

York University Board of Governors Minutes

Meeting: Open Session, 29 April 2025

Via Zoom

Present:	Regrets:	Others:
Paul Tsaparis, Chair Francesca Accinelli Stefanie Lamonaca Caputo Antonio Di Domenico Frank Fazzari David Garg Michael Giudice Uma Gopinath Ruth Green Naomi Ierullo Harshit Jaiswal Noorez Lalani Rhonda Lenton Sham Madhok Carole Malo Nadine Spencer Kathleen Taylor Mary Traversy <i>Leikha Bisera, Assistant Secretary</i> <i>Leanne De Filippis, Advisor</i>	Sheraz Arshad Doug Bergeron Loretta Lam Helen Polatajko Eugene Roman Nar Singh	Marcia Annisette Amir Asif Anthony Barbisan Laina Bay-Cheng Shannon Brooks Christine Brooks-Cappadocia Priyanka Debnath Marco Fiola Susana Gajic-Brueya Vinitha Gengatharan Keshia Gray Barbara Joy Margaret Kierylo Narin Kishinchandani, VPFA Julie Lafford Weiling Li Alice MacLachlan Ijade Maxwell Rodriques JJ McMurtry David Peters Christine Silversides Graeme Stewart Darus Suharto Elaine MacRae, Governance Coordinator Michelle Roseman, Admin Assistant Alexander Munin, IT Tech for Open Session

II. Open Session

1. Chair's Items

The Chair welcomed Governors and community members to the 489th meeting of the Board of Governors of York University and delivered the Land Acknowledgement.

The Chair welcomed new members Frank Fazzari and Noorez Lalani to their first Board meeting. Thanks and appreciation were extended to board members serving as mentors for their support to new members. Members were reminded that the last meeting of the

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governance year on June 24, 2025 will be an in-person meeting followed by the Hail and Farewell event.

The Chair noted that York was recently recognized as one of Canada's 2025 Greenest Employers for the 13th consecutive year and spoke to the most recent federal election which underscored the importance of community engagement and the democratic processes.

a) Report on Items Decided in the Closed Session

The Chair reported that at the Closed Session, the Board approved the following appointments:

- Sarah Willey-Thomas as University Secretary starting May 12, 2025
- Dr. Robert Tsushima for a 6-month period as Interim Dean, Faculty of Science effective 1 July 2025 and ending 31 December 2025.

The Board also approved-in-principle a new capital project to build the York University School of Medicine (YUSoM), comprised of a building at the Vaughan Healthcare Precinct (VHCP) and renovations on the Keele Campus to provide an interim solution.

b) Consent Agenda Approval

The Board approved the following items under consent:

- The minutes of the meeting of February 25, 2025.
- Appointments to the Pension Fund Board of Trustees
- Ratification and termination of Student Levies
- The Report on Forced and Child Labour in the Supply Chain Act (Bill S-211)
- Policy Updates and Annual Policy Review & Approvals:
 - Insurance Policy
 - Healthy Workplace Policy
 - Workplace Harassment Prevention Policy
 - Workplace Violence Prevention Policy
- Amendment to the Regulation Regarding Student Organizations

2. Executive Committee

The Chair reported that at its meeting that morning, the Committee received updates from the President, considered appointments as was just announced, received the Enterprise Risk Management report, considered the proposed Terms of Reference and the 2025-2026 Work plan of Board Executive committee; discussed the committee skill matrix, and heard from Committee Chairs on key issues and action items from this Board cycle's meeting.

3. President's Items

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President Rhonda Lenton provided a comprehensive update on York University's strategic initiatives and emphasized the university's commitment to equity, inclusion, diversity, and social justice, highlighting its strong liberal arts foundation and interdisciplinary programs.

The President discussed the impact of external factors such as federal policies on international enrollment, which have led to financial challenges and outlined the York University Forward Action Plan. The President spoke to the importance of strategic enrollment initiatives and the need for a five-year rolling budget to ensure financial sustainability. Additionally, President Lenton addressed the proposal for the York University School of Medicine, emphasizing the need for substantial funding before proceeding with the capital project as York focuses on leveraging opportunities for growth and maintaining its position as a leading higher education institution.

President Lenton spoke to financial health metrics as York moves to the 'Medium Action' category. She spoke to the request to submit a proposal under the Efficiency and Accountability Fund to retain a third-party consulting firm to review the University's recovery plan. In alignment with the Efficiency Accountability Fund framework and the anticipated timelines for the realization of the Forward Action Plan, a five-year recovery window is proposed. This timeline provides more time to achieve transformation through the Forward Action Plan, while fulfilling government requirements.

4. Academic Resources Committee

Antonio Di Domenico provided a summary of key items of business discussed by the Committee. This included updates on select Forward Action Plan projects and a comprehensive overview on research and innovation developments highlighting funding and grants received. Notable among the awards was the 2025 Killam Prize which York University Professor Christina Sharpe received for her impact on Black studies and the humanities. This prestigious prize is awarded annually to five distinguished Canadian scholars.

a. Report on Appointments, Tenure and Promotion

Documentation was noted.

It was duly *agreed* that the Board of Governors concur with the President's April 2025 report on appointments, tenure and promotion as set out in Appendices A and B.

b. Establishment and disestablishment of academic units, Glendon

The new Jay Smith and Laura Rapp Chair aims to lead the Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship and support university-wide initiatives and is funded by a \$1 million donation from the Schulich Foundation.

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It was duly *agreed* that the **Board of Governors approve the establishment of the Jay Smith and Laura Rapp Chair in Innovation and Entrepreneurship.**

5. External Relations Committee

Francesca Accinelli spoke to items of business covered by the Committee as noted in the report. Discussions included the strategies and communication protocol for addressing current issues, the “Hometown Heroes” storytelling campaign that highlighted successes and strategic recruitment efforts, and alumni engagement activities, which saw excellent attendance and participation from alumni.

6. Finance and Audit Committee

Dee Patterson provided highlights of items discussed at the Committee which included a budget and enrolment. Discussion focused on the decline of student targets, and how the downward trend relates to labour disruptions and federal policy change. In response, a number of strategic enrolment initiatives are underway, including conversion efforts. The Committee Chair also noted that the Committee received the report of the internal auditors and an update on the corrective action plan.

7. Governance and Human Resources Committee

On behalf of the Committee Chair, Sham Madhok delivered the committee report which covered updates from the division that focused on expanding and improving services that enrich and support faculty, staff, and students. Members also received updates on HR initiatives under York University Forward Action Plan as well as highlights of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing annual report.

On the governance side, each Board Committee reviewed and recommended updates to their respective Terms of Reference in response to recommendations from the Auditor General's report. Additionally, the committee is considering renaming itself to better reflect the focus on people and culture. Similarly, all Board committees reviewed their respective Workplans for 2025-26 and discussed their skills matrix and future needs. The skills matrix review will be an annual exercise and will be incorporated into all committee work plans. In addition, the Committee received an update on Board recruitment and agreed to a process and timeline for renewing eligible members.

a. Smoking Policy

The Board received a recommendation on proposed amendments to the smoking policy, which was last reviewed in 2018.

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It was duly *agreed* that the **Board of Governors approve the Smoking Policy with proposed amendments as noted in Appendix A and the final revised version in Appendix B, attached hereto.**

8. Investment Committee

Mary Traversy spoke to the Investment Committee's report where the committee reviewed the performance and strategies of the Long-Term Investment Fund, which showed a fiscal year-to-date return of 12.11%. The Committee received a comprehensive presentation on investment accounts, discussing the impact of tariffs, the global credit market, and portfolio performance. A new global equity manager was approved, and progress is ongoing to move towards private equity.

9. Land and Property Committee

On behalf of the Committee Chair, Paul Tsaparis spoke to the Committee's report to the Board where the committee discussed updates on major capital projects in Keele campus and the closeout activities for the Markham campus. The Committee also discussed the approval in principle for the York University School of Medicine, which involves constructing a new building at the Vaughn Healthcare Precinct and renovating facilities at the Keele campus for interim use. This approval is part of the strategic agenda for capital projects, with a full business plan to be presented to the Committee in due course.

10. Other Business

There was no other business.

11. In Camera Session

An *In Camera* Session was held. No decisions were taken.

Paul Tsaparis, Chair _____

Leikha M. Bisera, Assistant University Secretary_____