



# SSMU GENERAL ASSEMBLY FALL 2019

## MINUTES

October 28, 2019

1. Call to Order: **18:15**

The Speaker explains how since this General Assembly does not meet quorum and thus this session will act as a Consultative Forum.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The Speaker reads out the land acknowledgement.

3. Adoption of Standing Rules --**ADOPTED**

Question Period:

There are no questions.

Debate:

There is no debate.

Opposed: 1

Abstaining: 2

The Speaker notes that quorum has not been met, and as such, the General Assembly is hereby recognized as a Consultative Forum, and notes that everything passed at Consultative Forum will be verified through the pathway of Legislative Council.

4. Approval of Minutes

- a. Minutes of General Assembly Fall 2018 (2018-10-29) --**REFERRED TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



b. Minutes of General Assembly Winter 2019 (2019-02-25) --**REFERRED TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Speaker notes that the Consultative Forum cannot approve the minutes, and as such, will be referred to the Board of Directors.

5. Approval of the Agenda --**APPROVED**

Councillor Wright motions to approve the agenda, seconded by VP Finance– PASSES.

Opposed: 2

6. New Business

a. Motion Regarding Nomination of Directors for the 2019-2020 Board of Directors  
2019-10-28 --**APPROVED AT CONSULTATIVE FORUM**

The President motivates the motion.

The President explains that the Board of Directors requires four (4) executives, four (4) legislative councillors, and four (\$) members-at-large. Furthermore, the President explains that Directors who had a conflict of interest were recused for part of the interview process and the voting process. The President notes that Legislative Council nominated four Legislative Councillors: Jordyn Wright (SUS), Mustafa Fakh (EUS), Adin Chan (AUS), and Rohan Bhutkar (SUS).

He explains that the Board of Directors deals with the legal, operational, and financial aspects of the SSMU.

Question Period:

There are no questions.

Debate:

There is no debate.

Voting Procedure:

Motion Regarding Nomination of Directors for the 2019-2020 Board of Directors - APPROVED.

Abstaining: 6



b. Motion Regarding the Nomination of the Auditor for the Fiscal Year of 2020  
**--APPROVED AT CONSULTATIVE FORUM**

VP Finance motivates the motion.

VP Finance explains that every year, the General Assembly or Consultative Forum is mandated to approve the auditor for the next fiscal year. VP Finance explains that Fuller Landau has been with SSMU previously.

Question Period:

There are no questions.

Debate:

There is no debate.

Voting Procedure:

Motion Regarding the Nomination of the Auditor for the Fiscal Year of 2020 – PASSES.

Abstaining: 3

7. Question Period

André Lametti, SSMU Senator and Medicine Representative, inquires about the PDF metadata on SSMU documents. He states that the “fill in” data within SSMU documents is often ‘Jim Jones’. He is not aware of who Jim Jones is, besides the infamous Jonestown Massacre in South America, and is wondering when the Executives will fix this issue.

VP Finance explains that Jim Jones is a former General Manager of SSMU, and that the documents were created when Jim Jones was General Manager. If interested, VP Finance states that the Governance Manager and the President could work together to resolve this issue.

VP External directs a question at Senator Lametti and asks if Senator Lametti would be open to creating an ad-hoc committee for re-naming, as he thinks it could be a commemorative activity.

Senator Lametti states that he would not be in favour of such a committee, as it would be a waste of time.



Senator Lametti states that recently a statement was issued regarding the delayed opening of the University Centre, and asks the Executives to comment on such a matter, and if they expect the timeline to be correct, and how they see this affecting SSMU's operations going forward.

The President explains that a statement was released by the Communications team, in regard to the delayed opening of the University Centre, which is projected to open Winter 2020 semester. SSMU President cites this delay due to having a lack of skilled tradespeople, specifically in the area of plumbing and heating. Due to this, there has been ongoing delays with construction. The President states that they continue to work with McGill administration and project managers. Furthermore, he states that they have sent out notices to the tenants of 680 Sherbrooke and 3501 Peel St. alerting them of the situation.

Adin Chan, Arts, asks the executives if there are any updates on the Samosa situation.

VP Finance states that there is. He notes that communications are currently going out to all student groups. He states that sales will re-commence soon, and SSMU is currently getting equipment for foods that are perishable, such as coolers. VP Finance notes that in the communication going out, it explains how to run a sale, what is required, and how the SSMU can support such sales.

Senator Lametti asks the VP University Affairs what their opinion is on the potential removal of the Senate Caucus from Legislative Council as suggested by the report of the CGRC, and furthermore, how it would affect student democracy.

VP University Affairs states that there is a discussion to be had about the difference between representation of constituency and the representation of an idea.

VP University Affairs thinks the removal of the positions is an idea but would be hesitant to support it currently as she has not served on the committee prior. She alerts that her opinion may change during her oncoming participation on the committee this coming year.

Senator Lametti explains that last year, at the end of the Winter 2019 semester, there was a referendum regarding the increase of the SSMU base fee. Senator Lametti notes that this referendum failed. That being said, he states a new referendum will be coming for the next semester, and notes that in Legislative Council this year, many motions have come forward regarding increased funding that could be used to complete the increase that was proposed and voted down by voters last year. As such, Senator Lametti asks the Executives if they believe it disrespectful to the voters of the referenda and if it shows that there is less value to the referenda than first appears.

The President states that the increases that are presented by the executives are not intended to be a piecemeal increase of the failed base fee increase.



The President explains that the past fee was based on renovation, increase of staffing, and property acquisition, whereas the funding as of late is for more targeted projects, and ones directed by the executives.

Senator Lametti explains the establishment of an off-site campus of the Faculty of Medicine in Outaouais, and notes that while attendees will be members of SSMU, they would not be able to benefit from the fees. As such, Senator Lametti asks if the Executives can commit to the act of devolution until it is possible that the students are no longer members of SSMU.

VP Finance states that he has spoken with the Deputy Provost and Director of Student Accounts and he is currently looking for a way for them to be coded differently, so that they would only have to pay for fees for items they would be able to access.

Brent Jamsa, Arts, directs a question towards VP External and asks for an update on the progress of the interfaculty involvement restriction policy, and if the committee that is working on it is looking towards the implementation of an appeals process for those accused.

VP External states that the policy is entering the final phase of legal review, and they have reached a consensus on what they wanted to see out of the policy in question. In regard to the appeal process, VP External notes that there is not one currently in place. VP External makes aware that they are still in contact with the working group that was working on the development and implementation of the policy.

Kyle Dewsnap, McGill Daily, asks that in regards to the failure of the massive base fee increase, inquires if the Executives have plans to further implement the SSMU masterplan as presented by the previous Executives.

The President explains that the master plan was proposed by the previous SSMU Executives, and notes that it is not a policy nor plan of SSMU. Furthermore, the President notes that it was simply a vision that the SSMU President of the time had for the direction of the Society. For this year, the Executives are planning on moving forward with their priorities.

Senator Lametti directs a question towards the Speaker, Husayn Jamal in his capacity as Governance Documents Researcher, and inquires if the elevated quorum required for General Assemblies is a factor that discourages participation and submission of motions, noting that lack of participation at recent General Assemblies.

Husayn Jamal states that he does not have a comment as Governance Documents Researcher, but as Chair of the Comprehensive Governance Review Committee, notes that the elevated quorum is one of the items being considered by the committee. Jamal notes that after the work of the CGRC has been completed regarding the Legislative Council, they will then turn their attention to the Board of Directors. Following, they will look to review other governing bodies, such as the General Assembly.



Question Period is closed.

8. Executive Reports
  - a. Board of Directors Report (President)

The President presents the report on the Board of Directors.

The President explains that the Board of Directors is composed of 12 members, consisting of four (4) executives, four (4) Councillors of Legislative Council, and four (4) members-at-large. As well, there is also one non-voting international student representative, the President explains that this is due to SSMU's liquor license for Gert's, the Board of Directors is unable to have an international voting director.

For requirements, the President states that candidates must be eighteen years of age or older, a citizen or permanent resident of Canada, must not have declared bankruptcy, must not have been declared incapable by a court, and must not have been convicted of a crime.

The President explains that the Board of Directors is the highest governing body of the SSMU. Further, the Board of Directors is responsible for the Society's finances, operations, legal, and human resources matters. Furthermore, it ratifies the decisions of the Legislative Council. The President states that the Board meets bi-weekly.

On some of the key decisions that the Board of Directors has taken, the President explains that the Board of Directors partook in funding and actively searching for external spaces for students and student groups and services, such as 680 Sherbrooke, 3471 Peel, an office building on Robert Bourassa for the flat-bike collective. The President notes that SSMU also owns 3501 Peel Street, acquired by the Executive Committee of the 2017-2018 year.

The President explains that over the past three years, SSMU has been operating without a memorandum of agreement with McGill, which highlights and explains the legal relationship between SSMU and McGill University. As such, they have based it off of old expired memorandum, but notes that the Executive Committee of last year was able to secure an updated memorandum, which will be in place for the next five years.

In addition, the President explains that the Board of Directors has also worked for further funding for live-streaming equipment, which was a capital cost in order to ensure students could participate more fully in student democracy.

In September, General Manager Ryan Hughes resigned. The President explains that a hiring plan is currently taking place, and states that the timeline for having a new General Manager is at the end of November.



#### Question Period:

VP External inquires if the memorandum includes the clause often included in union agreements, whereas in the case of expiry, the terms of the old memorandum would continue to be in place.

SSMU President states that as far as he remembers, it does not have a clause regarding that currently, but would look favourably on an introduction of one.

Adrienne Tessier, Law Senator, asks SSMU President to explain the relationship between Legislative Council and Board of Directors.

The President states that Legislative Council is the highest political body of the Society, while the Board of Directors is the highest governing body. He explains that any motion passed at Legislative Council needs to be ratified by the Board of Directors, and they must be ratified in public session. Furthermore, none of the motions can be changed in any way by the Board of Directors.

Augu Pecarie, Le Delit, states that they are expecting a decision from the Board of Directors regarding divestment on December 5 and asks if this is still the timeframe.

The President states that the decision regarding divestment is from the Board of Governors, not the Board of Directors, but notes that SSMU has been fully divested since 2013.

Augu Pecarie asks, as SSMU President, if he has any comments or provisions will come about.

The President defers this question to his report.

#### b. Vice-President (Internal Affairs)

VP Internal motivates the report.

Speaking firstly on communications and events, VP Internal notes that they completed a Listserv redesign, with the new Listserv being visually minimalistic, and easier to read. VP Internal notes that one of the biggest issues she's faced such far is the French translations.

On social media, VP Internal states that both Facebook and Instagram have seen huge growths in engagement.

For events, VP Internal explains that the largest event she has organized thus far has been Frosh. She notes that organized more inclusive 'dry' events, such as laser tag and board games, but notes that the turnout was low due to the fact that they occurred on the same nights of the most physically exhausting events of Frosh.



For SSPN, they are working towards planning Great Gertsby. Similarly, she notes that the upcoming year is the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Faculty Olympics.

Councillor Wright motions to extend by three minutes, seconded by Councillor Wu – PASSES.

Opposed: 2

For First Years affairs, VP Internal states that they are currently planning de-stress events.

On sustainability, VP Internal states that there is now a Sustainability Corner where people can showcase their sustainable efforts and work. VP Internal states that Sustainability Commissioners have had many events, and hold weekly meetings on Wednesday.

Question Period:

VP External asks VP Internal to elaborate on the engagement strategy.

VP Internal states that she has been working to make the social media a lot more, and has received complimentary feedback thus far.

The President asks VP Internal to comment on the growth of SSMU social media channels.

VP Internal remarks that engagement on both Instagram and Facebook has grown considerably.

c. Vice-President (Finance)

VP Finance presents the report.

VP Finance explains that he is responsible for the creation and up-keep of the bank accounts of all SSMU clubs. Furthermore, he resets credit cards and user profiles. Similarly, he provides certain forms of help and support.

For services, he manages budget review, variance analysis, purchase reviews and reporting. Similarly, VP Finance also reviews contracts.

In terms of long-term financial well-being, VP Finance is responsible for the creation of the annual budget. VP Finance states that the long-term financial plan has not been updated since 2015, and as such, is something that he would look favourable on redoing.

VP Finance would like to focus on recovering from the impact of the lost funds from the University Centre closure, which he puts at around a million dollars. He states that in the year prior to the





closure, the SSMU saved around \$800,000 in preparation for the closure, but notes that it no longer exists.

On the investment portfolio, SSMU's main sectors are renewable energy sources and telecommunication services.

On the health and dental plans, he explains that all students are automatically enrolled in the plans.

Councillor Marcoux motions to extend by four minutes, seconded by VP Internal – PASSES.

For projects this year, he states that club banking workshops were successful, and the transition towards credit cards was remarkably quick. Furthermore, VP Finance states that a new position of Clubs Finances Coordinator has been created.

For challenges, he states that RBC has been slow for some resource orders, such as cheques.

Member-at-Large motions to extend by two minutes, seconded by Councillor Chan – PASSES.

Opposed: 8

For 3501 Peel St. project, VP Finance states that it is currently undergoing conversion from residential to commercial spaces.

Question Period:

Mustafa Fakhri, Engineering Councillor, asks if McGill is compensating the one million dollars that was lost, and if the Executive Committee has ever considered taking legal action.

VP Finance states that there is no legal action one can take against McGill University, but states that there are current discussions at lowered or non-existent rent of the University Centre following its opening for a period of time.

Stefan Suvajac, AUS, asks if the underlying fees that are going into a consolidated fee have already been indexed to inflation.

VP Finance states that none of the fees are currently indexed, stating that they are flat fees which are renewed every five years.

Alex Karasick, McGill Daily, asks if there has been a discussion on issues with RBC.

VP Finance states that they are looking towards moving to a third-party cheque provider.



d. Vice-President (University Affairs)

VP University Affairs presents the report.

VP University Affairs states that she is in charge of overseeing Senate and Senate Caucus, Secretary General, Equity, Libraries, and Indigenous Affairs.

VP University Affairs states that three Associate Senators have been selected. VP University Affairs states that Student Senators represent students at McGill Senate.

VP External motions to extend by ten minutes, seconded by Member at Large – PASSES.

Opposed: 6

VP University Affairs adds that they are currently working towards divestment. VP University Affairs states that Arts Senator Kemeni is working towards a Bill of Black Students' Rights.

VP University Affairs is also interested in hiring a researcher to look at how McGill processes preferred names.

VP University Affairs states that Equity is working towards an art show.

For Indigenous Affairs, VP University Affairs states that a motion for a fee passed through Legislative Council.

Question Period:

Councillor Morgan asks if they are looking to improve accessibility as part of the Library Improvement Fund.

VP University Affairs states that they would be interested in hearing such suggestions.

e. Vice-President (Student Life)

VP Student Life presents the report.

VP Student Life explains that he governs the relationships between Clubs, Services, and ISGs. Similarly, he is responsible for mental health outreach, and serves as President of the Daycare Board of Directors.

Regarding Activities Night, VP Student Life notes that Activities Night was relatively successful, with over six thousand people in attendance. He explains that it was held in Tomlinson Fieldhouse, due to



the closure of the University Centre, but states that he is currently in talks with Athletics to keep hosting Activities Night within the Fieldhouse. Regarding sustainability, VP Student Life notes that we were awarded a Silver award for Activities Night. Winter semester Activities Nights will occur on January 9-10, 2020, and in the Tomlinson Fieldhouse.

In terms of Clubs, the clubs workshops were successful, and most clubs did not get sanctions. The Club portal is moving along nicely, and is working for the Club Fund Referendum to be passed, so that the Club portal can be launched.

For Services, the services summit occurred at the same time as the clubs workshops, and the VP Student Life states that it went well. They are currently working with services to find spaces while the University Centre is closed. They are also working for a centralized security request form.

For mental health, they are currently working on updating the Mental Health policy, and is currently welcoming feedback from the Wellness Hub. Similarly, they are looking at creating a Mental Health round table, including all mental health actors on campus.

Councillor Wright motions to extend by two minutes, seconded by Councillor Mackie – PASSES.

Opposed: 2

For daycare, VP Student Life states that the banking is currently being moved from Scotiabank to RBC.

Question Period:

Councillor Daryanani inquires on what the plan for the mental health committee is, and if VP Student Life plans on including faculty mental health groups.

VP Student Life states that it would be a restructuring, with one commissioner, and main chairs, one each for advocacy and outreach. For faculty input, VP Student Life states that it will be a collaborative effort.

f. President

The President presents the report.

The President states that he serves as the Chief Spokesperson of the Society, to enforce the Constitution and Internal Regulations, to maintain the governance documents, to chair and coordinate activities of the Executive Committee, and represents students at McGill Senate and Board of Directors.



Regarding McGill Senate, the President sits on the Committee of Physical Development, and on the Committee of Rights of Senate.

In addition, the President sits on the Board of Governors, the Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility (CAMSR), as well as the Building Property Committee.

VP External motions to extend by ten minutes, seconded by Councillor Franceschini – PASSES.

Opposed: 6

Over the past few months, the President held meetings with Legislative Councillors, as well as administrators and professors.

The President states that he is currently working on creating Ethics SSMU, working to establish the Conflict of Interest policy.

Due to the time commitment of the job, the President states that the resignation of General Manager has added additional tasks for him.

The President currently sits on CAMSR.

The President states that his full platform is available online on the SSMU website.

Question Period:

VP External asks who would govern over Academic Support Services.

The President indicates that the program would create paid note-taking positions, and increase the amount of open educational resources.

The President states that for the first year, it would be under his purview, but notes that the position may change.

Augu Pecarie asks, as SSMU President, if he has any comments or provisions will come about divestment.

SSMU President states that he is bound by confidentiality.

g. Vice-President (External Affairs)

VP External presents the report.



VP External primarily focuses on community affairs and engagement.

Similarly, VP External also works with Francophone Affairs and unions on campus.

In the case of requirement, VP External helps on political campaigns.

Alex Karasick, McGill Daily, motions for a seven minute extension, seconded by VP Finance – PASSES.

Opposed: 7

VP External states that SEED no longer exists.

9. Adjournment: **20:11**

VP Finance motions to adjourn, seconded by Councillor Daryanani – PASSES.

  
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Bryan Buraga, President

APPROVED