



SSMU LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PUBLIC MINUTES

February 25, 2021

The regular bi-weekly Legislative Council Meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be held by teleconference, on February 25, 2021 at 18:00.

Certain sections of the minutes were transcribed in verbatim to accurately reflect the discussions.

1. Call to Order: **18:06**

The Speaker calls the Legislative Council to order at 18:06.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The Speaker presents the Land Acknowledgement.

The SSMU acknowledges that McGill University is situated on the traditional and unceded territory of the Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee nations. The SSMU recognizes and respects these nations as the true and constant custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet today. Further, the SSMU commits to and respects the traditional laws and customs of these territories.

3. Attendance

There are two proxies this evening: Justin Liao is Proxy for Councillor Bulhoes and a Proxy for Councillor Rhamey.

Councillor Bonan is absent.

4. Adoption of the Agenda – **APPROVED**

VP Finance motions to add Report of the Finance Committee to the agenda.

VP External motions to postpone Item 10.c) until next Legislative Council.

Question:



Councillor Gundermann asks if Council will be postponing the Motion Regarding a Policy on Harmful Military Technology 2021-01-28 because of new amendments brought forward?

Answer:

VP External notes that the Board of Directors referred back the motion to Legislative Council, to be reviewed by the Steering Committee, and they have not had the chance to review all recommendations regarding sources.

Councillor Smith motions to approve the Agenda is amended, seconded by Councillor Collins.

The amended Agenda is adopted.

5. Report of the Steering Committee

The Speaker presents the Report of the Steering Committee.

Question Period:

There are no questions.

6. Announcements

VP Finance announces that the 2020-2021 SSMU Awards of Distinction applications are open. He encourages individuals to nominate those that deserve the award. He notes that the award is \$2,000, and is designed to recognize students who have demonstrated a combination of strength in both extra-curricular activities, as well as in academics at McGill.

There are no further announcements.

7. Question Period

a. Question from Senator Daryanani

Question:

Senator Darynani notes that In April 2020, the Legislative Council approved the creation of the Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity of SSMU Events under the President Portfolio. The next steps indicate that an Events Researcher has to be hired and their research would be presented by Fall 2021. Has there been any progress on this committee? If yes, what is the progress? If not, why hasn't there been any progress?

Answer:



The President indicates that there hasn't been progress, and notes that the reasoning is multifold. Firstly, he states that the report was supposed to be given for Fall 2020, not Fall 2021, but he notes that he was only informed that the position should have been hired in August 2020. Furthermore, he notes that given the COVID-19 pandemic, and a lack of a VP Internal to help supervise the event's portfolio, it got postponed. He states that it is still on the radar, but in terms of priorities, he notes that there have been other things that have superseded it. The President notes that the position will be hired with this cycle of SSMU hiring, with the work being done over the summer to meet the Fall 2021 report deadline hopefully.

Question:

Councillor Gundermann states that there have been a number of amendments made to the Adoption of the Divest for Human Rights Policy last second, and that due to this, he is wondering if it is possible to postpone the motion.

The Speaker inquires with VP External on the substance of the amendments, as she understands that though individuals may be willing to put forward friendly amendments, they nevertheless have to appear at Legislative Council.

Councillor Reed states that they were amendments that he submitted to the organizers and movers of the motion a couple of days ago, between the GA and today's meeting.

The Speaker thus states that the amendments will be entertained during the debate of the motion.

Senator Daryanani notes that the amendments that Councillor Reed submitted were not friendly.

Councillor Reed clarifies, stating that the amendments have been discussed with the Divest McGill team, who accepted them in a modified form. As such, he is bringing forward those during debate today.

8. Generative Discussion

a. SENSE

VP External states that within the National Assembly of Québec, there is a proposed bill to implement electoral reform, moving away from the current First-Past-the-Post system to a Mixed-Member-Proportional system.



The Political Researcher presents. He states that this referendum will be interesting. He notes that British Columbia has attempted two referendums of electoral reform, but both of them have failed. He associates this due to logistical and accessibility concerns, paired with a lack of educational and informational understandings. He also states that the Government has been given a mandate, as they had promised that they would implement it.

Councillor Karasick states that during the original presentation, he brought up a question that he states has been brought up by those concerned about the MMP motion, specifically in regard to how it would be implemented. He notes that it would provide less proportional support to the island of Montreal, even regardless of the population proportion adjustments. The response Councillor Karasick received was that the solution was better than FPTP, but never received a full response. As such, he asks if there is a plan to try and put an amendment to try and fix it, or if they accept how it appears now.

9. Recess, Consent Items

[Recess begins at 18:36.]

[Recess ends at 18:41.]

The Speaker notes that neither of the two motions passed through consent vote, and thus will be discussed and debated this evening.

10. Old Business

- a. Motion to Amend the Internal Regulations of Elections and Referenda 2021-02-11

--APPROVED

Question Period:

There are no questions.

Debate:

There is no debate.

Voting Period:

Vote on the Motion to Amend the Internal Regulations of Elections and Referenda 2021-02-11 –
APPROVED



In favour: 29

Opposed: 0

Abstain: 1

The motion is approved.

b. Motion Regarding the Adoption of the Divest For Human Rights Policy 2021-02-16
--APPROVED

The Speaker notes that this was approved at a Consultative Forum on February 16, 2021. However, during the voting period, quorum for the General Assembly [350] was not reached, and as such, the vote was not binding. She notes that in order for the motion to go through, it requires approval by the Legislative Council. She notes that given that it has been moved at the General Assembly, it is not a Legislative Council motion. Given this, she notes that the specific provisions regarding Legislative Council motions, do not apply.

Furthermore, the Speaker explains that the organizers behind the motion will be recognized as the movers of the motion, and that amendments are eligible to be accepted. The Speaker once again notes that she will not be entertaining motions to divide the question, and furthermore, such a decision will not be appealable.

VP External motivates. VP External notes that the motion was approved at the Consultative Forum overwhelmingly. He states that the motion intends to expand SSMU's commitment to social justice and human rights, by adopting a divestment campaign regarding several companies that McGill University invests in.

Councillor Wan raises a point of order. He notes that according to Section 7.4 of the Internal Regulations of Governance, that the minutes from a General Assembly shall be circulated to the Legislative Council and uploaded to the website before the meeting of the Legislative Council. He notes that this wasn't done with the past General Assembly. As such, he asks if the Steering Committee was aware of this.

The Speaker defers to the Governance Manager.

Senator Daryanani motions for a five (5)-minute recess; this is seconded – APPROVED

[Recess begins at 18:52.]

[Recess ends at 18:57.]



The Governance Manager notes that the Recording Secretary is in the process of transcribing the minutes, and notes that there is a two-week duration to prepare the minutes. She further notes that all Legislative Councillors that are present today, were required to attend the Winter General Assembly. Furthermore, she states that if they were not there, it is best practice to consult the recording or livestream to review what took place. However, the Governance Manager notes that if Council does not wish to proceed with voting on or debating the motion today, and wishes to wait for the minutes from the Consultative Forum, that Council has the prerogative to postpone the motion as well.

The Speaker notes that while she understands the IRs, she notes that there is nevertheless a significant number of Members at Large present this evening. She notes that moving to postpone the motion based on pure procedural claims could cause increased inconvenience. Furthermore, she noted that it was the obligation of Councillors to attend the GA, or at the very least, refer to the recording. Further, she assumes that the majority of members of the gallery had also attended the General Assembly. Given this, she encourages everyone to only postpone if they truly believe that the minutes would be helpful, rather than simply wishing to account for a procedural difference.

Councillor Gundermann motions to postpone. This is not seconded. The motion fails.

Question Period:

Question:

Councillor Gundermann asks who was consulted in the drafting of the motion.

Answer:

Maya Garfinkel, one of the movers of the motion, states that the motion began very organically, coming from past campaigns and organizations on McGill campus. She states that they expanded their policy development, consulting with other groups on campus. Furthermore, she notes that since the GA, they have also consulted with various representatives, as well as with others who wished to discuss specific elements of the policy. VP External adds on, stating that they can view the consultations completed in the relevant section of the motion. Furthermore, he notes that by recommendation of the Steering Committee, they consulted with the Governance Manager, the President, and the Communications Manager as well. He also notes that the motion was reviewed and endorsed by the SSMU Equity Commissioners.

Question:



Councillor Gundermann asks if they consulted with a human rights expert, such as a lawyer, or with McGill administration.

Answer:

VP External indicates that McGill administration and/or lawyers were not consulted in the drafting of this motion. However, he notes that testimonies of human rights experts are cited within the policy appended to the motion.

Maya also adds that according to past precedent, other policies have been approved without consultation of such sources.

Question:

Councillor Mulvaney inquires about the 'Mandates' section, noting that it states that the Society's advocacy will utilize as much social, political, and financial pressure as necessary. He inquires on what financial pressure would mean, and asks if any fees raised from the Society would go towards the motion.

Answer:

VP External states that this section was removed from the motion, and that they are referring to an old version. The Speaker indicates that this is correct

VP University Affairs motions to extend Question Period by five (5) minutes, seconded by Councillor Williamson – APPROVED

Question:

Councillor Reed asks the VP University Affairs and VP External how well equipped the external affairs and university affairs infrastructures of SSMU are in handling what the motion is calling for, whether there will be additional demands in the next year, and what can be done to bolster the effort in the future.

Answer:

VP External notes that the political campaigns area of the External portfolio is very well-developed. Given such, he notes that it is suited to take it on.

Question:



Councillor Wan states that the public Facebook announcement regarding the motion was issued by an organization other than the SSMU, at least a week prior to the GA. He notes that the motion wasn't included in the original GA agenda, and was moved from the floor. He asks if the motion was approved by the Steering Committee prior to the beginning of the GA.

Answer:

The Speaker indicates that this question was reiterated during the General Assembly. She notes that the motion was reviewed multiple times prior to the General Assembly. She also notes that during the General Assembly, the Steering Committee also took part in a recess to review it again. The Speaker concludes that the motion has now been reviewed by the Steering Committee four times.

Councillor Karasick motions for a three (3) minute recess, **seconded**. – APPROVED

[Recess begins at 19:12.]

[Recess ends at 19:15.]

Question:

VP University Affairs asks if it would be easier for them to simply share a new version of the motion, so that they can ensure that they are not missing changes.

Answer:

The Parliamentarian states that he has confirmed that the document has been updated, as necessary.

Question:

Senator Daryanani inquires on how well equipped the SSMU University Affairs portfolio is in fulfilling the mandate of this policy.

Answer:

VP University Affairs states that they have had a very big role in assisting with the drafting of the policy. Furthermore, they note that the mandate is within the capacity of the kind of mobilization that they can do within University Affairs. Lastly, they note that it would more so be expanding the scope of the work that they are currently doing.



Senator Parsons motions to extend question period by five (5) minutes, seconded by Councillor Mulvaney – APPROVED.

Question:

Councillor Karasick asks about the current progress towards divestment.

Answer:

VP External notes that the University rejected the last vote to divest in December of 2019. He notes that since then, the administration made the decision to decarbonize the endowment, which would include divestment from some fossil fuel companies. VP University Affairs notes that the students do not have an incredible amount of leverage, but notes that this policy is leveraging all of the momentum and resources that they have. VP University Affairs notes that while they may not have achieved divestment, there is nevertheless movement, such as the recent commitment from McGill University with carbon neutrality by 2030.

Question:

Councillor Reed inquires on if the VP External or VP University Affairs can comment on the sort of infrastructure that they have in ensuring efforts that occur on a one-year basis can be extended to a five-year basis, despite turnover of multiple executives.

Answer:

VP External states that the relationship between the VP External and the Political Campaigns office is that the VP External is the executive responsible for political campaigns, and serving as the liaison between the campaigns and the executives. He notes that the VP External is not the person that leads campaigns, but rather, the student groups. He notes that while turnover may have some impact, the VP Ex is not the primary actor in the Society's affiliated campaigns.

There are no further questions.

Debate:

The Parliamentarian plays a pre-recorded statement.

Jordana Schiff, SSMU Member, presents. Schiff notes that she was unable to attend the Legislative Council meeting in-person and recorded this video to be presented to Councillors.



Schiff speaks on behalf of many Jewish students on campus and states they support legitimate efforts to promote human rights and social justice. However, she notes that this motion creates a false and misleading parallel between the complex Israeli-Palestinian conflict and human rights concerns worldwide. She states that the clauses about Israel and Palestine will only serve to undermine the rest of the resolution. The anti-Semitism in these clauses is shown through its anti-Semitic elements, and notes that they are blatant attempts to de-legitimize Israel, a safe haven for the Jewish people. Schiff states that the people who are advocating for the policies in this motion are the same people who, last year, denounced Israel's very right to exist in Legislative Council. The clause about Israel is a part of the larger Boycott-Divest-Sanction movement. The ultimate goal of BDS is not to change Israeli policies, but to end Israel's existence. She notes that this is a fundamental violation of SSMU's commitment to leadership in matters of human rights and social justice. She states that while she cannot speak for all Jewish students, she can speak for the mainstream Jewish opinion. Jewish students have feared for their safety, due to an increase of anti-Semitism, following the many anti-Israel occurrences at McGill University. She states that SSMU should be looking out for the safety of its students above all else. Lastly, Schiff notes that the adoption of such a motion will further jeopardize the safety and wellbeing of students on our campus.

Councillor Smith reads a statement:

«Madame la Présidente,

Le préambule de la constitution de notre association dit « L'ÉUM s'engage à faire preuve de leadership en matière de droits de la personne, justice sociale et protection de l'environnement. »

Dans les dernières années, l'ÉUM était un leader de la promotion de ces valeurs exprimées dans notre constitution, sur notre campus et autour du monde. C'était grâce aux efforts de notre association et nos membres, que nous avons déjà convaincu l'Administration à céder les investissements en Afrique du Sud contre l'institution d'apartheid, Myanmar pendant leur période de régime militaire, et des compagnies du tabac.

En investissant dans les compagnies comme Lockheed Martin, Re-Max, Oshkosh, Puma, Foot Locker, Nordstrom, ainsi que Kohl's, l'Administration démontre que leur seule priorité est le portfolio d'investissements, et non l'implication de ces compagnies en les injustices contre les personnes marginalisé. Madame la Présidente, nous, comme « student leaders », nous devons envoyer un message à l'Administration, que ça suffit !

Pendant les derniers jours, j'ai reçu plus des commentaires en faveur de cette motion que toutes autres motions qu'on a discuté cette année. Pendant les dernières semaines, nous avons vu les commentaires, à propos de la motion présentée ce soir, sur les réseaux sociaux.



Madame la Présidente, les membres de l'AEUM souhaitent qu'on prenne cette position de leadership, et je suis en accord avec eux.

Selon moi, cette motion est une bonne addition au cadre que nous avons effectivement créé, pendant les dernières réunions du conseil. Cela nous aidera, comme « student leaders », dans la promotion des valeurs et priorités de notre organisation et nos membres.

Madame la Présidente, je suis en accord avec cette motion et j'encourage les autres conseillers à me rejoindre en votant pour cette motion.

Merci, Madame la Présidente.»

[End of statement.]

Councillor Awan presents friendly amendments. He notes that they were drafted in conjunction with the mover and the seconder, as well as the rest of the Divest coalition. He notes that the amendments are relatively minor, and that they don't change the substance of the motion, simply expanding upon descriptions of two of the companies that are named. He notes that the description concerning Re/Max was amended, as well as OshKosh, to better reflect reality. He also notes the addition of three (3) additional sources.

Councillor Wan presents a pre-prepared statement:

“I attended the General Assembly as a Medicine Representative, a Director, and most importantly, a member of the MSS. I was caught by surprise, finding out about the motion that evening, as it had been added to the agenda once the meeting had already started, and given this, the motion had not been published in advance. I did not have time to read or understand the motion, nor was provided the opportunity to consult with my constituents, or the MSS. I believe that the motion could have been presented in a different manner, specifically, with greater transparency and advance public notice. I've subsequently discussed this matter with the MSS over several days. Due to a recently passed policy passed at the MSS Fall 2020 General Assembly, my association mandated me to vote against the motion at this time.”

[End of statement]

The Speaker clarifies that the motion was moved from the floor, as the motion went through numerous stages of revision between the Steering Committee and between the organizers themselves, which is why it was moved from the floor. She further clarifies that for Councillors who voted at the General Assembly, that they did not vote in their positions as Directors or Councillors, but as SSMU members.



Councillor Williamson reads a statement:

“While I understand the importance of SSMU’s mandate to be a leader in cultural, social, and environmental issues, many of my constituents mentioned it as a reason for being inactive and disillusioned with student government. They [constituents] are frustrated when they see most of their representatives’ time being taken up by ‘hot-button, global issues,’ when they feel that the issues they face on campus, such as a lack of support for sexual assault survivors, and adequate mental health resources, seem to fall by the wayside. Furthermore, the motion serves to harm their campus, while fueling further injustice and conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. While I support the valiant efforts to promote human rights and social justice, the calluses that focus on Israel-Palestine are harmful, and that the current language concerning the conflict does not do justice to Israel or Palestine, and will only serve to undermine the rest of the resolution. Further, the amendments added last minute seemed to be an attempt to move away from the focus on Israel, which feels hypocritical, as the movers claimed that they [the movers] were not targeting specific states, but felt the need to amend this particular portion. Finally, in the ‘Impact of Decision’ section of the motion, this policy states that “this policy shall not be interpreted as justification for racism, xenophobia of any kind, including, but not limited to anti-Asian racism, Sinophobia, and anti-Semitism” and again is restated in the ‘Interpretation’ section. However, such a statement feels performatory at best, and has no action or accountability to ensure that this motion is not used in such a way. While it is a nice sentiment, it is only that, and provides no real support to the communities mentioned above. For the reasons stated, I will be voting against this.”

[End of statement]

Councillor Williamson motions to extend by fifteen minutes for debate, seconded by Councillor Wan – APPROVED.

Councillor Lee states that following the General Assembly, he states that he has received a tremendous amount of emails regarding the motion, as well as the stance of the Dentistry Faculty as well. He states that it led him to launch a survey concerning it, so that he had a better grasp of what the student body was standing for. He states that there was a majority against the motion, including that they do not believe that the Israeli-Palestine conflict should be singled-out. Councillor Lee states that the motion provides the SSMU the freedom to put forward anti-Israel and BDS ideas, which will further marginalize Jewish and Israeli students on campus. Furthermore, he notes that many of his constituents had concerns about the safety of going to campus, with this motion being passed, as there have also been some incidents in the Montreal community pertaining to this. For these reasons, Councillor Lee states that he will be voting against this motion and wanted to highlight the voices that had not been heard during the General Assembly.



Councillor Reed speaks on sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3. He notes that having been brought forward by a coalition of campus' foremost advocacy groups. He states that some of the background research about Re/Mac and Oshkosh are questions about not what the policy does, but about some of the sentiments that are expressed. He states that as Councillors, they have a responsibility to look specifically at the motion and what it intends to do. He states that they have a responsibility to contribute towards an effort to uphold human rights around the globe.

Councillor Gundermann states that the resolution aims to demonstrate leadership on matters of human rights, social justice, and environmental protection. He states that the policy should not be deciphered as such though. Councillor Gundermann first speaks on the TLC Pipeline. He notes that while the project has faced opposition from Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs, all twenty elected band councils along the coastal gasoline routes support the pipeline, and have signed benefit agreements with the company. He notes that he is not comfortable choosing sides between the hereditary leaders of the tribes, and tribal leaders. On Lockheed Martin, he notes that the reason for their inclusion is that the abuse of a product creates a liability for the producer. He states that one could also make this argument with Tesla, with Tesla being responsible for people dying in car accidents involving Tesla cars. Thus, Councillor Gundermann notes that the tragedies in Yemen do not justify divestment from Lockheed Martin.

Councillor Williamson moves for a two (2)-minute extension for Councillor Gundermann's speaking time, seconded by Councillor Wan – APPROVED.

Councillor Gundermann continues that there is a great difference between 'arms in private hands' and 'arms in the hands of governments'. He states that the only matter to discuss should be whether the export of arms to regimes like Saudi Arabia should be allowed. For Oshkosh corporation, he states that they were named one of the world's most ethical companies for six consecutive years, and named one of Fortune magazine's most admired companies. Given this, he is wondering why they are calling for divestiture, given that it is internationally recognized as ethical. He notes that the sources do not tell the full story. For Re/Max, he states that Re/Max does business in 110 countries, including in some dubious regimes, such as Nicaragua, Venezuela, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. He asks why they are not discussing Re/Max in those countries.

Senator Parsons motions to extend for two (2) minutes, seconded – APPROVED.

For Puma, Councillor Gundermann notes that while he agrees that the Chinese persecution of Uighurs fits the definition of genocide, he wonders if divestment from Puma is educated. He states that Puma has explicitly stated that they do not have any involvement, and thus asks, what the quality of the motion is. He states that after research, it has become clear that the motion is based on misleading



sources, without consultation of human rights lawyers. Furthermore, he states that the motion being passed would send a reflection of the Legislative Council, as well as McGill as a university.

Member of the Gallery, Noah Fisher, states that a lot of people have framed the motion as being anti-Israel, but that he doesn't understand, as Re/Max, the company predominantly in question, is involved with one part of the state, not the state as a whole. Fisher also states that if the Councillors believe that the motion involved is too narrow and targets certain groups too specifically, that the original motion originally presents included all human rights issues. If Council wants to expand it to that, the movers would be happy to hear. However, he states that if not, it sounds that they are just avoiding passing this motion, and asks why Council support the acts of genocide and human rights violations.

The Speaker notes that the Steering Committee struck the initial scope of the motion, that was to expand to all companies with human rights violations, given that the scope was too large and unspecific, as well as opening up to subjective interpretation with no clear threshold.

VP University Affairs states that they have never seen so much student engagement and student interest in the approval of a policy. They state that as supported by the record people at the Consultative Forum, that the policy is well-supported by the Membership. VP University Affairs states that when they are making their decisions, that they do it based on the reading of this policy, and not based on allegations of content.

Member of the Gallery, Ghida Malawi, notes that the BDS movement is not a tool to facilitate anti-Semitism. Malawi states that has three distinct goals, to end occupation of Palestinian lands, to recognize rights of Palestinian citizens, and be advocates for the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their home.

Councillor Collins notes that she will be voting in favour of this motion, as she has been bound by the AUS Council. She states that there appears to be a theme of Councillors stating that they shouldn't make judgements on international conflicts, but that she argues that the motion isn't about them making judgements. She states that they had plenty of time to consult with constituents and do research. She questions Councillor Gundermann's sentiments concerning the ranking of ethical operations, and asks about the measurements.

Member of the Gallery, Simone Bobrow, states that there appears to be a dismissal of the discrimination that Palestinian students face on McGill campus. Bobrow states that Council should be considering the lived experiences of many of the students that are in this Council this evening.

[Recess begins at 20:08.]



[Recess ends at 20:18.]

Councillor Smith motions for a ten (10)-minute extension on debate, seconded – APPROVED.

Senator Daryanani states that the motion is great and recognizes the labour of the coalition in bringing it forward. He states that there is a petition that has been going around since last Tuesday, and notes that it has garnered 380 signatures so far, with 245 votes from the Faculty of Arts. He states that the motion stands out as a signal to go against humanitarian abuses. Senator Darynani clarifies the importance of acknowledging the lived experiences and real traumas that continue to be upheld at McGill University.

Member of the Gallery, Dorothy Yip, notes that there is a common discussion from the opposition of this motion claiming that the motion is anti-Semitic. They believe this achieves two things: perpetuates the false belief that the existence of Palestinian human rights and condemnation of global military complex against Palestinians is inherently anti-Semitic. Furthermore, Yip notes that the second thing that it achieves is that opponents appear willing to put aside the other acts of international solidarity. Yip also warns people about trusting companies, and being complicit in genocide.

Councillor Karasick notes that he has been bound by AUS to approve the motion. He states that SSMU has received complaints about previous issues concerning the Chinese community, and makes it clear that there is a history of other communities feeling frustrated at events as well.

Member of the Gallery, Zahur Ashrafuzzaman, explains that the Supreme Court of Canada designated the hereditary chiefs of the Wet'suwet'en Nation as having jurisdiction over their traditional territories, and notes that those chiefs have voiced their opposition to the pipeline. Additionally, the forced removal of Indigenous people from their land by the RCMP goes against the United Nations Declarations of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. He also notes that providing jobs to Indigenous people does not preclude the company from performing human rights abuses. Most of the jobs provided to Indigenous people are temporary and very few single permanent jobs.

Senator Daryanani motions for a one (1) and a half minute extension, seconded by Councillor Karasick – APPROVED.

Ashrafuzzaman notes Some of these projects will also be 200m from people's homes and TC Energy's past behaviour, and notes that the company has shown a disregard for Indigenous health during COVID-19, by sending workers to the pipeline, several of whom have gone to work without masks and tested positive for COVID-19.



The SSMU Equity Commissioner states that the Equity Commissioners were consulted on the policy, and believed it in line with SSMU's commitment to equity. She states that the consultation process was very unique, and she has never seen such support for a motion during her time at McGill.

Member of the Gallery, Maya Garfinkel, states that criticizing Israeli occupation is not criticizing Israel's right to exist. Garfinkel states that to say that all Jews feel a certain way, or that this is a mainstream Jewish opinion feels insulting. Anything that concerns Palestinian human rights appears to be contentious. She states that while they have not spoken to human rights lawyers, they are the experts within McGill's student body on these issues.

VP External states that the motion was approved overwhelmingly at the consultative forum. He states that they have a responsibility to their students, who have come to the consultative forum. VP External also states that they have a responsibility that extends beyond their student body, towards marginalized communities.

A one (1)-minute extension is moved, seconded by VP University Affairs – APPROVED.

VP External emphasizes how significant it would be for SSMU to adopt a position that stands in solidarity with a number of different communities across the world, but especially with Palestinian communities. He states that they have a responsibility to demonstrate leadership on matters of human rights, social justice, and environmental protection. He strongly encourages everyone to vote in favour of this.

Councillor Awan speaks in favour of the motion, stating that the points raised by the members of the gallery and of the Councillors that have spoken in favour are representative of what the student body voiced and voted upon at the SSMU General Assembly. Councillor Awan is astonished by some of the points raised by Councillors so far. He states that he detests the assertion that most McGill students don't care about human rights, or that it is some global issue that isn't relevant. He states that these claims are often made, and that he has never seen them substantiated.

Senator Daryanani motions for a minute extension, seconded by VP University Affairs - APPROVED.

Councillor Awan states that they have been given an incredible mandate by the student body. Lastly, he notes that he wishes to reframe the discussion, noting that it isn't about McGill or about SSMU taking an international stance, but about McGill disentangling itself from international conflicts.

Senator Daryanani motions to call the question, seconded by Councillor Smith – APPROVED.

VP University Affairs moves to vote by roll call, seconded by Councillor Daryanani.



VP University Affairs motivates.

They state that the vote is tremendously important for SSMU in its history of political advocacy. VP University Affairs notes that because the motion is coming from a Consultative Forum, it is important for the particular vote to be transparent to their constituents.

In favour: 23

Opposed: 2

The motion to vote by roll call has been approved.

Voting Period:

In favour: 21 (Councillor Collins, Councillor Karasick, Councillor Smith, Councillor Litvina, Councillor Awan, Proxy for Councillor Bulhoes, Councillor Reed, Councillor Page, Councillor Khodadadi, Councillor Ge, Councillor Fernandez, Councillor Sood, Councillor Zhang, Senator Darynani, Councillor Merali, Councillor Drew, VP University Affairs, VP Student Life, VP External, VP Finance, Councillor Nelson)

Opposed: 5 (Councillor Williamson, Councillor Lee, Councillor Gundermann, Councillor Wan, Councillor Kunze--Roelens)

Abstain: 4 (Councillor Mulvaney, Councillor Rhamey, Senator Parsons, SSMU President)

Did not vote: Councillor Kurkcu and Councillor Morgan

Absent: Councillor Bonan

The Motion Regarding the Adoption of the Divest For Human Rights Policy 2021-02-16 is approved.

- c. Motion Regarding a Policy on Harmful Military Technology 2021-01-28 -- **POSTPONED**

The motion is postponed until the next Council meeting.

11. Reports by Committees

- a. Executive Committee

The President presents. He states that there was a hiring of the External Affairs Coordinator and the Community Affairs Commissioner. As well, he notes that they signed on to a coalition for the GNL pipeline. The Executive Committee also approved the job descriptions for the two (2) Campus Crops positions.



Question Period:

There are no questions.

b. Services Committee – **POSTPONED**

VP Student Life motions to postpone, seconded by Senator Daryanani – APPROVED.

The report will be presented at the next meeting.

c. Affordable Student Housing Committee

VP External presents.

VP External states that they have an incoming Community Affairs Commissioner, who will be the chair in the near future. He states that the Committee met over winter break, and on January 11, to plan the Tenants' Rights Event. He states that the former Community Affairs Commissioner took a few Directors to visit the Concordia Student Union's Woodnote affordable student housing project. He states that there was a Tenants' Rights event on January 12th, which was well attended. He also notes that they have been consulted on some motions concerning the unhoused populations and public safety. He states that the public assembly on student housing was well attended.

Question Period:

There are no questions.

d. Mental Health Committee

VP Student Life presents. For outreach, VP Student Life states that the Mental Health Action Week was planned, and that it occurred in the last week of January. She notes that the committee is currently collecting feedback for two surveys, on remote learning and mental health, and on Wellness Hub satisfaction. She states that there is a preliminary report linked.

VP Student Life notes that the Mental Health Round Table meets every three weeks on Thursday evenings, led by the Mental Health Commissioner. She notes that it brings together stakeholders on campus to discuss current on-campus mental health initiatives.

The Mental Health Commissioner is currently working with Student Services to implement Wellness



World. She notes that the expected launch date is March or April 2021.

For Keep.meSAFE, VP Student Life notes that in the Fall, SSMU students used the service 705 times and 352 students used the service. As well, that staff has increased for Keep.meSAFE, and so wait times will significantly reduce as a result.

She notes that the Mental Health Commissioner is investigating Student Care and Blue Cross insurance to resolve any gaps.

Question Period:

There are no questions.

e. Funding Committee

VP Finance presents the Funding Committee report. VP Finance notes that the Club Fund has distributed \$10,715.61. For the Campus Life Fund, they have distributed \$11,852.67. For the Ambassador Fund, \$11,247.78, Community Engagement Fund \$4,795.04, Equity Fund \$3,223.89, Mental Health Fund \$3528, and for the First Year Fund, \$100. He states that there are two funds that haven't been distributed by the Funding Committee, the Environment Fund and the Space Fund.

12. Reports by Councillors

a. Councillor Page (FYC) -- **POSTPONED**

The report of Councillor Page is postponed until the next Council meeting.

b. Councillor Zhang (Science)

Councillor Zhang presents. Councillor Zhang states that they have had two motions that have been approved to move to referendum, concerning the computer fund and space improvement fund. She notes that the governance review committee meetings are in full swing. Councillor Zhang notes that Academia Week happened a few weeks ago, and that there were 12 different events spread out over five days. She states that the Science Internal Committee has held four events so far. She notes that both the Grad Ball Committee and Science Games Committee are finalized. She notes that for finance, they are moving away from cheques, and instead doing direct deposits. For VP Sustainability, she notes that there was a virtual pet therapy event, as well as virtual art competitions. Furthermore, she notes that Charity Week will be occurring in March.



Question Period:

There are no questions.

c. Councillor Williamson (Arts)

Councillor Williamson presents. Councillor Williamson states that AUS' Speaker received training from a U.S. Parliamentarian with the updated Robert's Rules of Order. Councillor Williamson notes that there were two motions brought to Council, both which passed. She notes that the next Mental Health Advocacy meeting is on March 1. She states that 'Work Your BA' has finished, and went well. She notes that Arts Community Engagement is working on some events. Lastly, Councillor Williamson notes that AUS Mental Health is working on a mental health scavenger hunt.

Question Period:

There are no questions.

d. Councillor Merali (Services)

Councillor Merali presents. Councillor Merali states that there was a Housing Assembly on Tuesday, and notes that it was great. For the Services Committee, Councillor Merali notes that Council will be receiving the report next Council. Councillor Merali states that they have been discussing shared experiences that the Services have been facing. Councillor Merali notes that the Services Review Committee has almost completed their review process.

Question Period:

There are no questions.

13. Executive Reports

a. President

The President presents. The President states that Senate met yesterday. He notes that the Board of Governors had their annual retreat this morning, and they spoke about testing different departments to move towards a hybrid model. For SSMU Catalyst Awards, he notes that the committee met. The President notes that the awards are different sustainable or environment-related awards that go to groups, students, or staff working on the projects. He notes that they finalized the candidates who will be awarded this year. BOMCOM met and they discussed 3501 Peel, as well as the University Centre



re-opening. He notes that he met with some student representatives from the Faculty of Music about the Equity Committee that was recently formed. As well, the President states that he met with the new Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer that McGill recently hired.

Question Period:

There are no questions.

b. VP University Affairs

VP University Affairs presents. VP University Affairs notes that at Senate, they discussed must-pass assessments and exam accommodations. VP University Affairs notes that Senate met yesterday, and that there were reports from the Ombudsperson, and from the Office of Student Life and Learning. As well, there was an open discussion on student experience with remote learning. VP University Affairs notes that Senate Caucus met on February 23rd, reviewing Senate agendas. As well, they note that the Mental Health team presented their academic wellness proposal.

VP University Affairs notes that they are still in the process of revising the IRs of Representation and Advocacy. For Equity and Advocacy, they note that they met on the 19th. As well, VP University Affairs notes that they met with the Student Services EDI Advisor. They state that the Black Affairs and the Gender and Sexuality Commissioners were added to the Equity Policy's working group. They note that they also attended a Judicial Board hearing on the Reference submitted in 2018 regarding the Applicability of the 2016 BDS Reference on Services. VP University Affairs notes that they met with the Library Improvement Fund Committee, and reviewed more applications.

Question Period:

There are no questions.

c. VP Finance

VP Finance presents. VP Finance states that for budget revisions, it will be based on a forecast for the rest of the year. He states that the 2021-2022 Budget is almost complete, but that they are waiting on a Pay Equity Report to ensure that the salaries and wages are equitable and in line with common salaries. He notes that he is starting work on the amendments to the IRs of Finance. VP Finance notes that the Finance website is still under construction.

For Funding, he notes that the Funding Committee continues to meet. For Clubs, he states that they have received another round of club banking resources, which will be used as an opportunity to test



the updated distribution system. For Services, he notes that credit card reconciliation is ongoing. Lastly, SSPN is planning its third event, an escape room.

Question Period:

There are no questions.

d. VP Student Life + Report from 2021-02-11

VP Student Life presents. VP Student Life states that the Clubs Portal Committee has been having frequent meetings. She notes that they are currently waiting for more information on Eventus, and will be comparing Eventus and Campus Labs for the Clubs Portal. She notes that they expect to have something in place by the fall of next semester. She notes that the Clubs Committee meetings are occurring weekly, and that they have been approving interim and full-status clubs, as well as Club constitutions. She states that they have been seeing a slowdown of new clubs this semester. VP Student Life notes that the Club workshops took place on February 6 and 7. As well, she states that she has had meetings with various clubs.

For Services, she states that she is meeting with various services to formalize space allocations, as well as conduct mid-semester check-ins. She states that the Services Review Committee has been meeting as well, and is continuing to do direct audits. VP Student Life notes that they approved the Muslim Students' Association as a service. She states that there was a Services Committee meeting on February 24, where services provided their feedback and discussed current events.

For Mental Health, there is an upcoming fee renewal at the referendum. She notes that meetings are ongoing with Steve Cameron, the head of Keep.meSAFE.

For Family Care, VP Student Life states that the Daycare Board of Directors meetings are going well. VP Student Life notes that they are approving the budget 2021-2022 for the Daycare in the coming weeks, and have spoken about making updates to programming. She states that there was a Joint-Board and Senate subcommittee meeting on Family Care today, and spoke about how to provide better support to student caregivers.

Question Period:

There are no questions.

e. VP External



VP External presents. VP External states that UCRU has met twice, with both the Board of Directors and the Advocacy Committee. He states that there has been work on government regulation of academic speech and political pedagogy, as well as policy frameworks of international students. He states that the Affordable Student Housing Committee met last week to go over the event that was occurring on Tuesday. As well, he is working on currently getting funding for consultation and feasibility studies of the Royal Victoria Hospital, by a number of community organizations. He states that there is not much to update concerning political campaigns. He states that he, the Black Affairs Commissioner, and VP Finance met with the Black Students' Network (BSN) to discuss funding. He notes that he has finalized the External Affairs Budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

Question Period:

There are no questions.

14. Confidential Session

There is no confidential business this evening

15. Adjournment: **21:30**

Councillor Wan motions to adjourn, seconded by VP University Affairs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Earle'.

Jemark Earle, President