

Present: Bradley Menard, Chair & IDEA Officer; Alex Parkinson, Associate Vice-Chair; Tricia Taylor, Vice-Chair; Harman Rathore; Matt Kidwell; Aman Khinda; Tarndeepp Chattu; Graham Petek; Michelle Vandepol; Whitney Fordham, Director, Alumni Engagement & Executive Director, UFVAA (Staff); Bryan Candy, Manager, Alumni Engagement (Staff); Luisa Torres, Coordinator, Alumni Engagement (Recording Staff)

Regrets: Tony Dhaliwal, Chair Emeritus; Nikiel Lal; Tristan Taylor; Anthony Biondi, Digital Engagement Strategist, Alumni Engagement (Staff)

Guests: Dr. James Mandigo, UFV President and Vice-Chancellor; Stacey Irwin, Chair Emerita; Bilal Faisal Faheem, UFV Student Union Society; Alexandra Desautels; Tracey McKone, Associate Director, UFV Relationship and Fund Development

1. Call to order & introductions (Bradley Menard, Chair)

Meeting was called to order at 5:55 p.m.

2. Land acknowledgement (Michelle Vandepol, Director)

3. Declaration of conflict of interest (Bradley Menard, Chair)

The Chair invited Board members to declare any actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest related to the items on the agenda. Members were reminded to disclose any conflicts as they arise during the meeting and to state their name and the nature of the conflict for the record, at which point the Board would determine whether recusal from discussion or voting was required.

No conflicts were declared.

4. Approval of agenda (Bradley Menard, Chair)

MOTION: To adopt the March 24, 2026, Board of Directors meeting agenda, as presented.

**RATHORE / TRICIA TAYLOR
CARRIED**

5. Approval of minutes (Bradley Menard, Chair)

MOTION: To approve the January 27, 2026 Board of Directors meeting minutes, as presented.

**VANDEPOL / KHINDA
CARRIED**

6. Business arising from the minutes (Bradley Menard, Chair)

There was no outstanding business arising from the January 27, 2026 minutes that was not otherwise included on the current agenda.

The Chair noted that discussions related to awards and recognition are ongoing. It was reported that the Governance Committee is reviewing the relevant policy, which is expected to be brought forward for Board consideration at a subsequent meeting. This review will inform future Board decisions in this area.

7. Presentation from UFV President (Dr. James Mandigo, UFV President and Vice-Chancellor)

Dr. Mandigo provided an update on institutional priorities, performance, and key initiatives at the University of the Fraser Valley, including enrolment trends, academic and research activity, capital developments, and strategic planning.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Enrolment and student profile: Total enrolment exceeded 16,000 students in 2024–25, including approximately 13,000 domestic and 3,000 international students representing more than 70 countries. A modest decline in international enrolment is anticipated for 2025–26. Growth in degree-seeking students and inbound transfer students was noted.
- Graduate outcomes: Graduate employment outcomes remain strong, with approximately 90% of graduates employed, a median salary of \$60,000, and high reported satisfaction with job preparedness. Trades and apprenticeship programs continue to demonstrate high full-time employment rates and low unemployment.
- Research and experiential learning: UFV continues to expand applied research activity, with more than \$5 million in external research funding and significant undergraduate student participation. Over 3,100 students are engaged in work-integrated learning through community-based and industry projects.
- Institutional recognition and impact: UFV has been recognized as an Ashoka Changemaker Campus, reflecting leadership in social innovation and community engagement. The global reach and impact of UFV alumni were also highlighted.
- Key research initiatives: Updates were provided on research focused on food security and agricultural innovation, climate-resilient crops and industry partnerships, and community health and social innovation. Dr. Mandigo also introduced UFV's "One Health" approach, integrating human, environmental, and animal health perspectives.
- Capital developments and infrastructure: Recent and ongoing developments include the opening of new student housing (Lá:léms Ye EverGreen), expanded on-campus housing capacity, and the launch of a new dining hall and community hall to support student life and campus events. Long-term planning includes exploration of a property trust model to support financial sustainability and infrastructure development.
- Strategic planning and advocacy: Dr. Mandigo noted the upcoming renewal of UFV's institutional strategic plan, with opportunities for engagement from alumni and other stakeholders. He also highlighted resource pressures associated with operating above provincially funded capacity and emphasized the importance of continued advocacy for sustainable post-secondary funding.

Following the presentation, the Board engaged in a general discussion on topics including campus infrastructure and transportation planning, student housing experience, research funding opportunities, the balance between teaching and applied research, and the role of alumni in advocacy, partnerships, and community impact. Dr. Mandigo responded to questions and provided clarification as appropriate.

The presentation was received for information.

8. Presentation from Stacey Irwin (Stacey Irwin, Chair Emerita)

Stacey Irwin, Chair Emerita, provided a historical overview of the UFV Alumni Association, reflecting on its origins, early challenges, and long-term development. She shared her personal involvement with the Association following her graduation in 1997, including her role in early strategic planning efforts and her service as the first Chair following incorporation in 2001.

Key themes from the presentation included:

- Foundational development: The Alumni Association was established with no initial funding, alumni database, or formal organizational structure. Early efforts focused on building a sustainable foundation through volunteer leadership and alumni engagement.
- Governance and formalization: Significant work was undertaken to develop governance structures, including the creation of bylaws, alignment with the Societies Act, and the establishment of early memoranda of understanding with the University.
- Sustainability and growth: Initial sustainability was supported through grassroots fundraising and outreach. Over time, key milestones were achieved, including the establishment of an Alumni Association office, dedicated staffing, alumni awards and endowments, and access to an alumni database representing approximately 21,000 graduates.
- Advocacy and institutional evolution: The Association played an active role in advocating for UFV's transition to university status, supported by strong alumni and community engagement.
- Evolution of Board structure: Ms. Irwin highlighted the transition from an operational board model to the Association's current governance-focused structure, reflecting maturation of the organization.
- Volunteer leadership: The significant volunteer commitment required in the Association's early years was acknowledged as critical to building and sustaining the organization.

The presentation underscored the longstanding role of the Alumni Association in supporting institutional development, advocacy, and community connection, and highlighted the enduring impact of volunteer leadership.

The Board expressed its appreciation for the presentation and formally acknowledged Stacey Irwin's contributions to the establishment and ongoing success of the UFV Alumni Association, as well as her continued engagement as an alumni volunteer and ambassador.

The presentation was received for information.

9. Chair report (Bradley Menard, Chair)

The Chair provided a report to the Board.

The Board was advised that the UFV Alumni Association is approaching its 25th anniversary, and that a proposal later in the agenda would outline potential opportunities to formally recognize this milestone.

The Chair also noted that a small anniversary event is planned for April, with additional information to be shared following the event.

There were no questions arising from the report.

10. Executive Committee report (Bradley Menard, Chair)

- a. March 17, 2026 Executive Committee report

MOTION: to approve March 17, 2026, Executive Committee report, as presented.

**MENARD / TRICIA TAYLOR
CARRIED**

11. Governance Committee report (Graham Petek, Committee Chair)

The Governance Committee Chair presented the Committee’s report, noting that its work aligns with the written report included in the meeting package. Key updates were highlighted for the Board’s awareness.

Online Board Binder: The Committee reviewed progress on the development of an online Board binder, which is being assembled by the Alumni Engagement Office. The binder will provide directors with centralized access to key governance documents, including bylaws, policies, terms of reference, and other materials to support Board and committee work. Access will be provided to directors once the binder is finalized.

Awards and Recognition Policy: The Committee discussed proposed revisions to the Awards and Recognition Policy. Further review and refinement will take place at the next Governance Committee meeting, after which recommendations will be brought forward to the Board for consideration.

Committee Membership: The addition of Nikiel Lal to the Governance Committee was noted.

Governance Committee Work Plans (2026–2027): The Committee reviewed draft work plans outlining priorities for the upcoming years, including policy review, milestone planning, and broader governance objectives.

- a. February 10, 2026 Governance Committee report

MOTION: to approve February 10, 2026, Governance Committee report, as presented.

**PETEK / VANDEPOL
CARRIED**

- b. Nominations for AGM

MOTION: that the Board of Directors nominate Harman Rathore and Michelle Vandepol for re-election by the membership at the 2026 Annual General Meeting, each for a second two-year term concluding the adjournment of the 2028 Annual General Meeting.

**PETEK / MENARD
CARRIED**

- c. In-Camera session – Appointment of new Director

The meeting moved in camera at 7:05 p.m. to consider the appointment of a Director.

The meeting returned to open session at 7:09 p.m.

Upon returning to open session, the Chair announced the appointment and welcomed Alexandra Desautels to the UFV Alumni Association Board of Directors.

12. Awards Committee report (Tricia Taylor, Committee Chair)

The Awards Committee Chair provided an update on the Committee’s recent activities and upcoming work.

The Board was advised that the Committee met in February, including an orientation session for new members to review committee roles, responsibilities, and expectations for the current awards cycle.

It was reported that the nomination processes for the Distinguished Alumni Award, Young Distinguished Alumni Award, and Outstanding Student Leadership Award (OSLA) are now closed or nearing completion. The Alumni Engagement Office will review submissions and prepare nomination packages for Committee consideration.

The Committee will meet to adjudicate nominations and will bring recommendations forward to the Board for approval at the next Board meeting, in accordance with the Awards and Recognition Policy.

The Chair also noted that the Committee will be developing its work plan to support ongoing priorities and structure. In addition, updates are underway to the Association's website to better reflect the full range of awards overseen by the Committee, including the Medal of Excellence.

- a. February 25, 2026 Awards Committee report

MOTION: to approve February 25, 2026, Awards Committee report, as presented.

TRICIA TAYLOR / CHATTU
CARRIED

13. Advocacy moment (All)

The Chair invited Board members to share advocacy moments, recognizing the role of alumni and affiliated organizations in advancing community impact through professional, volunteer, and advocacy activities. The Board heard examples of advocacy and engagement, including:

Community and local-economy advocacy:

An example was shared highlighting collaboration between a school district and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to promote local investment and BC food systems. The initiative, documented through a film project produced by a CBC documentarian, showcases public-sector leadership in supporting local procurement and regional economies. Related educational outreach to senior secondary students on topics such as tariffs, local food systems, and the importance of local investment was also noted.

Federal post-secondary advocacy (UFV Student Union Society):

Updates were shared on recent federal advocacy efforts undertaken by the UFV Student Union Society, including engagement through national student organizations and participation in federal advocacy forums.

Key outcomes highlighted included:

- Renewal of the Canada Student Grants at \$4,200, benefiting approximately 700,000 students.
- Continued engagement with federal ministries to support expanded apprenticeship opportunities through participation in federal projects.
- A federal investment of \$635.2 million to support work-integrated learning and student work placement programs.
- Expanded student placement capacity, with approximately 55,000 placements available in the current year and 40,000 annually over the next two years.

The Board acknowledged the importance of advocacy efforts led by alumni and partner organizations in supporting students, strengthening community connections, and advancing post-secondary education.

The Chair also acknowledged and thanked departing Student Union Society President, Bilal Faisal Faheem for his contributions and service.

14. Alumni Representative on Senate Report (Aman Khinda, Alumni Representative on the UFV Senate)

The Alumni Representative on the UFV Senate provided an update on recent Senate activities. She shared that the most recent Senate meeting was held at the Mission campus, reflecting efforts to engage across UFV campuses and provide broader visibility into campus operations.

Key highlights from the Senate update included:

- Continued development of an international partnership between UFV and the University of Punjab in India.
- Exploration of pathway opportunities allowing students to begin their studies at the University of Punjab and complete their degrees at UFV.
- Ongoing efforts to strengthen international collaboration and expand access to educational opportunities.

The Chair noted the importance of these types of affiliation agreements in supporting institutional growth and building strategic global partnerships.

15. Executive Director Report (Whitney Fordham, Executive Director)

The Executive Director presented her report. Updates were provided on programming, communications, events, and the Association's financial position.

Key highlights included:

- Delivery of the Afternoon Exchange program, which brought together students and alumni, with 34 attendees and an average satisfaction rating of 4.5 out of 5.
- Continued strong performance in alumni communications, including storytelling and media content.
- Recent collaborations, including an alumni and community leadership panel delivered in partnership with the Esposito Family Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce.
- Successful delivery of community-building initiatives, including the Plasma Cup Playoffs.

a. 2025-26 Budget update

The Executive Director presented a preliminary year end financial update, noting that the Association is projecting a strong financial position with an estimated surplus of approximately \$39,000.

It was reported that:

- Revenues exceeded projections, with approximately \$73,421 received compared to a projected \$56,000; and
- Expenses were lower than anticipated, contributing to the projected surplus.

b. Funding proposal UFVAA 25 Anniversary

A funding proposal in support of UFVAA's 25th anniversary, associated with an initiative led by Community Engagement, was presented. It was noted that the proposal aligns with the Association's mandate and leverages its current financial position.

The Board discussed the proposal and expressed support for the initiative and its potential impact on alumni and community engagement.

MOTION: to approve the UFVAA 25th Anniversary funding proposal, and to authorize the allocation of the remaining balance required to reach the total proposal amount, acknowledging previous funding commitments already approved.

**MENARD / TRICIA TAYLOR
CARRIED**

c. 2026-27 Budget

The Executive Director presented the proposed 2026–2027 operating budget, noting that it was developed in alignment with the Association’s strategic priorities, anticipated revenue conditions, and principles of responsible financial stewardship.

It was reported that the proposed budget:

- Is balanced, with total projected revenues and expenses of \$61,775;
- Reflects a conservative, evidence-based approach that does not rely on reserve funds;
- Includes conservative revenue projections based on historical program performance;
- Projects approximately \$30,000 in TD Insurance affinity revenue, supported by strong participation and retention rates;
- Reflects reduced reliance on wine-related revenues due to lower margins and decreased demand;
- Adjusts interest income projections to reflect stable or slightly declining rates; and
- Maintains continued investment in priority areas, including governance, alumni events, and awards and recognition, with expense adjustments aligned with inflation and program needs.

It was noted that any year-end surplus will be allocated to reserve funds, in accordance with policy.

The Board expressed support for the budget’s prudent and strategic approach. It was also noted that flexibility will be maintained to reallocate funds as needed, including for sponsorship opportunities, enhanced recognition of volunteers and contributors, and anticipated one-time costs associated with leadership transition.

MOTION: to approve UFV Alumni Association's 2026-27 budget, as presented.

**VANDEPOL / PARKINSON
CARRIED**

16. Director attendance at upcoming events (Tricia Taylor, Vice-Chair)

The Vice-Chair provided an overview of upcoming institutional and alumni engagement events and encouraged Board member participation, emphasizing the value of alumni presence and visibility at key UFV events.

The Board was advised of the following upcoming events:

- March 26: Sustainability Partnership event, Open Mic, and Queereoke event
- March 31: College of Arts Showcase session with alumni
- April 17: Science Café
- April 24: INTERPRET Festival, including Alumni Wine Contest voting
- June 9–11: UFV Convocation ceremonies
- June (date to be determined): Indigenous Graduation Celebration

Board members were encouraged to attend convocation ceremonies, including participating in presenting where possible, noting the positive impact of alumni engagement and the opportunity to connect directly with graduates.

It was also noted that the next Board meeting will coincide with the Annual General Meeting, and directors were encouraged to attend in person where feasible. Travel expenses will be covered in accordance with policy.

The Chair invited Board members to share ideas for the upcoming summer social, noting that planning will commence shortly and that input from directors is welcome.

17. Other Business

The Chair noted that April 11 marks the 25th anniversary of the UFV Alumni Association and encouraged members to celebrate the milestone.

The outgoing UFV Student Union Society President, Bilal Faisal Faheem expressed his appreciation to the Board, noting that this was his final meeting as his term concludes on April 30. He highlighted the strength of the partnership between the UFV Alumni Association and the Student Union Society, emphasizing the value of collaboration and knowledge sharing between both groups.

Board members acknowledged Bilal's contributions and leadership, recognizing his role in strengthening the relationship between the student and alumni communities and supporting a stronger transition from student to alumni engagement.

18. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Minutes approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Bilal Faheem', written over a horizontal line.

Chair:

Date: May 26, 2026