

MEETING MINUTES

BCIT BOARD OF GOVERNORS - OPEN

Tuesday March 31, 2026, 1:04 to 2:00 p.m.

Board:

Mike Bonshor, Chair
 Don Matthew, Vice Chair
 Corry Anderson-Fennell (*virtual*)
 Cora Bell
 Catherine Boivie
 Bobby Davidson
 Annabelle Donovan
 Noor Esmail (*virtual*)
 Zahra Esmail (*virtual*)
 Colin Jones
 Brooks Patterson
 Stepan Vdovine (*virtual*)
 Claire Wang

Ex Officio:

Jeff Zabudsky, President
 Morgan Westcott, Education Council Chair
 (*acting*)

In Attendance:

Raimonda De Zen, Dir. Enterprise Risk & Internal Audit (*virtual*)
 Jennifer Figner, Provost & VP, Academic
 Chris Hudson, VP, People, Culture & Inclusion
 Elizabeth Kao, Sr. Dir., Financial Planning & BI (#7.0) (*virtual*)
 Cynthia Petrie, VP, External
 Navida Suleman, CFO & VP, Administration
 Barbara Kader, EA, Governance

Regrets:

Carla Reid, Board Member
 Shawna Waberi, Education Council Chair

A quorum was present.

1.0 Call to Order and Introductory Remarks

The Chair acknowledged that BCIT campuses are located on unceded Indigenous land belonging to the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the x^wməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) and Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nations.

2.0 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Distributed material: Information Note

No declarations were received.

3.0 Approval of Agenda/Consent Agenda

All reports were read with no discussion.

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, SECONDED AND CARRIED THAT the Agenda/Consent Agenda for the Open Board of Governors meeting held on March 31, 2026, be approved.

- 3.1 Adopt Agenda**
Distributed material: Agenda
- 3.2 Minutes February 24, 2026**
Distributed material: Meeting Minutes
- 3.3 Education Council Report**
Distributed material: Information Note
- 3.4 Institute Report**
Distributed material: Information Note
- 3.5 Nominating Committee**
Distributed material: Decision Note

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, SECONDED AND CARRIED THAT the membership of the 2026 Nominating Committee, comprising Catherine Boivie (Committee Chair), Corry Anderson-Fennell, and Bobby Davidson, be approved

4.0 Board Chair's Comments

The Board Chair noted that he and other Governors toured the Health Sciences Centre before the meeting. He acknowledged Ms. Wescott who attended the meeting for Shawna Waberi. He mentioned attending committee meetings and expressed confidence in BCIT's current position and progress are being tracked accurately across financial and other areas.

5.0 President's Comments

The President reported that Minister Patty Hajdu, Minister of Jobs; Minister Gregor Robertson, Minister of Housing and Infrastructure Canada, visited the Burnaby Campus and participated in an industry engagement event. Their portfolios are significant for BCIT, given the current focus on housing and workforce training within the federal government. Minister Hajdu is also overseeing the launch of a new federal sectoral initiative Workforce Alliances.

The federal government aims to bring together key industry clusters and stakeholders to inform policy and investment decisions. Minister Hajdu's visit allowed BCIT to showcase its research facility, highlighting innovation in sustainable, zero-emission homebuilding and mass timber construction. BCIT is recognized for leading advancements in efficient, sustainable, and safe building practices, and for collaborating with industry partners to provide training and support sector upgrades. The President will meet with Deputy Minister Jobs, Paul Thomas on April 2, 2026, followed by discussions with the Deputy Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, to further promote BCIT's contributions and priorities within BC.

The President reported that he participated in a roundtable hosted by Wendy Lisogar-Cocchia, the Lieutenant Governor of BC, with industry and government stakeholders, focused on skills development and future workforce needs. He acknowledged the province's investments in skilled trades training and noted that updated funding guidance indicates an increase of approximately 35% funding increase per seat. An additional adjustment was made initially, foundation trade programs were excluded from funding, but following advocacy from various organizations, foundation funding will now be included where demand is identified. This is particularly important for smaller colleges focused solely on foundation programming. While the number of foundation seats will be increased as needed, no funding lift has been provided for these seats at this time.

The President communicated that he will be meeting with Mayor Hurley, Mayor of Burnaby, to participate in the mayor's podcast scheduled for April 7, 2026. The Board will be provided with the link to the podcast once it becomes available.

He reported that the Alumni Association held an event for their volunteers. Governor Patterson and former Board Chair Jack Davidson were in attendance.

6.0 Academic

6.1 Student Enrolment Update

Distributed material: Information Note

Management referred to the material previously circulated. It was reported that institutional research and enrolment planning data as of January 2026 remains current and relevant, with trends unchanged.

Enrolment from April to end of January is down approximately 6% compared to the previous year. The decrease is primarily due to lower international student numbers in full-time technology and flexible learning programs; domestic enrolments in full-time programs have slightly increased. Trades and apprenticeship enrolments remain stable and in high demand, with strong Indigenous representation. Flexible learning enrolment also declined, primarily among international students, with new international enrolments down 83% year-over-year, reflecting recent federal immigration policy changes.

Management answered questions regarding federal policy for international enrolment requirements, and student permit restrictions for master's and bachelor's degree level programs.

The federal Auditor General released a recent report, raising concerns about international student oversight. In the report it was noted that some institutes had not adequately monitored attendance, resulting in students disappearing after arrival. The report also suggested that recent federal reductions in international student numbers may have been too severe, negatively impacting post-secondary institutes. Additionally, unexplained declines in approval rates and delays have contributed to lower enrolment figures, with no clear rationale provided for these changes. The report marks the first significant federal acknowledgment of these issues.

Despite a demographic decline in British Columbia's population, BCIT has experienced increased domestic enrolment in full-time programs. This growth is notable given the shrinking cohort of 18–24-year-olds typically pursuing post-secondary education. The trend indicates local students recognise the value of BCIT's offerings over other institutions.

7.0 Finance

7.1 FY2026/27 Tuition Increase

Distributed material: Decision Note (see 7.2)

It was reported that the Audit and Finance Committee conducted thorough due diligence, reviewing detailed enrolment reports and receiving high-level analysis from management. All relevant departments were actively involved. The committee meeting was productive and demonstrated strong coordination among the management team. Appreciation was expressed to those who contributed to the process.

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, SECONDED AND CARRIED THAT a 2% increase on both domestic (base) tuition and mandatory student fees, and a 7% increase on the International Differential Factor for FY2026/27. These increases comply with the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education & Future Skills' Tuition Limit Policy, be approved.

7.2 FY2026/27 Budget

Distributed material: Decision Note, Report, Presentation

The Institute concludes FY2025/26 in a strong financial position, largely due to sustained efforts across all departments, including effective partnerships between the finance and academic teams. Notable achievements include \$50M in cost savings over the past three years and successful balancing of the budget, assisted by new funding from Skilled Trades BC. The current year began with a budgeted \$2.6M deficit, but ongoing cost reductions and new industry partnerships have resulted in sustainable improvements. The Institute is well-positioned to pursue innovative revenue diversification opportunities and capitalize on skilled trades funding.

Management highlighted key points from the presentation and answered questions.

The budget includes detailed analysis of international enrolment and tuition declines, offset by increased skilled trades funding. Additional revenue opportunities may arise if capacity expands. A five-year financial plan is being developed for board approval in June 2026, with projections targeting sustained financial resilience into the future.

A contingency fund is included in the budget to mitigate risks if revenue projections, particularly tuition, are not met. Should enrolment decline and tuition revenue fall short, contingency reserves will be used prior to implementing cost reductions or exploring alternative measures. By mid-year, financial trends are clearer, allowing for potential strategic investments beyond those already budgeted. Priority for surplus funds will be given to investment in the enterprise resource planning (ERP) project over the next three years.

Management answered questions relating to capital budgeting. While some projects, such as the wired network refresh are funded (\$2.5M) by government, the remaining capital projects presented are primarily funded by BCIT. Ministry-funded capital projects, including campus development, are reported separately to the Board.

Regarding cash flow, a larger portion of cash reserves is expected to be used in the upcoming year to support unfunded capital requirements. These investments will be financed directly by internal cash resources.

The ERP project has been identified as a primary budget focus, requiring significant resources and attention. The capital items being proposed are essential for ongoing operations, including classroom equipment and IT infrastructure, and are regarded as foundational necessities.

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, SECONDED AND CARRIED THAT the Board of Governors approves:

1. the FY2026/27 Operating and Capital Budget. The Capital Budget includes necessary equipment and deferred maintenance impacting FY2026/27.

2. delegation of signing authority to the CFO and President to finalize and execute all agreements required to complete the wired network refresh capital project, subject to it being within its approved capital budget.

8.0 Next Meeting and Conclusion

The next Board of Governors meeting will be held on May 26, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. The open meeting concluded at 2:00 p.m.

Signed

Mike Bonshor, Chair

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