

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE OPEN SESSION OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Thursday, May 15, 2025 at 4 p.m.  
Room GM 410 (Board of Governors meeting room)  
SGW Campus and via Zoom video conferencing

**PRESENT**

Helen Antoniou (C)	Darshan Vishnu Dorugade	Shoshana Kalfon
Theresa Bianco	(remote)	Catherine Loubier (remote)
Graham Carr (P and Vice-C)	Adriana Embiricos (remote)	Christine Panet-Raymond
Jarrett Carty (V.C)	Kim Fuller (remote)	Rahul Ravi
Daniel Cross	Shahir Guindi (remote)	Robert Soroka
Pat Di Lillo (remote)	Claude Joli-Coeur (V.C)	Ted Stathopoulos
		Roula Zaarour

**Alternate:** Ali Salman

**Non-voting observer:** Gina Cody (remote)

**Also attending:**

Philippe Beauregard	Michael Di Grappa	Frederica Jacobs (remote)
William Cheaib	Tim Evans	Pascal Lebel
Denis Cossette	Julie Fortier (remote)	Anne Whitelaw

**ABSENT**

**Governors:**

Ken Brooks	Rana Ghorayeb	Paul John Murdoch
Gary N. Chateram	Miranda Melfi	Kareem Rahaman

**LEGEND:**

C: Chair

P and Vice-C: President and Vice Chancellor

V.C: Vice Chair

Remote: joined via Zoom/Teams

## 1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

The Chair welcomed the new external member Christine Panet-Raymond and invited members to introduce themselves to Christine.

### 1.1 Approval of the Agenda

Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

*R-2025-3-1 That the Agenda be approved, including the items on the Consent Agenda.*

## CONSENT

## 2. Approval of April 16, 2025 Minutes

*R-2025-3-2 That the Minutes of the meeting of Open Session of April 16, 2025 be approved.*

## 3. Report on compliance with environmental legislation and health and safety regulations (Q1-2025) (Document BG-2025-3-D1)

This report was provided for information only.

## REGULAR

## 4. Business arising from the Minutes not included on the Agenda

There was no other business to bring before the meeting that was not included on the Agenda.

## 5. President's report (Document BG-2025-3-D2)

As complementary information to his written report, G. Carr's remarks are summarized as follows:

- Dr. Carr began by expressing his disappointment that the GM building was the target of a criminal attack overnight. At around 2:00 a.m. on May 15<sup>th</sup>, a group of seven masked individuals vandalized the outside entrance to the GM building, spraying graffiti on the ground and breaking all the glass doors. Campus Safety and Prevention Services (CSPS) called the police, and two agents followed the group as they were running north on Guy Street.
- As the two CSPS agents intercepted one individual, the masked individuals assaulted the agents, shoving and pushing them. When the police arrived, the individual intercepted by CSPS was arrested.

- The individual who was arrested was identified as a student. The University is collaborating with the SPVM on their investigation, and the individual will also be dealt with in accordance with the University's policies.
- Dr. Carr applauded the quick response of CSPS in intervening in the situation.
- Sadly, the graffiti targeted the Board of Governors over divestment, notwithstanding the university's progressive approach to investments, which have been communicated broadly to the community, including students. He noted that the vast majority of people inside and outside the University community agree that there is no justification for such violence and attacks on a public institution. On behalf of the University, Dr. Carr reiterated that this sort of intimidation shall not be tolerated, and he was sure that he would have the Board's support as well.
- Dr. Carr drew attention to an article in *Le Devoir* the previous week which noted that the combined costs to maintain security on campus at three universities - *Université du Québec à Montréal*, McGill and Concordia - were to the tune of \$200M in the past ten years, while only \$4M was spent on security at *Université de Montréal*. This statistic demonstrates the extent to which having a downtown campus location makes universities more vulnerable to such criminal acts and misbehavior. Considering that the government offers special financial dispensations to universities in regions because of their location, it is worth asking whether there is a justification for similar treatment of urban universities given the impact that the increased security costs have on university budgets.
- Dr. Carr noted that the winter semester is over, and that the first summer session is already underway. At Convocation in June, there will be close to 6,130-6,350 students who will be graduating in comparison to last year's 6,255.
- He offered congratulations to the John Molson School of Business (JMSB) for receiving the EQUIS accreditation, which is a European business school accreditation that has been granted to only ten business schools in Canada. Less than 1% of business schools across the globe have both EQUIS and the gold-standard AACSB accreditation, and JMSB is now among this 1%, further raising its profile internationally. Dr. Carr commended JMSB Dean Anne-Marie Croteau, Associate Dean of Accreditation & Faculty Relations Alexandra Panaccio, and all others who contributed to the accreditation process.
- The Alumni achievement awards were held on Tuesday, honoring twelve outstanding members of the community including students, faculty, staff and alumni. The honoree for alumnus of the year was Ken Woods and, the following evening, the University marked the 25th anniversary of the Portfolio Management Program that K. Woods had created at JMSB, which has sent 150+ graduates into leading financial management positions in Canada and internationally. Alexandre Bilodeau, a graduate of the JMSB MBA program, Olympic gold medalist, and founder of his own wealth management business, gave a fantastic keynote address at the event.

- Speaking of great alumni, Isabelle Dessurault, a graduate of the University's MBA program, was named the new President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Montréal. I. Dessurault currently is the Québec Delegué Général in Miami, with vast experience as a diplomat, but also working with small and large enterprise, in Québec and internationally, including in India. As was I. Dessurault's predecessor, Michel Leblanc, Dr. Carr believes that I. Dessurault will also be a strong champion for the University.
- Dr. Carr turned his attention to the recently concluded federal election, where thirteen Concordia graduates were elected. Of the thirteen, eleven are members of the governing Liberal Party; one in the Bloc Québécois; and one from the Conservative Party of Canada.
- Moreover, two of the recently elected Concordia graduates have been appointed to cabinet positions: Mandy Gull-Masty, BA 06, BA 08, formerly Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Cree's, was sworn in as the first Indigenous person to serve as Minister of Indigenous Services. Anna Gainey, MP for Westmount-NDG, where the Loyola Campus is located, was named Secretary of State for Children and Youth.
- In terms of key portfolios for the higher education sector, the University has very good working relationships with several key ministers, including:
  - Mélanie Joly, Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Québec Regions, Member of Parliament for Ahuntsic-Cartierville; and
  - François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Member of Parliament for Saint-Maurice – Champlain.
- A new position, Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation, has been introduced, reflecting Canada's commitment to emerging technologies which is an area of critical research strength for Concordia.
- Overall, Dr. Carr expressed optimism that the new federal government will be receptive to the concerns of the university sector. Universities Canada has begun advocacy with key ministries, and the University is hopeful for a productive, respectful approach to collaboration. Immigration remains a critical file, but alignment of research with government priorities and economic stimulus, as well as potential initiatives to attract scholars and students from the US are also on the agenda.
- Turning next to the political context in Québec, Dr. Carr spoke about the outcome of the legal proceedings that were instituted by the University (with McGill) against the Government of Québec. The Québec Superior Court ruled that the government's changes to the tuition rates for out-of-province students and its target that 80% of non-Québec graduating students had to achieve a moderate level of French proficiency were unreasonable. The judge in the matter ordered that the francization requirements cease

immediately and gave the government nine months to revisit its approach to Rest of Canada student tuitions.

- At the same time, the judge accepted the change to the funding formula for international students which has led to a major claw back on tuition by the government at great financial cost to the universities.
- Dr. Carr noted that the court decision was a moral victory that confirms what the University had been saying all along: that the targeting of the anglophone universities was unfair, that the rationales for the policies were not supported by any evidence and that the demands placed on the universities were unreasonable.
- This decision will allow the University to at least respond to students concerned about French-language requirements; however, the damage has been done in terms of the plummeting registrations that have been experienced last year from both the Rest of Canada and international students, plus the ongoing loss of revenue from the flow through. Dr. Carr also noted that, although the judge had recognized in the summer that the universities were suffering grave and irreparable financial harm because of the policies, which he has now deemed unreasonable and ill-conceived, he did not order any financial restitution. The parties have 30 days to appeal (not from the time of the public announcement, but from the moment when the appeal is officially deposited with the parties). There has been no direct contact with the government on the outcome of the judgment, but the University is preparing should any further legal action be required.
- Dr. Carr took the opportunity to once again thank the Board for supporting the administration in taking the extraordinary step of suing the government. He thanked all the members of the community and external friends who supported the decision that the University took. The feedback that has been received internally and externally has been overwhelmingly positive. Dr. Carr, for his part, has reiterated in his public statements that the University hopes that the forceful message of the court's judgment will persuade the government that it is time to reset relations with the anglophone universities and the whole university sector. In turn, the University remains committed to doing its part to support students in their quest to learn or improve their French and integrate into Québec society.
- Dr. Carr commended the tireless work done by the Communications team (Chief Communications Officer Philippe Beauregard, University Spokesperson Vannina Maestracci, Senior Writer Brett Hooton, Executive Director, Government Relations Pascal Lebel, and General Counsel Frederica Jacobs and the internal legal team. He also thanked Chief Financial Officer Denis Cossette and his entire team in Financial Services, who were extraordinary in terms of the level of documentation about the funding formula and financial impact that they provided, as well as Daniel Therrien, Associate vice-president of integrated planning in the Office of the Provost. He also thanked the legal team at Power Law, the University's external legal counsel, noting his appreciation for the great work that they did in developing a novel legal strategy,

assembling the supportive documentation and presenting the case. He also noted the contributions of colleagues at McGill and their legal counsel, Fasken.

- The final costs in relation to the litigation have not been billed, but the cost to date is more than \$500,000. This amount may seem expensive for a moral victory; however, the principles at stake matter. Dr. Carr affirmed that it was the right decision for the University to draw a line in the sand to defend the autonomy of universities from government and to underscore the important contributions that the University makes and wants to continue to make to Québec society.
- Regarding Concordia's contributions to Québec society, Dr. Carr went on to share with the Board that the largest interdisciplinary conference in French in the world, *Association francophone pour le savoir* (Acfas), was co-hosted by Concordia and *l'École de technologie supérieure*. It was an excellent opportunity to position the University as a Francophile anglophone university integrated into Québec science and culture. The University's faculty and students were well-represented on panels, many of the students were volunteers. Dr. Carr offered special thanks to Véronique Pépin, Dean of the School of Health, Martin Lefebvre, Chair of the Department of Cinema, and Sylvia Kairouz, Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology, whose contributions to the event were noteworthy.
- Last week at the Montréal Climate Summit, the University made a major announcement with Hydro-Québec and Énergir of a three-way collaboration to assess the feasibility of developing an integrated district heating and cooling system on the Loyola campus. This is part of the Plan-Net Zéro decarbonization initiative that was announced in 2023. The goal at Loyola is to integrate the 20+ buildings on campus into an optimized energy grid, reducing consumption, ideally creating storage to relieve pressure on Hydro-Québec in peak hours, and potentially increasing the capacity to serve the surrounding neighborhood.
- This partnership is the first time any of the three major players have worked together on a project of this scale and it is indicative of the kind of collaborative action that will be required to effect energy transformation. This partnership will break silos between different enterprises and knowledge keepers, to foster and scale innovation with impact.
- The announcement came literally days after Hydro-Québec had announced it was creating a \$10B fund to support new energy efficiency initiatives, which makes the Hydro-Québec-Énergir-Concordia project unique in Québec with the potential to be a critical demonstrator project for application elsewhere and a major impetus for research and training leadership at the University.
- Finally, Dr. Carr was proud to announce that the Concordia University Inter-Generational Fund had successfully completed the transition of its investment portfolio to 100% sustainable investments, removing the University from investments in the underground 200, and meeting its commitment to increase its social equity investing to 10% of the total portfolio value. Dr. Carr had the opportunity to present that outcome

earlier in the week when Montréal hosted the global summit on sustainable finance, which attracted a couple of thousand delegates from around the world and was a great opportunity to showcase why the Concordia University Inter-Generational Fund is so well-regarded as a leader and an innovator, including with respect to transparency, in this sphere.

Various members of the Board congratulated Dr. Carr and the University team for the decision of the Superior Court and for all the hard work that was put into it. Members underscored the need to stand by one's principles. To a question about recovery of legal fees, F. Jacobs explained that it was unlikely that a full indemnity of the legal fees would be paid by the government or ordered by the court, only a small portion of some administrative court fees were reimbursed. Another Board member noted how the decision was very important for the University community as a whole.

#### **6. Other business**

There was no other business to bring before the Open Session,

#### **7. Adjournment**

The Chair declared the Open Session adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

*K. Singh*  
Karan Singh  
Secretary of the Board of Governors