects for Isabel Bader Theatre, as provided in the memorandum dated February 13th, 2025, be approved.

#### **15. Campus Access Controls and Security Solutions Modernization Project**

On motion duly moved, seconded, and carried,

IT WAS RESOLVED

THAT the multi-year framework for the Campus Access Control System and Security Solutions Modernization Project and the proposed implementation of the campus access

control system and security solutions for the 2025-2026 year, as noted in the memorandum dated February 13th, 2025, be approved.

#### **16. Update on UPP Transfer**

Anthony Yeung provided an update on the transfer to UPP (University Pension Plan Ontario).

#### **17. Question Period**

There was no further question.

#### **18. Next Meeting**

The next Board meeting was scheduled for Thursday, April 10, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

The meeting returned to *open session*.

---

**The meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.**

/s/ Keith Thomas

**Keith Thomas**

Chair of the Board of Regents

/s/ Anwar Kazimi

**Anwar Kazimi**

Secretary to the Board of Regents