

Secretariat

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The following items arise from the Information Technology (IT) Committee meeting of January 27, 2021. They are presented to the Board of Governors for information.

I. FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**1. Report on IT Project and Contract Approvals Valued Between \$1M and \$6M** [IT20-07]

The Committee received a Report on IT Project and Contract Approvals valued between \$1M and \$6M approved by the Principal or the Vice-Principal (Administration and Finance) during the reporting period between September 1, 2020, and December 31, 2020 pursuant to their respective authorities under the *Policy on Approval of Contracts and Designation of Signing Authority*.

It was reported that there were two IT contracts valued between \$1 million and \$6 million for the period of September 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, valued at \$1.042 million and \$1.644 million (after tax and rebates) respectively.

The Committee was also informed that there were three IT projects valued between \$1 million and \$6 million to report for the period between September 1, 2020, and December 31, 2020, valued at \$2,026,262 (net of tax), \$2,035,000 (net of tax), and \$1,192,800 (net of tax) respectively.

2. Annual Report on Cyber Security and Impact of COVID-19 [IT20-09]

The Committee received the Cyber Security Annual Report 2020, which outlined the major cyber security incidents and related improvements delivered by McGill Information Technology Services (ITS) to the University's IT security capabilities. It was noted that the number of compromised accounts had significantly decreased in 2020, which was mainly the result of the deployment of the 2-factor authentication and the cyber security awareness activities led by ITS.

The Annual Report included an overview of the Cyber Security Roadmap, developed for the period of 2020-2025, which aims to grow the University's IT security capabilities. The overview detailed the maturity levels and initiatives for each core capability.

The Committee also received an update on cyber security for the period from September to December 2020. This reporting period had no major incident and included 4

emergency fixes. It was noted that the most significant threats were credential thefts through phishing and through cyber incidents on external sites.

The Committee also received an update on cyber security-related risks and challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the University's response. The Committee was informed of the key controls implemented during the reporting period to reduce the risks related to remote work and remote teaching.

3. Update on the Disaster Recovery Plan [IT20-08]

The Committee received an update on McGill University's data centres and data infrastructure, which had been discussed at the Committee's Retreat on February 6, 2020 and at its last regular meeting on October 16, 2020. The update detailed McGill's disaster recovery status, comparing its disaster recovery needs and capabilities, and included an analysis of the business impact of a data center failure with various scenarios.

It is expected that the Committee will consider the business case for the University's disaster recovery solution at its meeting in May 2021.

2. Report on IT Initiatives and Projects [IT20-10]

The Committee received a Report on IT initiatives and Projects, which included a status update of active initiatives and projects funded by proceeds of the \$210M bond as well as a financial summary of both planned and ongoing bond-funded IT projects and initiatives.

As at November 30, 2020, the cumulative expenditure of bond funds on IT projects and initiatives was \$82,253,936.

The Committee received a detailed update on the Recruitment to Retire (R2R) Project, which had successfully gone live on August 4, 2020. The Committee was informed that a SWAT team had been put in place in the Fall 2020 to address the high volume of support requests and resolve the hiring and onboarding issues that were encountered at the beginning of the term (when a high volume of hiring of part-time students, academic casual personnel and teaching assistants takes place). It was noted that efforts had been made to help departments and end-users complete their transactions. A Task Force between McGill and Deloitte had also been put in place to review the recruitment and hiring process. It was noted that the project was expected to close in April 2021 with a total cost of \$45M (below the \$50,700,000 approved by the Board).

3. IT Unit Activity Report [IT20-11]

The Committee received an update on general IT Unit-related activities. The report included updates on the following topics:

- Impact of COVID-19 on mobility and sustainability: a review of ITS' devices strategy is being undertaken with the objective of increasing the mobility of staff by providing an increased number of laptops to support more remote work in the future, potentially reducing the personal carbon footprint impact.
- Impact of COVID-19 on Teaching & Learning technologies: in partnership with Teaching & Learning Services and Procurement Services, ITS has continued to vet, acquire and implement new systems, tools and technologies in support of the University's teaching needs.
- Increased support to the research community: in its desire to increase support to researchers at the University, a new position of Director of Research Software was created to improve the growing demand for software development and acquisition and to help reduce the University's cyber security risk exposure.

The Committee also received an update on the Auditor General of Quebec's (AGQ) audit of the University's information technology projects, including the R2R Project. The Committee was informed that a preliminary report by the AGQ was expected in February 2021, which would also include another university and the *Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur*. It was noted that the University would have the opportunity to respond to the report before it is finalized, published and presented to the National Assembly.

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February 2021