

SSMU Legislative Council Meeting #2 Minutes – March 15th 2012

1) Call to Order

10:00pm

The Chair remarked that because there was a previous meeting, the Council will move straight into new business.

2) New Business

2a. Motion Re: Contribution to Alexandra Dodger Memorial Bursary

Vice-President Pedneault suggested that President Knight speak on his behalf. She said that this money would be taken out of the awards of distinction fund, a full-time student was not able to give to get the award. The money for the fund would go instead to a bursary in memory of a law student who died earlier this year in a car crash. This money is supposed to support students with their financial need for a great member of our McGill community

Councillor Clarke said she was an inspiration to every member of the LSA. If this passes, the LSA will be deeply indebted and thankful.

This passed unanimously.

2b.. Motion Re: Creation of the Athletics Roundtable as a Society Committee

Vice-President Plummer put forward this motion and read out the Resolved clauses. He explained that this has been an informal body of the Council and there are no terms of reference but this would be an institutionalized way to show support for the body.

President Knight said that the roundtable is starting to strengthen support of student athletes. They have very high training schedules and workloads. This would be a dedicated body of SSMU to address their needs and issues.

Councillor Hernandez asked if the two members from the Council could be athletically inclined and said that the person on the Council should not be uninterested on the issues.

Chair Nizam said that all Councillors should have the right to be involved because it is election-based. Hopefully in the context of elections that would be a concern that would be addressed. Elections should ensure that everybody's skill sets are represented.

Councillor Fletcher asked about a PGSS rep. He is wondering whether there has been one this year, or how a member of PGSS would be asked to sit on this committee.

President Knight said it hasn't been consistent this semester. The committee does not have official decision making power over anything. This would be specifically

designating spots for them and acknowledging that they can be there, but they can choose to not attend.

This motion passed.

2c. Motion Re: Creation of the First-year Undergraduate Network as a Society Committee

President Knight read out the resolved clauses.

President Knight explained that first year students tougher learning curve than others here. She has been facilitating their relationship between SSMU and first years, and there has been a lot of sharing of support for first-years this year. She clarified the roles of these bodies serving the same constituency. First-year Councils at the faculty level at the core same as athletics round table in terms of making them more effective. There is a hub of institutional memory in terms of Council, and this should be more institutional memory in the President's office.

Councillor Fletcher said that FIERCE and other first year Councils mentioned. Asked if they would be amenable to a representative of each first-year faculty association. He would prefer to discuss that with other people and given this is really new, not sure if those Councils are interested. Also not every faculty has a Council. He said he's not sure if terms of reference are necessary, but they could add terms of reference.

Councillor Driesberg said that this is more of a flexible body in regards to first-year Councils and more continuity of membership.

President Knight asked to amend to add at the end of members at large, to add "with specific attention to faculty level associations and bodies." This was friendly.

Councillor Niu asked if it's possible to include a member of FUSS. He said that would apply to FUSS, FIERCE, or other bodies and has another friendly amendment to make it more specific "with specific attention to the faculty association level." This was a friendly amendment.

A motion to previous question passed.

With a vote of 21-0-0 this motion passed.

2d. Motion Re: Referendum Question Re: 2 for General Assembly

Councillor Kunev read the resolved clauses. He said we tried to vote regarding the regular referendum period. There were 480 signatures and this was highly discussed during the AUS GA. They tried to pose this question to the undergraduate body for a clear answer.

Councillor Fletcher asked about 29.7 and said that it should be overseen by "Elections SSMU" instead of the chief electoral officer. He rescinded that amendment.

Councillor Clarke said this was brought up earlier this year but would have violated the constitution because it could have been seen as taking power away from a general assembly. He said there was a survey conducted and 88% of the respondents wanted to have some form of an online ratification system. They did it a little too late, but he feels this is important to address. This motion is to recognize the fact that students want to be able to respond.

Councillor Chaini asked whether quorum would stay the same for the normal general assembly. She also asked whether ratification of the general assembly's decisions would have to be done online.

The motion is to ratify decisions made at the general assembly, which would not be ratified online.

President Knight said that her concern is about the difficulty of reaching quorum. There were different levels of participation required to do certain things. Some things are at the level of Council, others at the level of the GA, and others at the level of referenda. This way, referenda are the highest standard of direct democracy with the student body at the moment. She asked if we wish quorum to be 15% for GA referenda, so that we wouldn't be able to do things if there were not enough votes online. Some motions could be passed at the GA by those who chose to attend and exercise their democratic right, does not have quorum. It's her job to raise those concerns.

Chair Nizam asked about individuals partaking the vote, and whether individuals at the general assembly would also be allowed to vote to ratify the vote.

President Knight said that every member of the society would have the right to ratify the vote.

Councillor Bi said that the general assembly is severe in nature and main issues that would not be brought to GA but would be referendum would be constitutional changes. This percentage is a strong number to go with.

Councillor Fletcher said that it's important to pass this. He said accommodation for 25,000 students is an issue from the AUS GA independent from the SSMU. If SSMU is unable to get Leacock 132 or many students want to attend, students who cannot fit in the room would be unable to vote. If they are sick or unable to do that because of work this ensures that people will be allowed to debate, amend, but it will go to an online vote. He hopes that the Council will support this question for referendum.

Councillor Bernard said that the nature of the general assembly is to have a debate on the motion. Most of them will not have heard the debate. That will only be a small minority of people. That makes her uneasy and she is really not sure about this.

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Councillor Fagen asked the movers if they considered including some mechanism for discussion or debate online.

Vice-President Pedneault gave an update to the Council (on his return, upon request) and said he was trying to join up with Wallace Sealy who set up a triage station for students who were hurt. A McGill student went to the hospital as a result of the anti-police brutality demonstration.

Councillor Clarke said in reference to not being able to hear debate, and to give the opportunity to hear the general assembly, he felt that was not appropriate for the constitution. It's a chicken and the egg argument and this is a legitimate concern, but there could be a bylaw amendment in the GA section and a synopsis of the debate could be posted online. As for quorum, he is not sure that we should have a quorum because that conflates whether this amendment is addressing two issues: whether people are unable to come for logistical reasons, (and whether this allows them to attend when they are unable) or whether 100 people should not be able to make a decision for 20,000. He said the quorum part might be part of the amendment.

Vice-President Pedneault apologized for missing debate on this motion. He said that there already is possibility to move things online and said that it would make it difficult to discuss anything but it would be difficult to lobby all of the Councillors to come to the GA. You would have to run a referendum campaign afterwards. This would centralize a lot of power in SSMU Council and would be tedious in getting any motion passed.

Councillor Chaini said that the motion suggests that this should be articles 29.7 and 29.8 should be 29.8 and 29.9. This was researched, and the initial numbers were modified to 29.8 and 29.9.

Vice-President Patel said that he will speak against this motion because it takes away from a really important thing on campus—dialogue. This is a backward way of working. The GA needs to be transformed to be effective and we need to continue dialogue. It's his opinion that it needs to be promoted better.

Chair Nizam read out article 5.8 that a motion could be debated at any time and the referendum question could be moved from the GA. In other words, any motion can be moved to an online vote by a vote of the General Assembly.

Councillor Winer commended that the movers of the motion have done a lot of work on this and said that his speaking against the motion is in no way against the effort they put in to fix the GA. He said two other problems are that in the interim period between motions passing at the GA and being placed online, do we anticipate any kind of yes or no campaigning and will these be regulated? Secondly, this would seem to preclude the SSMU's ability to make an immediate decision on things that might happen. This would allow executives to make decisions where an executive could and should not make that decision. He encourages people to vote against this.

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Councillor Clarke said that the immediate decision concern is that the hopes are that this would follow the same process that Vice-President Pednealt outlined. Furthermore, GAs take at least two weeks to be mobilized and two weeks afterward aren't an immediate concern. The other idea about regulating the potential campaigning, there is no concern when implemented and not sure that we should have that concern when we want every vote to be ratified—he said not to worry about egregious breeches about actions if we make it happen all the time.

President Knight said that the standards set in this Council's tenure is whether the referendum question is legitimate, not whether or not we want it to pass. Also, given 480 signatures, if we don't pass it it's likely this will go to referendum anyway. Given the short timeline she feels we should keep that in mind. She would speak against 15% quorum requirement because referenda is to do with changing fees or constitution, but if people choose not to exercise their right to vote she does not have a lot of sympathy for that. It could make it very difficult to do anything (if quorum is not reached) so it may not be productive. There is a substantial additional expense in terms of hours of staff time with each additional referendum. Would like to recommend that they amend 29.8 to read that there shall be no quorum for this online vote.

Councillor Clarke made a motion to strike 29.9 in its entirety. This was friendly.

President Knight asked if the movers are amenable to discuss if there having no quorum.

Councillor Bernard said that if you have less than 100 people voting that's weird. She would like to leave quorum at 200.

Councillor Kunev said that 100 students is not representative. It's .01% or something. It should be 10% or something easier to achieve.

Councillor Winer said that he is a little confused about how the discussion is proceeding. He said one of the major reasons stated for why this motion should be approved is that it has been brought forward by 400 something students. If this is to do with changing the content of that motion they should do it now.

President Knight said the point is that whether or not a question is approved should be about whether or not it's a fair question and then it can be furthered by yes and no committees. We discussed support of the CKUT question, but a question of support is not at hand at the moment. It is in the Council's power to do that, they lease that question alone. It's a student body that should decide. The question brought to Council is whether it's the best to be addressed here. They could say no, they are substantively changing the tense of this. They should be the most fair and representative of the intent of the motion.

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Councillor Kunev made a motion to amend quorum requirements from 15% to 10%.

Chair Nizam reminded that body that it is discussing whether this should be seen as two questions. If this is to do with the specification of the first point, the question in the petition was into the idea of a quorum. That is one of the main issues.

Councillor Bi said it's important to call on institutional memory. The rules underneath need to be understood to see how it should be governed. She is open to putting back the second clause.

President Knight said that her understanding is that the text of this question was previously accepted by the chief electoral officer, which was supported by the judicial board. She does not think specifying quorum would be seen as a separate issue. It is possible to leave quorum at any level including 0.

Councillor Kunev asked whether there would be two questions or one question. They found that it was pertaining to an existing body. One question would change it and the other would keep it as the status quo. He is speaking against a need for quorum. The intent that he received is that they wanted to be able to vote but would not be able to attend because a lot of law events and clubs meet at the same time as GAs, they may not be able to commit four hours. Opening it up to online would satisfy that and do not necessarily need quorum.

Councillor Chaini said that 1% would be very difficult. It's difficult to get 100 people to come to the GA. It could be a small quorum with 5% or 2%. It sounds like a small amount, but that would address the issues and what if 200 people vote for this—there is still that problem of representation. If there is no quorum there is no motivation for people to vote.

Chair Nizam said again this is Council-initiated referendum question so is this a fair thing to ask of students and this should be discussed in terms of how the content is phrased and whether it's phrased properly for students.

An amendment was put forward to specify 10% quorum. With a vote of 12 for, 2 against, and 2 abstentions, this amendment passed.

A motion to previous question passed. With a vote of 15 for, 4 against, and 1 abstention, this motion passed.

2e. Notice of Motion Re: General Rules of Clubs, Services and Independent Student Groups By-Law Reform

2f. Notice of Motion Re: Clubs By-Law Reform

2g. Notice of Motion Re: ISGs By-Law Reform

2h. Notice of Motion Re: Services By-Law Reform

2i. Notice of Motion Re: Handbook By-Law Reform

Vice-President Fraser read out the above five notices of motion.

Councillor Clarke asked why it is an issue that they're asking for non-university research in their projects.

Vice-President Fraser said it was in the bylaws already but it was passed before because it seems unethical.

Councillor Bernard asked if it would cover STI testing for students.

Vice-President Fraser said that would probably be allowed.

Chair Nizam said that question can be addressed to the speakers via e-mail.

Vice-President Clare asked, in the first motion about independent student groups and bylaw reform, why was article 4 on pornographic material left in?

Vice-President Fraser said that motion was passed because of a GA motion that happened about 6 years ago.

Vice-President Clare said that there seems to be no room for potentially striking that article.

President Knight said that she would like to consult on this. She recalls that the last motion on general rules was in the winter of 2010 and that should be double-checked.

2j. Notice of Motion Re: Media Rules and Regulations and Schedule By-Law Reform

2k. Notice of Motion Re: Revision of By-Law Book I-7 (Undergraduate University Representation)

2l. Notice of Motion Re: Revision of By-Law Book I-9, I-10 and I-11 (Policies, Resolutions and Plans)

2m. Notice of Motion Re: Student Life Fund By-Law Reform

2n. Notice of Motion Re: Revision of Library Improvement Fund By-Laws

2o. Notice of Motion Re: Electoral By-Law Reform

President Knight read out all of the above motions.

2p. Notice of Motion Re: Conflict of Interest Policy

President Knight said that the conflict of interest policy is important to the society and builds on the work of President Newburgh and Max Zidel. She said that she and her legal Council made some additional edits by Councillors Clarke and Bi and the final version will be passed to their legal Council. This should be much more clear and should create a high level of ethics and disclosure while regarding rights. She suggested that those with technical questions contact her in the next two weeks.

2q. Notice of Motion Re: Policy Regarding Executive Officers' Contracts and Job Descriptions

President Knight said that instead of being passed as a resolution from Council, this should last for 5 years as a policy. This could more strongly institutionalize high accountability and transparency. This has to do with the rights and responsibility of Executives of the SSMU. She urged people concerned about this to consult with HR folks and consult with her as necessary.

3) Reports by Committees

3a. Interest Group Committee Report

Vice-President Fraser stood for questions and said they were unable to meet this week because of the AUS GA.

The report was approved.

3b. Executive Report

President Knight said that as noted, she apologizes this is differently formatted. This was not completed with the use of the minutes from the Executive Committee, as the recording secretary had not yet submitted the minutes at the time the report was due. She stood for questions.

Councillor Fletcher asked, regarding the bus trip to Quebec City, is this reflected as a \$1019.39 in the report?

President Knight said this didn't meet the deadline for the report last time, and that's why it's here. In the end, we only paid \$125.

Vice-President Fraser asked the Vice-President Internal why he did not attend the March 7th meeting of the Executive Committee.

Vice-President Plummer said he was purchasing things for Faculty Olympics at that time.

Vice-President Fraser asked why those things were being purchased during that time with no notice given.

Vice-President Plummer said he had meetings and appointments for the next few days and needed to get the supplies for Faculty Olympics.

The report was adopted.

4) Reports by Executives

4a. VP Clubs & Services Report

Vice-President Fraser said that an advanced room bookings coordinator was hired. Room bookings project still needs to be worked out. CKUT she is bummed that the question didn't pass. Let her know about any thoughts about that. She is working with Mendelson and Robin Wiltshire. C&S rep elections will happen next Thursday. PGSS edited some typos to do with their MOA with SSMU. She said that nothing about the content is changing. About the midnight kitchen fridge, some serious maintenance needs to be done.

Councillor Clarke said he's not sure what she's referring to in the mention of student services on her report.

Vice-President Fraser said the committee on student services has to do with the money that would normally have to do with MUNACA fee. There was talk on the committee of getting the fee reimbursed to students. Originally, the deputy provost said that the government took back this money. She found out recently that it's going into the pot that student services use to cover their deficits and the fee should not have to be raised. Again, people paid the fee this year and perhaps there is some merit in people who paid this year getting their money back.

Councillor Fletcher said that the policy passed last semester but it should be last Council.

4b. VP External

Vice-President Pedneault stood for questions.

4c. VP Finance & Operations

Vice-President Patel said that his report is not as full as usual—he was busy campaigning and working. On the 4th page, there is an overview of the budget revision. It's in a table format because it's a revision and the budget is not that substantial. He would like everyone to listen to the budget. There is one small mistake and if you look at concerts and conferences budget, it should be (8,225). This is something you should be listening to remain accountable. The second column is the initial budget, the revised budget with notes.

In Gerts there is a deficit now because of equipment purchases for renovations. This amount will be transferred in CERF as fixed assets. This is not break even because every thing else moving into CERF should be noted as an expense at this point. Building, general administration, and security budgets were somewhat decreased. \$10,000 expense to purchase tables and chairs was cut again this year. Hopefully, we will do that in the next budget.

Mini-courses is not that much of a change, but that may change next year.

President's portfolio cut drastically because she doesn't spend much, as was the finance and operations budget. Executive Committee also decreased their to ensure that other departments were covered. \$5,400 will cover executive retreat and a wine and cheese event. The communications budget will be handled by the communications and publications manager and the general manager. The concerts and conferences budget was cut drastically. There will be concert this semester or the SSMU will have to charge students to cover all expenses. In case of any pending invoices, the SSMU should cut all revenues so that it won't have to charge students for the events. The deficit projected is \$3,183 but \$3,700 is accounted for. Student handbook actual figures are higher than budgeted. Plate club is funded directly by SSMU and they covered the deficit to cover salaries. SSMU funds include the club fund because takes into account actual amount spent. Opt-outable fees are a bit higher. In winter semester they were a bit lower.

Councilor Clarke said he has a few questions-he asked what the actual budget will be in terms of credit or debit of that account. In change of cost for frosh, it was a

large unexpected surprise. He asked what the total expenditure is for frosh to get idea for percentage. Asked why we feel we need a lot more money on plate club. In terms of gerts unsure of what the exact numbers will be. They will have to find out from next year's financial statements. Frosh they are missing one invoice for security which is hard to know. They don't know how much it's going to be so better to have this than an unexpected surprise. About plate club, he said it was an accounting mistake in the sense that stipends were promised from last year not well-transitioned from the VPCS and herself. He is happy about stipends for this year, worked on with HR advisor and in conjunction with payscale.

He thanked Pauline and the comptroller for their work on the budget.

This was adopted.

4d. Vice-President Internal

Vice-President Plummer said last weekend was faculty Olympics. Hundreds had a great time, but internally it caused a lot of stress in the SSMU office. There is a lot of planning in place about the alumni gala but it may not be financially viable. He thinks it's a cool initiative but we should not lose money. SSMU awards will be Friday, April 13th. Due to complications with Boreale, it will be in the SSMU ballroom but we will rent decorations and have a nice caterer. St. Patrick's Day will be in Gerts tomorrow. Old McGill is coming today. The other thing that's exciting in his report is regarding how orientation is going to change this year. He said there have been lots of meetings and consultation-it is all there.

Councillor Clarke asked, in relation to faculty Olympics, and said that law had a blast. They were wondering why it wasn't in the SSMU ballroom.

Puppies are coming!

4e. Vice-President University Affairs

Vice-President Clare said it's really sketchy that she hadn't handed in her report. She stood for questions.

Councillor Clarke said that his question is in relation to senate caucus. He said Senator Briones' question was denied and asked why.

Vice-President Clare said that steering deemed it inappropriate. She said the intent of the question was to push the administration against SPVM, but the spirit of the question was to recognize the support that students have done. She said that the Principal had already addressed the issue twice before in Senate. The principal and provost are willing to meet with independent student inquiry now.

Councilor Fletcher asked about the fine arts student association.

Vice-President Clare said that she met with fine arts student association at Concordia. She talked about the process and Concordia doesn't have a law school, gave them some hints about how the SSMU works with the Judicial Board

4f. President

President Knight said the bylaw review committee has been active and bylaws have been pushed back. They made a substantial effort to finish these off so that we wouldn't have to deal with all of these in this Council meeting. She apologized for this, but we've got to get stuff done. JBoard is working on producing internal regulations. About referendum questions, she wants to make sure they pass. About governance relations, she talked about the retreat with the deputy association. She said that the class action project is fundraising for a greenhouse which will go behind James Admin below Wong. That will be operated by campus crops. She said that she's been doing a lot of work on HR bylaws and policy. She hopes to leave her successor a solid draft and is hoping to leave that. She said there are reports from the staff under her portfolio.

5) Question Period

Councillor Fletcher asked the Vice-President External about an event called creation night, and the information on tuition truth that says that McGill student associations are on strike. On the event it said there would be a sleep over in the Shatner building. He asked what associations other than PGSS have a mandate for picket lines.

Vice-President External that POTUS is also on strike and departmental associations may also be on strike.

6) In-Camera Session

7) Adjournment 12:19am