

Legislative Council Meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University

1) **Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 6:08pm.

2) **Attendance**

Attendance sheet was passed around room.

3) **Adoption of the Agenda**

President Redel motions to amend the agenda and insert appointments of 3 of councillors to the Board of Directors to 8a. and renumber accordingly.

The Board of Directors is the highest power at SSMU. It is required by Quebec law that the Board of Directors be the highest body, but Legislative Council should be the most weighty in keeping with the mandate of SSMU, therefore the Board should listen to council recommendations. Meetings are held during council meetings and are 5-8 minutes long. Councillors are held responsible for anything SSMU decides as a corporation. Three more councillors are needed, will take nominations (must be at least 18 and Canadian).

The motion passes.

Nominations:

Councillors Mossallanejad, Lam, Ray, Stewart-Kanigan, and Guan are nominated.

Speeches from Nominees:

Councillor Mossallanejad: was involved in union at University of Toronto, comes to all meetings, is pretty responsible.

Councillor Lam: can make a contribution SSMU because the only other committee he sits on is FIR, wants to sit in on and represent these decisions, hopes it'll be fun.

Councillor Rea: fair and unbiased, part of student council at McGill for 3 years.

Councillor Stewart-Kanigan: can bring wide variety of voices to the talks, represents AUS and arts students, works with a variety of groups, and works for equity.

Councillor Guan withdraws her nomination.

Councillor Mossallanejad withdraws his application.

Council will automatically appoint remaining 3 to the Board of Directors.

4) **Approval of the Minutes – 10/11/12**

Point of Parliamentary Inquiry: We don't have the minutes.

Councillor Cooper motions to table the minutes. Motion passes, minutes tabled until Nov. 1.

5) Report of the Steering Committee

President Redel: would normally just ask for questions, but some important issues from the General Assembly were discussed. According to article 7.3, motions passed in general assembly without quorum are passed to Legislative Council. Steering Committee recommends tabling all four motions to the winter 2013 semester GA. Concerned with online ratifications: GA motions must be ratified online, yet introductions to GA laws and bylaws don't outline any procedures as to how this should operate. The Steering Committee is unsure as to how Council should handle this; are they a body that is replacing the GA or a body that is supplanting the GA and making a decision on its behalf? It is a representative body of students and faculties similar to the GA, but if council is to vote should motions still be debated, it or should they just be rubber stamped by Council? After this is decided, should Council even put it to online vote? Since these bylaws were passed late last year, there hasn't been time to figure this out. The committee is also concerned that quorum could be avoided to ensure faster approval. It is also noted that Legislative Council retains no authority to adopt decisions on external affairs, and many of the GA motions had external elements. Does Council have the right to amend and split motions? Council is more than welcome to debate motions and vote, however the recommendation of the Steering Committee is to table all motions until the next GA.

Questions:

Councillor Rosentzveig: Point of Parliamentary Inquiry – should this be done first, or later when more people are there?

Speaker: This could be accepted.

Councillor Stewart-Kanigan: Can the people who made the motions talk about them?

President Redel: Most motions were brought forward by members of council, however some were put forward by people who are not on council, so how can members possibly amend their own motions? This gives an unfair advantage to councillors.

Motion to adopt report, motion passes.

6) Announcements

Councillor Farnan: AUS Graduate School Fair on Monday in the SSMU ballroom from 10am-3pm. Councillor Baker: Law and Medicine are hosting a party, on Nov. 1st. Event is organized by Ian Clark, talk to him if you want to distribute tickets yourself.

Councillor Southey – The Inter-Residence Council is hosting a Halloween event on Monday at Club LaBoom.

President Redel: Welcome to Elie (Councillor Lubendo) from the First Year Council.

Councillor Szpejda: 4 Floors tickets went on sale today. Last 200 will be sold in 2 sections, which will be written on the Facebook page tonight. To ensure that people aren't missing class,

they will probably be sold half in the morning and half in the evening. Be sure to advertise the bus trip to Queen's University for Redmen hockey on the 26th. It was too busy to sell bus trip tickets at the same time as selling 1000 4 Floors tickets, but will continue trying to sell them.

Councillor Reid-Fraser: introduced new Recording Secretary, Andrea Coates

7) Question Period

No questions were asked.

8) New Business

- a) Appointment of 3 Councillors to Board of Directors
- b) Motion Regarding Renewing Support for Accessible Education
- c) Motion Regarding Ethical Investments at McGill
- d) Motion Regarding Opposition to Canadian Military Involvement in Iran
- e) Motion Regarding Plan Nord

Due to the recommendations of the Steering Committee, the chair looks favourably upon motions to table motions 8b-e. and move them tentatively to Monday, February 4, 2013.

Councillor Farnan motions to vote on tabling the motions.

Councillor Rosentzveig: Point of Parliamentary Inquiry: Is there any way to talk about whether we want to table the motions?

Debate on the motion to table GA motions:

Councillor Dinel: agrees with the Steering Committee, and has the understanding that Council could table the motions, and then rewrite some of them so that they are more SSMU-oriented and bring them back to SSMU within the mandate of what SSMU can do.

Councillor Cooper: The accessible education motion almost had quorum (had a reasonably sized consultative body) so she would recommend voting on this motion in Council and tabling the remaining motions.

Councillor Cybulsky: What happens if the motions are moved to the next GA, and quorum is not reached then?

Chair: Technically the same thing would happen, which would give students the incentive to attend the GA the second time around.

President Redel: The point is that the motions were brought to a GA, and if they fail at a GA, that's that. He does not think it is appropriate for the Council to supplant the GA. The issue is more about the appropriateness of Council doing it, and less about the appropriateness of the motion(s).

Councillor Rosentzveig: Has issues with this motion (to table all GA motions). The Steering Committee talked about having quorum at the GA, but putting things off until later could be negative. It seemed pretty clear that the accessible education motion passed and it is the responsibility of Council to its constituents not just to set a precedent but also to take action, especially when there is lots of movement provincially on this issue.

Chair: Reiterating Councillor Dinel, he says that these are GA issues because they were brought to the GA, and that Council is trying to make them more Council-oriented and then bring them back to Council as Council issues (not GA issues).

Councillor Szpejda: In the Steering Committee, it was unclear if motions did pass (in Council after not having quorum at the GA), would Council have to online ratify this? Online ratification was passed with quorum, so it is clear that this is what the student body wants. Council should be careful of creating a situation where avoiding quorum is sought out. Also, it is already in VP Reid-Fraser's mandate to support accessible education. Council should not be resolving issues in a way that's described as "sketchy".

Councillor Reid-Fraser: She also has concerns about tabling motion 8b. She understands there are elements to the following motions that are external to the Society and is favourable to the idea of tabling them and bringing them back to Council later. However with regards to the motion for accessible education, because this is a motion that comes from a 5-year policy of SSMU which was renewed last year, it is not a new policy but is a long-standing tradition at SSMU. Reid-Fraser understands procedure and concerns, but says that Councillors were all elected so they do represent the student body. She understand that this is long-standing policy so it is easier for Council to adopt this motion in particular; she would like to at least vote on this motion in today's Council meeting.

Councillor Stewart-Kanigan: She is against the motion to table because the report (of the Steering Committee) seems to be in contradiction to the SSMU constitution. She says if something passes in a consultative forum it should be taken to the Legislative Council. She takes issue with idea of GA motions needing to be discussed in a GA because Council needs to do something about time-sensitive issues.

Councillor Larson: The main point from the Steering Committee is that in SSMU consultation, SSMU Council could take any of these motions and pass them whether they are external or internal. This has been done in the past and it hasn't been sketchy, but Council probably should not do it in this case because of the multiple reasons. In good faith this is not a good idea.

Councillor Georges: If Council does decide to table the motions they should be tabled all together or not tabled all together. Council should follow procedure and take them all together and should not start cherry picking motions it likes. Council should choose all or choose none.

Councillor Cooper: Seconds Councillor Stewart-Kanigan, say that following SSMU's constitution is what students voted at the GA. In response to Larson, good faith would be to follow the constitution. Some people here (in Council) have been movers, and these movers are most comfortable moving forward with the accessible education motion.

Councillor Farnan rescinds his motion to table motions 8b-e and motions to table items 8cde and continue the debate on motion 8b.

Councillor Dinel motions to divide the previous question, is unsure whether council wants to discuss the motions separately or together?

Councillor Dinel motions to debate each item in order.

Councillor Larson motions to table motion 8b.

Councillor Rosentzveig says it is important to remember the precedent Council is setting; Council needs to respect the online ratification bylaw Council passed last year. It has implications for the GA and the decision Council makes now will have consequences. If Council does table until February, it will propagate idea of people not going to GAs because they know they can just ratify motions online.

Chair: Reads article 29 of constitution (regarding online ratification): "Motions tabled from a GA that loses quorum are inscribed on the agenda of the next GA or on the agenda of the next council meeting". To clarify the bylaw, these motions are not automatically added to the agenda.

President Redel: Addresses confusion on what the Steering Report is trying to say. It does want to preserve the concept of direct democracy, however bringing the motion to Council is a violation of direct democracy. Voting on it, moving it, and changing it in Council violates direct democracy. If we do bring a motion to Council, it shouldn't be debated or changed, it should be rubber stamped. It is interesting to look at why the decisions were made in Steering, the report says that the committee doesn't know if a GA motion passed in Council should go to online ratification afterwards because nothing clarifies the role of Council. Councillors who moved motions have unfair advantages over other movers who do not get to vote in Council.

Councillor Cooper: Says she understands the thought process of the Steering Committee and would also ask what the role of Council is. However she thinks the issue of accessible education is within Council's mandate. The sketchiness in the rules reflects a need; there are many rules for GAs that should be looked at in the long-term and made more clear, but this is not the time to do it.

Councillor Farnan: President Redel spoke very well, agrees and says he doesn't know why people wouldn't support bringing these motions back to council in their re-written form.

Councillor Stewart-Kanigan: It is important to look at why the precedent was set in the first place; it exists to protect time-sensitive motions which are often the most contentiously debated. There have been issues with causing GAs to lose quorum on purpose but it is important to look at the implications of getting rid of the precedent. If this continues, motions won't get passed through the GA and it is important that Council doesn't ignore them.

Councillor Reid-Fraser: In response to Councillor Farnan, the motion about accessible education was initiated by councillors as well as 2 other motions, but they were different situations because they relate to very external positions to SSMU. She understands Council doesn't want to set a dangerous precedent, but doesn't know why this motion in particular shouldn't be voted on because it was moved by councillors.

Councillor Szpejda: If Council has identified these loopholes, it is its job to fix these motions. They can be brought back to Council when no one has to worry about doing so is "sketchy". The motions should be brought back when Council is sure of what to do with motions once they are voted on. He agrees with Councillor Georges, Council should be able to discuss all motions, if it is only comfortable discussing one it shows how this idea is not sound.

Councillor Giannakakis: Proposes solution of holding another GA, would this be possible?

Chair: It is not impossible. A GA can be called, it requires 5 councillors to call for a GA.

Councillor Chaim: If 4 councillors move motions that can be decided on by Council, why can they not just bring them to Council, especially if they are time-sensitive as Council meets more often. Quorum is to protect against a small group of people making decisions, so he is curious why the councillors did not bring these motions to Council first.

Councillor Cooper: She wishes everything could be brought to a GA as GAs offer a much more powerful mandate. Unfortunately, it is not possible to get quorum every week. In response to Councillor Farnan, that is a very technical point, it is essentially a councillor-moved Council motion. She does not see how it is a loophole, and points out that the term "sketchy" has been used by both sides. Asks if 8b can be moved to a Council motion and discussed tonight without worrying about setting a precedent.

Chair: That could be entertained if Council were to adjourn the meeting and President Redel called a new Council meeting immediately after.

Councillor Lubendo: Could the same councillors pass it at council meeting? If they don't get a majority vote in the GA, can they just bring it back to council?

Chair: Yes, Council is not trying to get rid of the motions or push them back, there are ways they could be pushed back to Council.

Councillor Briggs: Has a question for President Redel, is it still unclear that if Council were to pass this motion, would it still have to be ratified online afterwards? If that is not clear, he suggest Council table this until a time at which the ramifications of Council's decisions are clear.

President Redel: Steering would appreciate more time to look into this

Councillor Dinel: From the last few years when GA motions have come to council, if these motions are passed are they considered GA motions or council motions?

President Redel: This is unclear.

Councillor Szpejda: Does debate have a time limit?

Chair: No.

Councillor Briggs motions to table this issue until next council when Policy Committee or Steering Committee can evaluate the constitutionality of the procedure.

Councillor Farnan rescinds his previous motions.

Councillor Briggs motions to commit 4 motions on agenda in new business back to the Steering Committee (perhaps Policy Committee) to discuss the constitutionality of the procedure for nest motions.

Councillor Cooper: Can the motion be tabled and have another council meeting (immediately after the current meeting) where it is brought back as a council motion and discussed today.?

Chair: It would brought back for the November 1st meeting.

Councillor Morawetz: If Council was to pass Briggs' motion, could the motions all be committed to the Policy Committee, and in the meantime councillors can bring motions forward to Council?

Chair: There is a deadline for submitting motions to Council, is currently trying to figure that out.

Councillor Chaim: These are important motions, clearly the movers saw it as important to have the support of the student body behind them. Clearly Council's job is to represent what the students want, and since no support was showing, how does Council represent them?

Councillor Szpejda: In regards to the indecisiveness of feelings towards these motions by the student body (less than 1%), if Council supports direct democracies it shouldn't have a problem with postponing this issue for 2 weeks so it can have more opinions on these matters.

Councillor Georges: It is a good idea to wait 2 weeks and let this issue simmer while Council gets the guidance from people who know more about this area of constitutionality. It is

dangerous to set a long-term precedent that could snowball. People can return to precedents so Council should make sure it sets the right one. Council should take 2 weeks to reflect.

Councillor Cooper: The numbers she had written down from the GA for the motion question were 52-14-7, this plus Council is a pretty good sample size. She thinks it is bureaucratic to have to wait 2 weeks.

Councillor Farnan motions to call the question (seconds to Councillor Briggs' motion).

Vote to commit motions 8b-e and to have a decision for the next Council in meeting in 2 weeks. Motion passes 18-7, motions have been committed.

9) Reports by Committees

a. Interest Group Committee

Councillor Cooper: stands for questions. No questions.

b. Executive Committee

President Redel: stands for questions. No questions.

President Redel: motions to table since committee report went up 10 minutes ago, motion passes.

10) Reports by Executives

a. VP Finance and Operations – J.P. Briggs

There have been a lot of ongoing budget meetings with services and groups to continuing furthering that progress. Met with second floor tenants who expressed some issues and concerns they were having with the space. They are not too content with what is happening in the building; the issue is that it takes forever to get things fixed because McGill is losing money. The Student Café Feasibility Committee met on Friday and broke off to do research (looking at other failed student options). This information should be available at the next meeting.

Councillor Rosentzveig: Do we have Gert's numbers from the past few weeks?

VP Briggs: Technically yes, but are waiting for the end of month (by next council meeting) to have most accurate figures.

b. VP University Affairs – Haley Dinel

The Consultation Fair happened on Tuesday, thanked to all who came out and supported. The Provost and Principal were there, as well as lots of useful middle management people. Senate met on Wednesday, and was one of the really good, intense sessions. If interested in finding out more, read the minutes or talk to Dinel or the senators

Councillor Dziadyk: Where are the minutes available?

VP Dinel: Will be online, in 3 weeks.

Councillor Lam: Can you elaborate on what the Provost said?

VP Dinel: He is going to meet with the deans of the faculties to see how barriers can be broken down, will talk with the APC about its policy, and is working with the Deputy Provost.

- c. VP Internal – Michael Szpejda
Since last week, has been working on 4 Floors.
- d. VP External – Robyn Reid-Fraser
Some interesting things happened in meetings today after report was submitted involving plans around the education summit that will be happening on McGill campus. VP externals from different associations have been emailing with executives and SSMU's political attaché and researcher Simon Charbonneau to talk about the process they would like to go through for the event. Would like to have a fairly long process (about a month long) with informal discussions moving towards larger and more formal meetings, and an interactive blog and online discussion forum with different sections to comment on various topics. They are considering having large meetings with different tables about different topics so people with time constraints wouldn't miss out on specific issues. Reid-Fraser acknowledges this plan is ambitious but is excited and optimistic. She plans on conducting an online survey, collecting data, making a big report, and trying to make generalizations to take to council and the faculties. This will be what goes on to TaCEQ, SSMU's representation at the PQ summit (which will likely be held in February). Charbonneau is doing a lot of research about universities in other countries, including the question of the role of universities in societies, how this works in other countries, as well as debates and issues going on in other countries, which will be something for Reid-Fraser to bring to the table.

Councillor Nasr: regarding Community Engagement Day (Oct. 5-6), what is Reid-Fraser going to do to increase turnout? Suggested avoiding putting it on Friday and Saturday.

VP Reid-Fraser: the event was organized by the Social Equity and Diversity Office, but she is doing a lot of debriefing with them and that is a point that could be talked about. The event came out of the Community Engagement Committee last year so there was not as much time for promotion. This year, planning will start in January so there should be more opportunities to promote it, and hopefully since it has already happened once there will be more awareness.

Councillor Georges: wanted to know what Reid-Fraser would be bringing back from a meeting she is attending in Quebec City.

VP Reid-Fraser: it is a meeting with TaCEQ, and will include a full report from TaCEQ's meetings with national associations. TaCEQ's position on the education summit is that it should be a big process and everyone who wants to participate should be able to participate. Reid-Fraser will get more information on Monday and can make sure it comes to the next council meeting.

Councillor Chaim: wanted more information about a student housing seminar discussed in GA that would deal with helping students who were looking for apartments for the first time. When is this going to be taking place and how would one get involved?

VP Reid-Fraser: this is the Community Ambassadors Program, targeted mostly in the Milton-Parc community. Students act as mentors and mediators for students who are moving into apartments for the first time. The program is still in its preliminary planning stages, she is talking to people in Off-campus Fellows Program (which does something similar but for first year students so it has a slightly different mandate) about how these two groups could work together, talking preliminarily about funding, who is best to be involved, and the goals of the process. The VP can add people to a list if they are interested.

- e. VP Clubs and Services – Allison Cooper
Began by thanking VP Dinel for organizing Consultation Fair. The VP has posted a clubs' wishlist and has received a lot of feedback. Big issues involve event booking bureaucracy and student space, she hopes to compile report soon so Council can make addressing this issue a goal this semester. She thanked VP Briggs for posting financial applications and announced that a clubs' website designer has finally been hired. Cooper also thanked Council for approving new interesting clubs, such as astronomy.
- f. President – Josh Redel
The Judicial Board will get decision to Council in 15 business days, so it will still will be awhile. The party was a lot of fun and they appreciated us coming; it is most likely that the next location will be Citadelle Residence. The General Assembly went well, he enjoyed level of debate incurred but it was too bad more people didn't stay. There are some things that could be done to resolve this issue. People really enjoyed the livestream, which was both good and bad. The livestream included many features, including a chatroom, minutes, and live translations (which were particularly impressive for such a long time, say thank you to the translator if you see her). Given the debate from earlier this evening there are clearly some things to work out for the next GA, will look at how it can be made better next time. Redel gave his thanks to those who came out, and said he will be sending survey around to get feedback and will be making a presentation on it for council soon. Also, everyone should have received an email to vote for online ratification of some GA motions.

Councillor Rosentzveig: asked President's opinion of the effect of having online tools on the GA's turnout.

President Redel: there was some initial concern as some thought it would lower numbers, but this GA had just as much – if not more – people than normal. Quorum was reached for a short period of time, which was not great but was pretty normal. The chatroom was, at times there was a lot of trolling, but it still provided a different kind of (uninterrupted) environment for people to talk about interesting points.

Councillor Lubendo: are GAs always held during midterm season? A lot of people had exams and couldn't attend. Also, what happened with clicker voting?

President Redel: The GA was supposed to happen October 1st but preparations were not complete. The winter 2013 GA will be 3 months into the semester so hopefully this will be less of an issue, however it is unfortunate that midterms start and then don't end until finals. The clickers were double-booked and SSMU was not able to have them.

Councillor Dinel: congratulated President for working tirelessly to coordinate GA.

Motion to recess for Board of Directors Meeting, motion passes.

Meeting of Legislative Council enters recess at 7:32pm.

Meeting resumes at 7:38pm.

11) **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn, motion passes. Meeting adjourned at 7:38pm.