



Report of the Vice-President (Finance)

Fall 2019 General Assembly

Summary

1. What does the Finance Portfolio do day-to-day?
 - a. Clubs
 - b. Services
 - c. General Finance/Accounting/Audit
 - d. Funding
 - e. Health Insurance Plan
2. 2019-2020 projects
 - a. Club Banking and Workshops
 - b. Services Surpluses
 - c. SSMU Building Project/3501 Peel Project
 - d. International Health Insurance
 - e. Other Goals/Projects
3. Involvement Opportunities!
4. Questions

What do I do?

SSMU Constitution

The Vice-President (Finance) shall exercise the following powers and perform the following duties: to ensure the long-term financial stability of the Society; to provide the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors with regular reports on the financial status of the Society; to develop the annual budget of the Society in a manner consistent with the governing documents of the Society and the priorities set out by the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors; to ensure that no individual or group disburses the Society's funds without authorization; to manage any Society group insurance plan duly approved by the Members, in a manner consistent with the governing documents of the Society; to authorize all agreements that bind the Society and to act as the representative of the SSMU to the SSMU Daycare Inc.

Clubs

- Responsible for the creation, upkeep and management of all SSMU club bank accounts
 - Currently over 230 open accounts, with up to 460 individual signing officers
 - Complete reset of credit cards and user profiles once every September
- Troubleshooting issues with club's banking access
 - Faulty tokens, lost credentials etc.
- General support/resources
 - How to make certain types of payments, work with vendors, use RBC Express
 - Contract review

Services

- Budget review and variance analysis
- Purchasing approval and recording
 - Purchase orders + Capital Purchases
- Contract review/approval
 - Like Clubs, Services are not legal entities
- Honorarium Payments
- Long term planning, growth, fee referenda
 - Service fees cannot be run longer than 5 years without returning to Referendum



General Finance

- Ensuring the long-term Financial Sustainability of the Society
 - Creation of the Annual Budget (December-March)
 - Long-term Financial Plan (hasn't been updated since 2015)
 - Recovering from financial impact of University Centre closure (close to \$1m in lost funds)
 - Staffing and Operations Expansion
 - Services Expansion
 - Managing the SSMU's cashflows
 - Semesterly fee reviews/variances
 - Investment Portfolio
 - Main sectors: renewable energy, telecommunications
 - Annual Audit (August-October)
 - Day-to-day Financial Controls
 - Credit Card approvals
 - Cheque Request approvals

Funding

- Overseeing the disbursement of over \$350,000 in funds every academic year
 - Funds for every type of initiative, and available to **all** groups on campus, not just SSMU Clubs and Services
 - First Year Fund - **newly opened for 2019-2020!**
 - Environment Fund
 - Charity Fund
 - Ambassador Fund
 - Club Fund
 - Campus Life Fund
 - Mental Health Fund
 - Equity Fund
 - Space Fund
 - Underutilized Funds
 - Environment
 - Charity
 - Mental Health

Health Insurance Plans

- All SSMU members are automatically enrolled in either the Health and Dental plans or Dental Plan only depending on residency status
 - Health Plan
 - Full prescription drug coverage
 - \$1000 Psychology Coverage (up from \$500 in 2018-2019)
 - Tuition Insurance
 - Travel Insurance (Covers students on exchange too!)
 - Dental Plan
 - \$750 per year covered
 - EmpowerMe e-counselling included in Dental Plan in order to give access to International Students
 - EmpowerMe coverage continued for Fall 2019 during McGill's e-counselling CFT process

Health Insurance Plans Cont.

- Plan fees were renewed in 2018-2019
- Current Work
 - Reviewing and managing plan reserves (first 2 years subsidize last two years to keep plan fees flat over time)
 - Reviewing e-counselling options and cost
 - Better supporting International Students from countries with RAMQ access (France, Belgium etc.)

2019-2020 Projects and Progress

Club Banking and Workshops

- 2019-2020 is the first full year with RBC
- **Successes**
 - **Full signing officer transition completed in just 8 days!**
 - Credit Cards and Accounts kept open over summer, eliminating the need for a blackout period
 - New position: Club Finance Coordinator. Troubleshooting minor issues, managing resource needs and password resets.
 - All club workshops available on Google Classroom 24/7. Next step to make workshop completion possible online. Goal is to trial some workshops with new interim clubs.
- **Challenges**
 - RBC is slow to move on resource orders (CCs, Chequebooks) and account opening

Services' Surpluses

- Referendum question passed in Winter 2019 that mandated surplus funds collected by Services be held in a fund for capital expenditures
 - Solution meets the requirements for not keeping 'profits' **but** hampers Services ability to plan for the future, encourages unnecessary spending and forces Services to deficit spend between June and October every year.
 - Service signing officers have complained that not enough consultation was done
 - Factoring in future expenditures to Service budgets and holding funds in trust is too administratively time consuming and difficult to record.
- Alternative proposal: **Fee Consolidations**
 - **Currently there are 16 Fund and Service fees that appear on e-bills (ranging from 0.10 - 3.97)**
 - These fees are hard to understand, the amounts are either far too low or too high (no Service ever nets to 0 comfortably and restricted five-figure surpluses are not uncommon), and are not indexed which prompts large and often unnecessary increases every 5 years
 - Consolidating Funds and Services' fees into a single fee **or** into the base fee has a number of benefits
 - Can be indexed to inflation - so fewer referenda needed and fewer long term fee increases
 - Easier to understand E-Bills
 - Service fee amounts can be adjusted internally as necessary between fiscal years rather than levying new fees or fee increases.
 - No need for deficit spending, and large projects can still be planned in advance

3501 Peel Project

- In the absence of the General Manager, have been working on the 3501 Peel Project (or SSMU Building #2 as I call it)
 - Purchased in 2018, conversion from residential to commercial property in 2019-2020
 - Addition of Fire Escape, Commercial Fire Suppression, Elevator, Offices, Meeting Spaces, Terrasses, Geothermal Heating, Electric Car Charging
 - General space improvements and renovations (flooring, furniture etc.)
 - Significant increase in bookable space for Student Groups
 - On time and due to open Fall 2020

International Health Insurance

- Various meeting with Student Services and ISS to discuss the high premiums paid by International Students.
 - Challenges that increase the premiums for students:
 - Plan needs to be near universally accepted as it is often a Student's only health coverage
 - Needs to cover expensive areas such as pre and postnatal care
 - Needs to provide comprehensive coverage for any dependents staying with students while they are in Canada

Other Goals/Projects

- Hired an EFA for the entire academic year
 - Reduction in processing times for Services
- Double office hours through December 2020
 - On-the-spot support for clubs and services for 4 hours per week
- Internal Regulation Revisions
 - Discretionary Funding Codification (hopefully reducing the workload for Services)
 - Funding updates
 - Procedures and additions for Indigenous Equity Fund and new Club Fund should they pass at Referendum.
 - Drivesafe Discretionary Funding Referendum for Carbon Offsetting
 - Shoutout to Drivesafe and MOOS for their work on this!!

How can I get involved!

Committees in Need of Commissioners and Members at Large:

- Finance
 - Members at Large
- Financial Ethics and Research
 - Commissioner
 - Members at Large
- Health and Dental Review
 - Members at Large

Questions?

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