



Senate Meeting  
MS Teams

April 25, 2024  
4 – 5 p.m.

### **MINUTES: Special Meeting**

**Present:** J. Dickinson (Chair), K. Allan, K. Blotnicky, S. Brigham, R. Burse, A. Card, C. Cameron, A. Card, M. Coolen, P. Crouse, G. Durepos, M. Eskritt, D. Fisher, L. Francis, T. Franz-Odendaal, J. Fraser Arsenault, J. Gahagan, M. Gonick, S. Goswami, S. Hale, M. J. Harkins, K. Jones, N. Kayhani, G. MacInnis, J. MacLeod, I. Nault, D. Rodrigues, K. Schlieff, C. Slumkoski, M. Siddiquee, G. Sneddon, L. Steele, J. R. Sylliboy, A. Thurlow, S. Trenholm, J. Valcke, R. Zuk

**Regrets:** R. Gechtman, C. McLean, C. Schneider

**Observers:** G. Batten, K. Gallant, E. Le Doze, G. Nepean, K. Resmer

*The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m. Observers were identified and welcomed.*

*Procedures to be used during the meeting and for voting were outlined.*

#### **1. Indigenous Land Recognition**

J. Dickinson provided an acknowledgement that the Mount is built on traditional, unceded Mi'kmaq territory and paid respect to the Indigenous peoples of the land on which Senate meets.

#### **2. Approval of Agenda**

**Moved** by L. Steele, seconded by N. Kayhani, to approve the agenda as presented.  
CARRIED.

#### **3. Administration Update**

##### **3.1. Vice-President Administration – Budget Presentation**

J. Dickinson thanked the executive leadership team, in particular, I. Nault and S. Davis for their extensive work on this budget. J. Dickinson prefaced the presentation by reiterating that the impact of the new IRCC required Provincial Attestation Letters (PALs) is still not known, and therefore this budget was prepared under the assumption that status quo will be maintained next year.

I. Nault echoed J. Dickinson's thanks to all those involved in the budget preparation, noting that it is truly a team effort.

I. Nault presented the 2024-2025 budget for information and discussion. She spoke to the following four items in detail:

1. Overview of the budget development process, including the guiding principles of MSVU's budget development
2. Context for the 2024-2025 fiscal planning
3. MSVU's obligations under the Bilateral Agreement with the Province
4. 2024-2025 budget assumptions and requests

I. Nault provided an overview of the proposed operating budget for 2024-2025, sharing that the assumed year-end surplus does not include any "savings" generated during the MSVUFA job action as those funds were redistributed to students via tuition reimbursement. She further shared that the anticipated year-end surplus is due to interest rates being more favourable than expected.

#### **4. Question Period**

N. Kayhani asked for clarification on the projected interest income change of -18.2% to which I. Nault and J. Dickinson clarified that they are anticipating the interest rates to go down mid-year, so the -18.2% change from 2023-2024 to 2024-2025 represents less income from interest due to lower interest rates.

J. Fraser Arsenault questioned if the increase in budget for makers and teaching assistants would include salary increases for other student jobs on campus. I. Nault responded that the budget was based on makers and teaching assistants but that she could review increases for other student positions if asked.

G. Nepean noted the requirement of a 97% enrollment rate in certain programs to receive our full government grant and questioned if a plan is in place to ensure the required enrollment rate is met in our Applied Human Nutrition program. J. Dickinson responded that the AHN program does not have a cap, with L. Francis adding that we are still seeking clarity on how the government expects these reports from programs without caps.

I. Nault commented on the intention to reevaluate the budget at the end of Q2 and if a trending positive variance is noted, they will review budget requests again and continue working on them throughout the year.

A. Thurlow asked about the possibility of a three-year or five-year staffing budget plan rather than year-to-year. It was shared that, while this would be the goal, government agreements for the same timeframe would be needed to implement this goal. In the meantime, departments were encouraged to discuss enrollment patterns and succession planning. (A. Thurlow, J. Dickinson, L. Francis)

T. Franz-Odenaal sought clarification on the required 5% administrative costs decrease in the bilateral agreement. I. Nault shared that much uncertainty still remains on what that

category will include, as salaries and benefits are not included. She also noted that institutions province-wide already work with ISI for intra-university procurement and best pricing on capital expenditures. J. Dickinson added that provincial funding to universities has not been increased this year; rather, funding has just been redistributed amongst the province's universities.

T. Franz-Odendaal questioned if specific funding would be available for departments to implement recommendations stemming from departmental reviews. The need for such funding was recognized, and it was proposed that this be looked at during the Q2 budget review. (T. Franz-Odendaal, L. Francis, I. Nault, J. Dickinson)

J. MacLeod asked for further details regarding the governance review line item. J. Dickinson shared that the funds have been earmarked for a future Board governance review, noting several reasons why it will be undertaken.

The topic of air conditioning was discussed, with Senators noting how uncomfortable offices in uncooled areas are in the summer months. While the budget does not include air conditioning, other possible solutions were discussed. (N. Kayhani, I. Nault, J. Dickinson, T. Franz-Odendaal)

## **5. Adjournment**

**Moved** by D. Fisher, seconded by N. Kayhani, that the meeting be adjourned.  
CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.