

UNIVERSITY OF KING'S COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Executive Committee of the University of King's College Board of Governors met by Zoom teleconference and in person on Thursday, June 19, 2025, at 12:00 noon.

Last Name	First Name	Title	Present	Regrets
ANDERSON	Ellie	(King's Students' Union President)	X	
BURTON	Kathryn	(Diocesan Representative)	Zoom	
CLIFT	Dr. Sarah	(Vice-President)	X	
FISHER	Bruce	(Treasurer)	X	
LAHEY	Prof. William	(President and Vice-Chancellor)	X	
L'ESPERANCE	Peter	(Secretary)	X	
McGRATH	Stephanie	(Alumni Representative & Vice-Chair) (Acting Chair)	X	
MORRIS	Dr. Kathryn	(Faculty Representative)	X	
RUCK	Douglas	(Chair)		X
WRIGHT	Hugh	(Diocesan Representative)	Zoom (12:27 p.m.)	

By invitation:

Last Name	First Name	Title	Present	Regrets
ABBOTT	Adriane	(Advancement Director)	Zoom	
HAZEL	Pamela	(Manager of Governance and University Ceremonies)	X	
SANDS	Bonnie	(Bursar)	X	
ULKUER	Kutay	(Chief Enrolment and Student Life Officer)	X	
WILSON	Jeff	(Interim Dean of Students)	X	

At 12:02 p.m., the Vice-Chair called the meeting to order.

(2025:16) INVOCATION

The Vice-Chair provided a land acknowledgment and an invocation with the theme of gratitude.

(2025:17) NECROLOGY

The Vice-Chair read the necrology. Sarah Clift shared memories of Cindy Littlefair. A moment of silence was observed.

(2025:18) VICE-CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Vice-Chair moved directly to the agenda.

(2025:19) CONSENT AGENDA

A Consent Agenda addressing the following matters was circulated:

- a) Approval of Minutes of March 6, 2025

- b) Approval of 2026 Meeting Dates for the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors and the Board of Governors
- c) Reports from Officers
 - i. Advancement Director
 - ii. Vice-President
- d) Reports from Committee Chairs
 - i. Advancement
- e) Report of the Alumni Association
- f) Annual Reports
 - i. Accessibility Officer
 - ii. Academic Integrity Officer
 - iii. Equity Officer
 - iv. Information Access and Privacy Officer
 - v. Sexual Health and Safety Officer
 - vi. Video Surveillance and Security

MOTION: (Lahey/L’Esperance) The Vice-Chair declared the consent agenda approved as presented for this meeting.

CARRIED

(2025:20) BUSINESS/DECISION ITEMS

a) Enrolment and Resident Occupancy Status

The Chief Enrolment and Student Life Officer (CESLO) referred to his report, noting a total headcount of 927, compared to 900 at the same time last year. He also reported that fall residency is expected to be at full occupancy. He invited questions, but none were raised.

b) Approval of tuition and fees for 2025-26

The Bursar informed the group that she will be seeking Board approval next week for the 2025-26 tuition and fees. She noted that the province has mandated a two-year undergraduate tuition freeze for Nova Scotia students, which the institution will implement for all domestic students, acknowledging that this will have financial implications. She invited questions, but none were asked.

c) 2025-26 Operating Budget

The Bursar advised that she will be seeking Board approval for the 2025–26 budget. She noted that significant changes have occurred since March and will provide a more detailed update next week.

Key highlights include a drop in enrolment from a projected FYP (Foundation Year Program) class of 240 students to 190, resulting in a \$500,000 reduction in revenue. Additionally, Dalhousie’s cost of teaching has increased at a higher percentage than anticipated, leading to a higher anticipated bill from Dal for 2025-26. However, these impacts have been partially offset by savings from removing or postponing new positions and adjusting the start date of other positions along with cost reductions across departments and programs. Enrollment in upper-year programs remains particularly strong.

The CESLO reported that they have completed an analysis of the past admissions cycle to better understand the decline in FYP numbers. They are using this data to inform strategies aimed at reversing this trend for next year. Additionally, there are ongoing system upgrades expected to support improved enrollment outcomes. There is also a focus on enhancing digital marketing efforts to better target prospective students and improve recruitment.

The President referred to page 80 of the Bursar's presentation, which outlines several items currently under discussion. A proposed motion includes capping the deficit at \$750,000, implementing \$250,000 in additional spending reductions, and creating a \$100,000 fund to address emerging issues on an application basis. The Bursar and Treasurer are available to provide additional context as needed.

It also references further recommendations for the Board and Executive's consideration. These include engaging a cost consultant to conduct an external review of potential savings, establishing a Financial Sustainability Committee to develop a "Plan B" focused on cost reduction rather than revenue growth, implementing a hiring freeze, and a potential salary freeze (which will be addressed in a separate motion from the Treasurer).

These additional measures are not part of the current motion. However, unless otherwise directed by the Board, the administration intends to move forward with their implementation.

MOTION: (Clift/Fisher) That the Executive Committee recommend to the Board the following Motion:

Be it resolved that the Board of Governors hereby approves the University of King's College operating budget for the 2025/26 fiscal year as presented. The President shall not exceed an operating cash deficit of \$750,000 without prior board approval. To ensure that the deficit does not exceed \$750,000, the Board mandates an additional overall spending reduction of \$250,000. Furthermore, a \$100,000 contingency shall be set aside from any reduction to address pressing needs within the administrative department and academic program budgets.

Be it further resolved that the Board of Governors hereby authorizes the use of the internally restricted funds to finance the operating cash deficit, up to but not exceeding \$750,000, as outlined in the proposed budget.

PASSED

d) Resolution on University's Financial Situation

The Treasurer referenced the resolutions on page 139 in the meeting package. Following discussion the following motions were presented:

That the Board Executive recommends the following resolutions to the Board of Governors:

Resolution 1

MOTION: (Fisher/McGrath) Be it resolved that the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee recommends that the Board of Governors hereby directs the President to prepare a report on a potential salary freeze (cost-of-living and other increases, step increases or both) no later than October 1, 2025, that specifies:

- **Its cost and implications for the current and future years;**

- Its duration (2025/26 and/or future years), including which circumstances would cause a freeze to continue or end;
- The process to approve future salary increases and/or freezes, including the role of the Board; and,
- Any other options and/or considerations the President considers to be appropriate.

The Board further directs the President not to authorize any salary increases, that are otherwise not confirmed, until such time as the Board receives the report and has provided further direction.

Following discussion, it was decided that the President would share this information with Faculty tomorrow at their June meeting and to the staff via email on Monday.

A vote was taken on Resolutions 1 – **PASSED**

Resolution 2

MOTION: (Fisher/Anderson) The Board Executive recommends to the Board of Governors the following resolution:

Be it resolved that the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee recommends that the Board of Governors hereby directs the President to prepare a report on fundraising no later than October 1, 2025, that identifies a strategy and an action plan to achieve at least an additional \$2 million in unrestricted fundraising proceeds (net of any required resources) that specifies:

- A potential strategy and business case, including the risks and potential for success;
- The resources required and any potential funding source(s);
- Potential timeframes and targets;
- The roles of the Board and the Advancement Committee; and,
- Any other options and/or considerations the President considers to be appropriate.

The Treasurer presented Resolution #2, which proposes raising \$2 million in unrestricted funds through fundraising efforts. The Director of Advancement expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity and looks forward to presenting potential models for how this goal might be achieved. The Chair of the Advancement Committee also voiced excitement about the challenge. It was emphasized that achieving this target will require a collective effort from the entire Board in support of the Committee.

The President noted the importance of aligning donor contributions with institutional priorities to help protect the Internally Restricted Funds from being used to cover deficits. The idea is to have money (and income earned on it) donated for priority areas going into the budget to reduce deficits instead of having larger deficits that have to be covered from internally restricted (i.e. unrestricted) funds after-the-fact.

A request was made to include a deadline in the resolution. The motion was subsequently amended to incorporate a deadline, and a vote was taken.

PASSED

e) Mental Health Strategy

The Interim Dean of Students reported that the development of a mental health strategy has been completed. The draft document has been submitted to the President and the Senior Administrative Team (SAT) with recommended revisions. It is now at a stage where it is ready for review by the Board of Governors, and approval is being sought to move the strategy forward.

MOTION: (Lahey/McGrath) That the Executive Committee recommend referring the Mental Health Strategy to the Board of Governors. for approval. PASSED

f) Application to MPHEC for Approval of New Undergraduate Journalism Curriculum

The VP advised that this change in the curriculum will be coming forward to Faculty tomorrow for their approval.

She will be asking the Board at its meeting next week to approve the changes so it may be taken to the MPHEC for approval.

g) Correspondence from the Investment Committee

The President addressed the letter from the Chair of the Investment Committee included in the meeting package, noting it is provided for information. The letter summarizes recent discussions between the Investment Committee and the university's investment manager and reflects the committee's conclusion that, to achieve the best possible returns, King's must continue investing in pooled funds.

While pooled funds generally deliver stronger long-term performance, the investment manager cannot guarantee that all companies from which the university has sought to divest will be excluded. Fully divesting from pooled funds to remedy situations where the fund includes a small portion of investment in proscribed business would likely result in significant financial loss to the university.

The letter serves as formal advice from the Investment Committee to the university community, confirming that this pooled investment strategy will be maintained. The President will be sharing the letter from the Investment Committee with the community after the latter is reviewed by the Board.

h) Conceptual Design for the Southeast Corner Project

The Board is being asked by the Campus Planning Committee to endorse the conceptual design with the clear understanding that no further work on the project will proceed until funding is secured, except for assisting in negotiating a development agreement with the municipality. Additionally, Board endorsement will be to establish that if funding is received, work will proceed from the endorsed conceptual design, unless the Board otherwise approves. This project will span the terms of multiple presidents. It is important for the Board to approve the design now so that, when the time comes to move forward, all necessary approvals are already in place.

MOTION: (Wright/McGrath) That the Executive Committee Recommend the following motion to the Board for approval:

The Campus Planning Committee recommends that the Board of Governors endorse the concept design for the Southeast Corner Project, as proposed by architects Diamond Schmitt and Abbott Brown, on the understanding that if funding is secured for further work on the project, it would proceed from and on the basis of this concept design.

PASSED

i. Audited financial statements 2024-25 and management discussion & analysis.

The Bursar referenced the audited financial statements included in the meeting package, noting that the audit received a clean opinion, a reflection of the strong work by our new Controller. For internal

purposes, the reported deficit is \$949,000. The audited financial statements include a prior period adjustment dating back to 2012, which is explained in detail in the note 2 to the financial statements (see page 263). Next week, she will seek Board approval for the financial statements.

ii. Accountability framework for investing internally restricted funds.

The Bursar referenced the document in the meeting package. She advised that she will present this next week at the Board meeting.

i) Update to the Pink Book re Changing Home Program Status

The VP outlined her recommended changes to the Pink Book concerning the process for changing home program status.

MOTION (Clift/McGrath)

That the Board Executive Committee recommend to the Board of Governors the approval of a more formalized process of changing home program status, found in Pink Book Appendix 5 & Appendix 7 as circulated.

PASSED

j) Update to the Green Book re Journalism Curriculum Changes

The VP summarized the Green Book edits in regard to the administrative structure of the Journalism programs.

MOTION: (Clift/McGrath) That the Board Executive Committee recommend to the Board of Governors the approval of the changes to the administrative structure of the Journalism programs outlined in the relevant sections of the Green Book as circulated.

PASSED

At 1:10, the committee took a 10-minute break.

The meeting resumed at 1:20

(2025:21) GOVERNANCE, HUMAN RESOURCES, AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Chair of G HR N Committee referred to the resolution on page 283 fulfilling the minimum requirements under our government documents on a annual basis.

MOTION: (L'ESPERANCE/LAHEY) the text of the resolution on pages 230 - 233 of the meeting package be approved for submission to the Board of Governors for approval.

PASSED

(2025:22) UPDATES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

The President advised that at the Board meeting there will be a separate agenda item for the Campus Planning Committee, Investment Committee, and Advancement Committee.

(2025:23) KING’S STUDENTS’ UNION REPORT

The President of the KSU provided a verbal update on their recent activities. Planning for Orientation Week is well underway and progressing smoothly. They are also in the process of changing health care providers, which involves significant preparation.

(2025:24) PRESIDENT’S REPORT

The President highlighted the upcoming release, scheduled for Monday, announcing the new African Nova Scotian Journalism Initiative. This program involves key partners including Minister Brendan Maguire, Deputy Minister Tracey Barbrick, The Honourable Twila Grosse, Ashley Hill, the CEO of the PREP Academy, Journalism faculty, and Russell Grosse, the CEO of the Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia (BCCNS).

Significant efforts are also underway in the area of government relations. The University has been submitting multiple reports as part of the bilateral agreement and is now entering a more intensive phase of mandatory academic program review. There was a briefing from the DAE held this week to outline the academic review process.

We have also been working with external advisors who have facilitated meetings with government officials. The University is pursuing targeted funding opportunities for program development, including initiatives such as a Screenwriting MFA and Podcasting Centre of Excellence. There is also interest in securing support for the SEC project, which would bolster private fundraising efforts.

The Minister of the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, The Honourable Leah Martin, is expected to visit in September. In preparation, the University is engaging with various organizations including the Tribe Network, which focuses on entrepreneurship with Mi’kmaw communities, and Screen Nova Scotia, whose response has been very enthusiastic.

On the federal side, a series of letters have been sent, particularly to members of the new cabinet, who may have an interest in King’s initiatives. Meetings are currently being scheduled. An analysis has also been conducted to identify points of contact between King’s representatives and senior federal government officials regarding both the SEC project and the University's broader objectives.

He drew attention to the VP’s report on experiential learning, noting that the pilot projects are creating valuable and positive experiences for students and emphasizing that this is the kind of innovative work that can help to show the province King’s is preparing students for professional as well as academic success.

(2025:25) VICE-PRESIDENT’S REPORT

The Vice-President referenced her written report and asked for questions. There were none.

(2025:26) UPDATES FROM OFFICERS

There were none.

(2025:27) OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

(2025:28) *IN CAMERA (2:02 p.m.)*

MOTION: (McGrath/Fisher) that the Board of Governors enter an *in-camera* discussion. CARRIED.

The meeting moved to an *in-camera* discussion at 2:08 p.m.

MOTION: (McGrath/Fisher) that the Board of Governors move out of the *in-camera* discussion. CARRIED.

The meeting of the Board of Governors' Executive Committee was adjourned at 3:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie McGrath

Peter L'Esperance