

SSMU Legislative Council Meeting #1 Minutes – March 15th 2012

1) Call to Order

6:18pm

2) Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted.

3) Adoption of the Minutes

Councillor Fletcher made a motion to amend the minutes to say that the AUS Council passed a motion “to hold an alternative nighttime activity one evening.”

The minutes were adopted with the above amendment.

4) Steering Committee

President Knight stood for questions.

Seeing none, the report of the Steering Committee was adopted.

5) Announcements

Councillor Fletcher announced that the arts undergraduate society 4-609 and quorum was lost. He was sure that would be discussed later but he wanted to bring it up at this point.

President Knight said we had a record turnout in the voting for SSMU elections. Megan from POTUS couldn't be here, but POTUS voted to go on a one-day strike on March 22nd.

Councillor Qin said that she's heard from students that they want to keep Tiki-Ming in the second floor. There is a petition of 1080 signatures. If anyone is interested, she can bring it later. Many students who signed it said that they have a well-priced and good quality restaurant and have a good relationship with current associations on campus. She wanted Councillors to be aware of this issue. She asked to yield her time to a member of the gallery.

Chair Nizam said that should be brought forward to Steering Committee to discuss it.

President Knight said this has been explained before. She recognizes that this is no ideal situation. We can't talk about this publically for legal reasons. She would prefer this to be a public discussion, but due to legal concerns which Tiki-Ming and Councillors are well aware of, we cannot share this information.

Chair Nizam asked her to bring that to steering because no one is prepared for that discussion.

Councillor Clarke asked if Councillors are allowed to sign this letter as well.

President Knight said that she is not a lawyer, but there may or may not be legal implications to signing that if you are a Director.

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Councillor Winer said that for the sake of the member of the gallery who didn't know they would have to send this to the steering committee, he asked if there is any forum at which this could be addressed tonight.

Vice-President Patel said that there's a St. Patrick's Day event tomorrow at Gerts. He will be there at the bar or coat check all day.

Councillor Chaini said March 24th there is a Kholi event (for the festival of colours). Wear clothes that you'd like to be ruined. You will be given coloured powder to throw at people. It begins at 7:00pm. Everyone should be invited via the facebook group.

Councillor Parent-Racine said that Social Work held a general assembly on Wednesday and has voted in favour of an unlimited general strike. They are on strike on the 19th and will reconvene on the 27th. There were 94 students present. Quorum was established at 24 students, and 61% of the 94 students present voted to go on strike.

Vice-President Clare said the awards of distinction committee is accepting applications until April 1st. If you feel you've done a lot of awesome work, it's a great opportunity. President Knight has won it in the past.

Vice-President Plummer said that he would like to address the letter that the Executive Committee sent out the letter to the AUS. He said it shouldn't have been sent to the media. He said it did put a lot of stress on the staff, building, and clubs. AUS is working on a meeting time to have an honest, productive, and open discussion about this.

Councillor Kryluk said that McGill Cheerleading team went to the Syracuse last weekend and got 2nd. There was a science GA last week. Science made the decision that to officially support accessible education. Also, science elections are coming up next week. Don't forget to tell your friends in science to vote.

Vice-President Pedneault said there is a march against tuition increases on March 22nd, 2012.

Councillor Winer said that elections for next year's clubs and services reps will be held next week on Tuesday. Every club or service is encouraged to send a delegate. Vice-President Fraser said only one person per club, service, or ISG should be sent. Councillor Fagen asked when the latest chance to send a delegate is. Vice-President Fraser said that the meeting is on Monday at 5pm.

Councillor Bi is speaking on behalf of the AUS President, the Vice-President External, and representative, and read from a statement. AUS Executive happy to say that they had the most well-attended general 695 no vote 495 yes votes and wanted to thank clubs and services, MSA, mini-courses for their cooperation, TVMcGill for

critical support, and SSMU security, but she said this statement would like to address the open letter. Councillor Bi said that issuing an open letter sets a dangerous precedent for faculty associations as a whole. The tone of the letter presumes that the AUS is subordinate to the SSMU. The AUS never has been and never will be subordinate to the SSMU. The letter to the AUS accused the AUS of lack of contingency, and unfairness toward SSMU staff. Actually, clubs and services failed to answer pertinent e-mails and did not work with the President. Councillor Bi said that President Knight failed her mandate to the society. Councillor Bi said she was dismayed of the SSMU's external affairs committee and mobilization squad's concerted efforts within AUS. SSMU's resources were used disproportionately within the AUS. They had planned for a larger turnout than usual. The Vice-President External should have communicated to the members of the AUS that was going on. The Vice-President Clubs and Services' blocking faculty association from booking rooms hurt thousands. To threaten largest fine arts event is unwarranted attack on Internal and fine arts council. The statement expressed disgust at the word "entitlement" that was used in the letter. By definition, that word means that one is deserving, and the use of it reflects the highest level of hypocrisy in the SSMU. SSSMU President and Vice-President External are aware of the use of SSMU's resources in AUS affairs. That undermined the dedication to student life shown by the AUS executive. Councillor Bi said that she herself asks Councillors to speak against this letter by the SSMU Executive. For them to choose an AUS event, like nuit blanche, to threaten, she said is disgusting. She had hoped that they would have expressed their concerns in a professional and productive manner. Further concerns should be expressed that way tonight.

Vice-President Fraser asked if there is a time limit on each speaker.

Chair Nizam said that she suggests that the Executives move forward with one another to discuss this issue further.

President Knight made a motion to suspend the rules to amend the agenda under item 7a. Discussion Re: SSMU Exective Letter to AUS Executive. This amendment passed.

6) Question Period

Councillor Clarke said that there are some law students who want to get involved in the student movement in Quebec but are upset with lack of TaCEQ doing anything. He asked if TaCEQ is going to be doing anything and asked if there is another organization that could be more representative of the SSMU.

Vice-President Pedneault said that discussion is still underway.

President Knight asked when the deadline for SSMU award applications is.

Vice-President Plummer said the deadline is Monday, March 19th at 5pm.

Vice-President Clare asked when they will be choosing Councillor of the year.

Vice-President Plummer said that will be whenever the meeting of the nominating committee is called.

President Knight said that will occur at the next meeting of the nominating committee.

Councillor Clarke said that he heard concerns about characterizing student strike as governed under Québec labour code. SSMU is not certified as union so there are concerns that the informational material sent out on the SSMU listserv may have been misleading. Also, there are concerns that McGill will not recognize a student strike. His perspective is that they would penalize students, and McGill administrators would not recognize the SSMU as a union..

Vice-President Plummer said that the FAQ page was written by the Vice-President External. He said that the Executives should have reviewed that more clearly. There are biases and he and President will be working on that so that a new version can be distributed by listserv next week

Vice-President Pedneault said that student unions are not governed by the labour code. The statement was not meant to state the University's position. The sentence says that students at other universities won't be penalized for striking, and that is something that's recognized.

President Knight said the approval for that was done very quickly. The Executive had an opportunity to review the full text and is in contact with the Deputy Provost's office to make sure everything is addressd. Should be addressed

Plummer said by Monday's listserv he will mention that it has been revised.

Councillor Fletcher asked, regarding, the upcoming general assembly, whether accommodations have been made for all members of the SSMU to participate on March 28th.

Vice-President Pedneault said they have booked Leacock 132, 232, and the Adams Auditorium in case an unprecedented number of members show up. They are looking into other rooms also.

Councillor Kunev said that an arts and science rep to council was voted upon and approved at the last meeting of Council. He asked how this confirms to article 4 of the constitution, which states that each faculty and school in representation with number of students with procedures set out fort heir constituencies, therefore 12,500 student should be 8 councillors from arts and science.

President Knight said that section of the constituton is misleading in this case. The arts and science faculty has a weird structure because it's inter-faculty and it's about 600 students in arts and science specifically, and it makes a special seat listed along the first-year Council or athletics rep. Her understanding is that the 600 students will be represented by one member of BaSIC.

Councillor Clarke asked a follow-up to Fletcher and asked if the SSMU has the capability to have an online vote at the GA. He asked if it could be done at the minute that the vote was livestreamed over TVM. President Knight said it's not in the constitution to have an online vote associated with the proceedings, but the

assembly can vote to have the vote online. In the situation with the high turnout, they will be looking at the logistics for that. In that case, he asked if there will be a motion for an online vote.

President Knight said that is being discussed.

Daniel Wolf from the gallery said that he's here because over 1000 people signed the petition in support of Tiki-Ming staying in SSMU. He came when he heard the possibility that they might be kicked out of SSMU and wanted to make sure the SSMU would do everything in their power to keep this restaurant. He said he understands that there are a lot of legal issues about talking about this in public. SSMU has been unable to consult with students. Without any push from SSMU or Tiki-Ming itself, SSMU members have signed this petition. He said he is speaking for himself and a lot of other students. There aren't that many students to have their voices represented but there is a lot of support from students for this restaurant. Also, he said it was mentioned earlier that during the AUS GA, the SSMU was in contact with third-party mobilizers. The AUS executive was doing the same. He said he thinks it's unfair to only discuss one side of this.

Chair Nizam asked that we keep the question to one topic at a time.

President Knight said she doesn't want to put us in a situation where we get sued. There was a substantial lawsuit in the past regarding negotiations bad faith and is not a light issue in terms of liability. She said it crushes her soul that we can't plan that conversation in public. Earlier, the Council substantially considered what was going to happen with the tenants. The Council appreciates the receipt of the petition. However, she can't say anything else other than that there is no intention to reconsider at this point, given where they are legally. This can be addressed by e-mail, but you will probably.

Chair Nizam said that no one should be stopped from asking whatever they want to ask.

Another member of the gallery asked to speak. He said that Tiki-Ming provides a good quality of food and he respects the legal issue but he sincerely wants to ask the Council to reconsider this case. There is a petition with 1,000 students who would like them to reconsider.

Councillor Qin asked if it is possible to bring this to in-camera session

President Knight said there may not be a lot more to say but we can discuss that.

Chair Nizam said that we will amend the in-camera agenda to include that.

Councillor Kunev asked President Knight what is going on in terms of the potential visit of the Principal to Council. EUS had the principal, deputy-provost, and the provost in attendance.

Vice-President Pedneault said that today is the anti police brutality March. Part of the March was on campus and there were police vans there.

President Knight said Vice-President Clare has gone to inform the security supervisor about the march and police presence on campus. She said that it's unlikely that a student union would be targeted by a group of protesters.

President Knight congratulated EUS for getting three administrators. President Knight said she's not sure if there would be any change in the Principal's availability to meet, but she is happy to reiterate the request. If no time works during regular Council meetings, perhaps there could be an alternate time for Councillors wishing to meet with the Principal.

7) New Business

7a. Discussion: SSMU Executive Letter to the AUS

Vice-President Pedneault said he wasn't present at the meeting where this was discussed.

Councillor Winer said towards the end of the letter, Councillor Bi said we should conduct ourselves in productive manner. He hopes that sentiment remains throughout this discussion. He asked that we try to focus on rebuilding things rather than focusing on attacks.

Chair Nizam said as always, the Council must engage respectfully in discussion.

Councillor Fagen asked if Vice-President Plummer would be willing to issue a statement to the campus media saying that it might not have been a good idea to send a letter to the media.

Vice-President Plummer said yes.

Vice-President Fraser said she will address the question of Councillor Fagen first. It's best to address the one letter to the press on its own so that it does not become a press war. They decided as an executive to have it be an open letter. She said she'd like to address a couple things. First, she said it's important to know this letter was not meant to be a personal attack and needs to be heavily contextualized. The AUS and SSMU have been working together on a lot this year. The relationship, while productive, has been difficult at times. The letter has come out of a time for her, being responsible for clubs and services and the building, there was not a lot she could do. Executive Committee happened on Wednesday morning after Tuesday's GA. She felt there was no other way to address the issue and it needed to be addressed equally. It has been really emotionally involved for everybody. About the specifics, they will be meeting with the AUS and perhaps it would be best not to go back and forth right now. In any case, in terms of planning of actual event, she would like to address the accusations made against herself in terms of planning. She had been in contact with AUS prior to the event and on the day of the event. The day of, she made it clear that there was no space in the building itself and that they would have to find overflow space outside of the building. That was understood between herself and the AUS President, and there was no other request in terms of space. About entitlement, the point was about taking MSA and mini-courses out of the spaces they are entitled to use, without asking first, especially because there was an

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understanding that those spaces were not available. If you read the letter carefully, there is provision for groups of the AUS wanting to book rooms to contact her directly about their event which can be approved on a case-by-case basis. Chair Nizam said that this is so important she wants to make sure everyone has their say.

Vice-President Clare asked to make this a ten-minute discussion. There is a possibility for extending.

Councillor Clarke said that he agreed with Vice-President Fraser that this is essentially an issue between two bodies because there are things in the letter they should hash out one-on-one, but he felt a chilling effect when he read the letter. He got the sense that if the LSA did something to cross the SSMU Executive, they might receive the same backlash. After they have their individual discussions he would like them to come up with a mutual letter and in order to alleviate the chilling effect he felt as a faculty association executive.

President said that in no way are any faculty associations subordinate to the SSMU. This particular letter refers to a faculty's association use of space and when space is on a fair level for all people, that has to be respected by all people. This is the same as any group with understanding that we protect clubs and services that use this building. She said she's spent a lot of her time this year trying to work effectively with faculty associations. This does not typify the relationships with faculty associations this year. There had been clear communication that there was no overflow space. Students pay to go to mini-courses and students have to act on that. Her understanding was the way that TVM was treated was extremely disrespectful and there had been discouragement from them to be dealing with it at all and for them to be treated as tech support is not the way they should be treated. She hopes we can move forward. Aggressive statements calling forward particular people are not particularly productive. She would like to hear a more nuanced debate.

Eli Marshall Arts U3 English spoke from the gallery. She is the President of TVM and said that she and the AUS President had a chance to briefly talk. They were not happy with how they have gone on and will be discussing the issue further. TVM was thankful for the SSMU's. Usually TVM events are handled in two ways as a part of regular service: either they are asked to go to an event in advance, or they will ask to cover an event out of their own interest in covering the event. This time, the executive producer was asked her to cover and livestream the event, but they were not given any indication until noon of the day that would actually be happening. She was messaged personally and said that the livestream shouldn't be given to the public. She said that, later, there was a suggestion that it could be made public through a motion at the GA which passed. TVM feels that they have been taken advantage of because they had to organize satellite rooms. She interrupted the MSA several times. She had to make a call on the spot about whether or not to use Gerts. She was subject to verbal reprimands about the service, and there were assumptions that they were able to wire the Shatner building, there was criticism for lack of access to computers, and in front of the entire SSMU ballroom, she had to

say that TVM does not have any more equipment. On a personal level, she did not know that she would be working on Tuesday. She would not have worn her red square if she had known she would have been helping out on Tuesday night, given TVM's journalistic nature. Different members of the AUS executive told them that they were not able to vote, and she and seven other members of TVM were there to vote, but did not have the chance. TVM is a part of the SSMU service and people who pay for TVM are internal and external to AUS, so SSMU services were mistreated for AUS benefit.

A motion passed to extend the discussion.

Councillor Chaini said that SSMU Council is public, and the letter should have been discussed here. She does not think this letter should have gone right away. A lot of students asked questions about it, and she did not know what they referring to. She thinks it would have been better to discuss this at the Council, or through e-mail because she read this when it was public and did not read it through Council. She said she appreciates hearing about people's experiences. As a SSMU Councillor, she would have liked some input about what's important to say. She said they should have discussed it before any letter was sent out. She does not think it should have been a unilateral decision of the Executive.

Jade Calver, President of the AUS, spoke from the gallery. She thanked the Council for allowing the time to discuss this issue tonight. She said this is an issue between two bodies, SSMU and AUS, and she wishes that the SSMU had consulted with the AUS executive and said that she does not want to create further tension. She said given the TVM presence, she would like to apologize. She thinks that the actions were a result of the tensions they were experiencing that night. She thanks them for their services and apologizes to the members of the AUS who suffered from the actions taken that evening. The evening did speak to the power of democracy on this campus, and the AUS did handle this successfully.

Councillor Fletcher said that he is not speaking on behalf of the Vice-President Internal but it is not fair to hold the nuit blanche hostage. He thinks the blame game should stop. There were problems, we can't deny that. He hopes that SSMU will try to avoid these problems when planning for their assembly on March 28th.

Vice-President Clare thanked the President of AUS for her words. She was present at the crisis management thing. One good example is that they worked with the McGill security at the last moment. Another thing to be noted is that people really stepped up. There were people from other universities helping to count and there were a lot of great things that we can learn from this. The SSMU executives will take these things to heart when considering their upcoming general assembly.

Councillor Bi said that the letter says "we are disgusted..." and there is merit for the Council to amend this or rescind it because some of the language is unacceptable.

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Eli, President of TVM, said that the word “disgusted” is a good explanation of seven people not being able to have dinner and being subjected to verbal abuse. Disgusted is the only word you can use to describe the mistreatment of TVM.

Councillor Parent-Racine said that she understands the gravity of the situation but feels like this atmosphere is very aggressive and defensive and would like to ask that this be more of a safe space.

Councillor Kunev said that it must be hard for the Executives in regards to the tension that has been happening this year. Letters like this seem to most students that they haven’t talked about that and it seems like the Executive Committee itself disagrees.

Jade Calver addressed a question to Vice-President Plummer or Fraser. She said given there was an admission that it was a mistake to give this letter to the campus press, are there are any responses about how to address this issue?

Vice-President Clare said that this is something the Executive Committee should meet on. If they choose to rescind or rephrase any part of the statement circulated by e-mail, based on approvals they could move forward. She made a motion to commit this issue to the Executive Committee this weekend (before Monday).

Councillor Clarke said this is subject to ratification via e-mail, and asked if that would be stipulated also.

President Knight suggested that the Executive made a proposal to Council via e-mail by Saturday at 5 and then Councillors will have until Sunday to submit a response.

Chair Nizam reiterated that there is a motion to commit this reconsideration of the letter to the Executive Committee with a vote of Council happening before Sunday at 5pm.

Councillor Bi made a formal motion resolving that the letter be formally rescinded and further resolved that a formal apology be issued.

President Knight suggested that given that we’ve bent those rules to address tangential manners, it would appropriate in this case to discuss a formal motion.

Chair Nizam said the motion to commit and the motion to rescind the letter will be entertained.

The motion to commit to the executive committee was discussed.

Vice-President Clare asked if it could be distributed by the Legislative Council.

Councillor Clarke made a motion to suspend the rules to amend the agenda to include this motion: Resolution regarding rescinding the SSMU’s letter to the AUS Executive. That amendment to the agenda passed.

7b. Resolution RE: Rescinding the SSMU Executive's Letter to the AUS Executive

Councillor Bi read the resolution.

Vice-President Fraser said she is opposed to this motion. For any other event of this scale, the AUS would have been billed for the use of their room. The billing is coming afterwards without prior notice, there were serious costs incurred. The whereas clauses should be more clear and less vague about actions with clubs. It would be great to hold the executive accountable, but there are many different things at stake right now and that should be more specific.

Vice-President Clare gave the Council an update and got a text message from the head of security because they are doing triage from seven McGill students and six Concordia students. Vice-President Pedneault is going to check on what's happening but she said it's important that the Council knows what's going on.

Councillor Fletcher said it's important that we all know what's going on. This letter was drafted without the Council's knowledge and considering that they regret what will be discussed in the future, Council has a say in the Executive Committee's actions. He thinks the demands should be rescinded then discussed with the AUS executive. He said that he does not think this resolution is vague at all.

President Knight said that she doesn't think that it's productive to go over it this way, and this letter was not intended as a political statement against the AUS. Regarding a demand of the letter of apology, she is not sure it is objectionable to the AUS and letters of apology are not always good ways of going about this. If we do not bill for these things, the SSMU would be subsidizing the cost of a general assembly which is highly unusual. She is not sure where that money is supposed to come from if it doesn't come from the AUS. Regarding nuit blanche, she said that she already committed to making this a success. Obvious mistakes, but interpreted as being partially SSMU as well. Not clear about exactly how this would happen. Without discussing with the nuit blanche folks, thinks that this is not a threat to the nuit blanche existence. AUS is not subordinate to the SSMU and the publications are not either, cannot make them publishing very quickly.

Vice-President Clare said that Wallace, the head of SSMU security, is currently heading to the hospital with a student.

Vice-President Clare spoke against this motion. It is our responsibility and we as SSMU exec have a responsibility to hired staff. A lot of the staff were extremely exhausted and pushed around in terms of not being aware of what security was needed; cleaners were forced to stay longer to do extensive cleaning of the building. Beyond overflow and clubs and services, this is an HR issue.

Councillor Fagen said to address Vice-President Clare's point, while he notes the HR issues, he thinks it's important to recognize that the blame shouldn't lie with the AUS executive. He said it was not possible to anticipate in the fullest sense how it would have gone, and he does not know how they could have done differently.

Councillor Winer said that he has no idea whether or not they could have reasonably known, but does he not think that the costs should therefore fall on the SSMU.

Councillor Bi said that the Council should vote to have this letter rescinded. There were demands in the letter from the SSMU to the AUS and it is not professional to make those demands in a public forum. They understand the statement. They decided to send the letter Wednesday morning and then sent it Wednesday evening. We can either get this passed or not within the next 20 minutes that would be more efficient than waiting until the weekend.

President Knight thanked everyone for their patience. She does not think a solution to hasty action is more hasty action. We have heard everything that's been said here. She said that she understands why arts reps have been concerned about that. She is not sure that restricting that based on this motion is necessarily helpful and would hope that there is something grater than making these personal. Thanks the President of the AUS for her words and if there can be an amicable solution to this, she is not sure the most productive decision will be made at the moment.

Motion to previous question passed.

With a vote of 3 in favour, 13 against, and 3 abstaining this motion did not pass.

Councillor Kunev suggested that those letters should be removed from the websites. Chair Nizam said we should say how they feel in a professional vocabulary. She would like the discussion to be kept as professional as possible.

7c. Motion Re: Special Referendum Period

Vice-President Fraser said that the motion regarding the special referendum period is being requested regarding QPIRG. There has been a lot of stuff going on in terms of QPIRG to ensure that the group continues to exist on campus.

President Knight said that it would be unfair to define an exceptional referendum period just for QPIRG. She said that the student body was informed of the possibility of this happening. She said you can see that there is, in fact, another motion for Council-initiated referendum questions. It's at the discretion of this Council whether or not it will be approved. It should be clear whether we will participate in that way.

Vice-President Plummer asked who is going to administer this election.

President Knight said that's under the purview of elections SSMU she has been in contact with Rebecca Tacoma. However, she has exams and will not be able to

entirely oversee this extra election period. There are provisions whereby the deputy returning officer could be hired for next year early, but those options should be weighed. Rebecca said she is able to advise but unable to oversee it all herself.

A motion to previous question passed.

The motion regarding the special referendum period passed with a vote of 18 for, one against, and none abstaining.

7d. Notice of Motion Re: Referendum Question Re: QPIRG Existence and Fee

Vice-President Fraser read out the notice of motion.

Councillor Clarke asked the movers how it will remain opt-outable
Vice-President Fraser said it will remain opt-outable online

Councillor Chaini suggested that it be made clear in the question so that students know exactly what they're voting for.

Vice-President Patel said it's in the whereas clause that it's opt-outable on Minerva
Vice-President Fraser said that it has been approved in its entirety by the Deputy Provost.

Councillor Kunev referred to the constitution of the society asked that 29.7. If it fails online but is passed at the GA, it doesn't pass.

Vice-President Fraser

Councillor Kunev said that it doesn't eliminate a physical GA, it's just online

Vice-President Fraser asked if that's seen in any way as non-compliant with decisions made by general assemblies

Councillor Kunev said this would provide incentive for people to attend that GA.

President Knight asked the movers about the percentage for quorum. 15% requirement for quorum for the referendum and concern with GA vote online means that everyone should have access, there have been referendums in the past failing to reach quorum. Asked if there is concern about that level of quorum. Asked whether this will incapacitate them to make decisions about quorum.

Councillor Clarke said that movers and co-signers haven't agreed on this. 15% was chosen because of executive election quorums as well. President Knight said that it's not important for the exec questions. He said we may not have capacity at the Gas. He said we're trying to give the ability to vote, but if we have too high quorum impossible. He said that 15% was picked to be higher than the current requirement of 100.

By a vote of 19 for, 1 against and 1 abstention, this motion passed.

8) Adjournment

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9:55pm