



# SSMU LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PUBLIC MINUTES

November 25, 2021

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

**CW: Certain sections of the Minutes include content and discourse that readers may find offensive.**

***Due to technical difficulties, the Announcements and Question Period sections of the meeting were regrettably not recorded and thus not transcribed in this session. We apologize for the inconvenience.***

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

The Speaker calls the meeting to order at 18:06 on Thursday, November 25, 2021.

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

The Speaker reads out the attendance list.

Councillor Anderson arrived at 18:12.

Absent are Councillors Awan, Yu, Eiley, Dakdouki, Qazi, and SSMU President.

4. Adoption of the Agenda -- **ADOPTED**

The Speaker states that if there is anyone who wishes to motion to modify the agenda, to do so now. VP External Affairs Affairs motions to adopt, and VP Internal Affairs seconds.



## 5. Report of the Steering Committee (3)

The Speaker states that the Governance Manager gives her regards in terms of her absence tonight. The SSMU President is also absent. The Speaker gives a reminder, that the time appears on the agenda in square brackets, and that the Speaker will use a reaction on Zoom once the person speaking is almost out of time. They also wish to remind everyone to please send motions and anything relating to Council to the Parliamentarian and to themselves, and to include the Governance Manager in copy, with edit access. If that is not done, it may not get into the agenda and it may be lost. Finally, they wish to remind everyone to preserve commentary procedures, as they may have more involved debate today. A reminder to please address the debate to the Speaker, that way they can ensure polity and properness.

The confidential session will be earlier than usual as there is a presentation.

There are no questions on the report.

## 6. Guest Speakers:

### a. Lester Asset Management

Guest Speaker, Stephen Takacsy, President and CEO at Lester Asset Management, states that Lester Asset Management manages the SSMU's portfolio and in this presentation they will find all the important information about the management, including the company's history. The company was started quite a long time ago, by Marie and Ken Lester, the latter being a professor at McGill University. They were also in charge of the Honours Finance Program and the Desautels Funds Management Group. The Guest Speaker joined when the founder passed away, and Ken asked the Guest Speaker to take over as Investment Officer, and they immediately refocused the company on equity, which launched in July 2006. The name of the firm was changed to Lester Asset Management in 2017, when Ken retired and the Guest Speaker bought the company along with a few other partners, Tony Beck. The Guest Speaker and Tony Beck are shareholders of the company, and Tony is a world-famous macroeconomist, founder of the Bank Credit Analyst, which he sold 12 years ago and started Alpine Macro publications. The company has excellent access to macroeconomists, and in 2019 they won the Quebec Mergers Manager's award, under Canadian Bond Mandate, which is their first mandate, worth about 20 pension funds. In 2021, they signed the UN Principle of Responsible Investing in PRI. The ownership is made up of management, done mostly by the Guest Speaker, and Beck. They are made up of seven people, three portfolio managers, two (2) client services representatives, one administration analyst and one client operations and technology representative. The portfolio managers manage equities, provincially, nationally and even internationally. Their background is in finance, two engineering degrees from McGill, and a Masters of Business and Administration, from McGill as well. They have just made a big donation to McGill for the Armstrong Building. They worked as an engineer for four years and got their MBA and changed careers, working in corporate banking and later investment banking, some advisory work, MNA work. They were then asked to join Lester



Asset Management in 2006. They are chair of Conservation Manitoou, vice-chair of the Foundation, chairman of the largest land conservancy in the Laurentians, which they founded eight (8) years ago, called Conservation Manitoou. They have their two-course strategy in equity and fixed income, they manage about \$236 million in fixed income, \$245 in their two pooled funds, and they manage around 50 segregated accounts, of which SSMU is one of. They have top-ranked ten-year returns on Canadian Equity and Canadian Fixed Income. Their Canadian Fixed Income strategy is small, mid and large-capped, which is very different from the index, which takes into account serious ESG considerations. On the fixed income side, their work is very corporate-bond focused, including high yields, because if they just buy government bonds they aren't going to make money. They are very research and credit analysis focused, which has been one of their big strengths on the fixed income side. Assets under Management (AUM) around \$100 million, and they've grown to around \$400 million, from mostly private clients, however a quarter of their clients are institutional (like SSMU), which include foundations and non-profit organizations. Over the last 15 years, Lester Asset Management has doubled SSMU's money. Their approach is quite different from the index, they are biased towards smaller companies as there is more value in them, since they can buy them at a cheaper valuation. They are occasionally opportunistic, and event-driven. The guiding principles are listed on-screen, at the disposal of all attendees. They are long-term investors, they don't play in markets where they would need to act as shareholders, they prefer to be activists. They are also very disciplined, which makes them harder to convince in terms of purchasing stocks. They are value-focused. They avoid trendy companies and try to stay focused on the ones that they research and invest in. They are also bargain hunters, since value is more than a cheap price. They look at special situations, they have had many acquired companies over the past 15 years. It is tough to find value in today's markets, it's mostly in the small-cap area as larger companies are much more expensive in the company's opinion. They don't like to invest in resource companies, since there is a bad return on capital, among other things. Out of 1000 companies, 500 are profitable, and Lester Asset Management invests in 200-300 and has 40-50 in their portfolio. For general investment criteria, the industry must be looked at, growth potential and margins must be observed, business strategy, cash flow, balance sheet, board member, corporate governance, management. If the company passes all the criteria, they look at valuation and attractive value. If it's not attractive, they don't buy the company but put it on their watchlist, to see if it improves at all, or if the market comes down to create a buying opportunity. They like to see if there are potential catalysts down the road, which could increase the value, and they have environmental, social and governance considerations. Their risk management depends heavily on the industry, and by waitings per individual spot, and it is split between small-, mid- and large-cap companies, and it is equally balanced. They are very strict about risk management. There are different sector wings, and they are quite different from the index, they are low on resources and financials. They present the top holdings, in the SSMU's case there are some positions that they don't owe in terms of environmental considerations, such as pipelines or energy infrastructure. They only own a few of those companies. On the fixed income side, there was a big value addition. They have done a good job, adding foreign bonds, government and cash bonds, corporate and investment bonds, and made big returns in 2009 and 2010, after the financial crisis. The value decreased after 2010, and they went further down the credit ladder and made riskier investments, however they never had a bond default. They got into a preferred share market on three occasions, very successfully, especially during summer and fall 2021.



They've been loading up on Great Reset with floors, which have been the best-performing sub asset class of fixed income in the last year, gaining over 20% return. This year, the bond return has been negative, and they are generating positive returns because they keep the duration very short so they have higher-yielding securities. When inflation begins or bond yields start going up, the longer-dated bonds decrease a lot more than shorter-dated ones. They never want to take interest rate risk, they would rather take credit risk, which is why they keep their durations short. With the credit risk, they can analyze it and control the risk.

Takacsy continues that the SSMU's portfolio is quite conservative, there is a high fixed income component, corporate bonds are almost 50% waiting. Preferred shares are over 11% waiting, and the rest are equities by sector. There are no companies that are large polluters, worst-case scenario they have Polar Banknote who makes scratch tickets, but a lot of that money goes to the government and into communities. Takacsy asks that if a member doesn't want something in their portfolio to reach out to them, they will sell it. Renewable energy has been big for them, they invested in it early. Some companies in the SSMU's portfolio are in that field. The SSMU gave the company \$1.8 million in 2007, and took out around \$250,000 which is worth over \$4 million today, so their internal rate of return on that is 6.4% annually. Their portfolio is quite conservative, which means that it is focused more on fixed income than equity. This year, they have been lagging behind, because they don't have any oil and gas or energy infrastructure companies, which would have been large contributors to the TSX index. SSMU has a lot of renewable energy, which performed well the previous year, but not so much this year. Solar and hydro stocks have gone down, because they are somewhat sensitive. They only own a few banks, so they aren't up as much as others are. This year has been tougher for them, although they outperformed the index last year.

The Speaker thanks Takacsy for their presentation and stands for questions.

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**Question:**

Councillor Wan asks what are the management fees and ratios that they charge for their services.

**Answer:**

Takacsy answers that they have a flat fee of 0.8% for SSMU, and there are minor custodial and trading costs that the custodian charges, which probably don't add up to 10 basis points.

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There are no further questions on the presentation.

7. Confidential Session: **18:36**



There is a short confidential session tonight. The Legislative Council enters into a Confidential Session at 18:36.

8. Announcements

***Due to technical difficulties, the Announcements section of the meeting was not recorded and thus not transcribed in this session.***

9. Question Period

a. Questions by constituents

***Due to technical difficulties, the Question Period section of the meeting was not recorded and thus not transcribed in this session.***

10. Recess, Consent Items

The Speaker states that the first consent item is the motion regarding Interim Provisions to the Internal Regulations of Student Groups, which has received 20 consents and 6 debate votes. The motion will be debated.

The second motion is the motion regarding the Fall 2021 budget, which has 25 consents and 1 debate. The motion will be debated.

The third motion is the motion regarding the absence of the SSMU President, which has 12 consents and 14 debates. This motion will be debated.

11. New Business:

a. Notice for Motion Regarding Amendments to the Internal Regulations of Student Groups

Councillor Coussa states that local campaigns are not entitled to free room bookings in the University Centre, while Society clubs have up to 15 hours per week of free bookings and 8 hours of free room booking. This has obstructed some student groups', such as Divest McGill, to hold meetings and perform their activities. If this motion is approved, free room bookings for up to 15 hours per week would be provided to student groups, and 8 hours of access in the University Centre. She continues that this would enable them to receive financial and non-financial support from the Society in a timely manner, and allow for greater democratic oversight on the allocation of the resources. She would like to thank Divest McGill for bringing this matter to her attention, and she encourages everyone to vote for this motion so that advocacy groups can receive all the resources they need to fulfill the mandates they were given by the Legislative Council, Referendum or the General Assembly. For clarification, Councillor Coussa asks if they will vote on the motion after it has become a Notice.



The Speaker answers that Councillor Coussa submitted both a notice and a motion, so they assumed that there was a tactical element to the motion, and that there was supposed to be a motion and a notice, as such both were added to the Agenda. The Speaker asks if both were meant to be included.

Councillor Javed states that the date for the motion is May 2022, but the Notice needs to be presented first to make the permanent changes to the Internal Regulations of Student Groups so that these are ready for next semester, as stated in the Internal Regulations of Governance.

The Speaker confirms that they assumed the same, and some changes with Internal Regulations have some rules to them, considering permanent and non-permanent changes.

b. Motion Regarding Interim Provisions to the Internal Regulations of Student Groups  
2021-11-25 -- **POSTPONED**

Councillor Coussa states that everyone should vote for this motion, as it would help advocacy groups to do what they wish, as they are entitled to, because they are mandated to do so by Legislative Council, Referendum or General Assembly. It would facilitate their operations.

Question Period:

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**Question:**

VP Finance asks why the mover of the motion had not consulted them, because the motion concerns financial aspects within the Society. They believe that consultations with the VP Finance are required on any motion involving the finances of the Society. To them, it seems like an oversight.

**Answer:**

Councillor Coussa wishes to delegate her speaking time to member of the gallery, Bryan Buraga.

The Speaker answers that that is out of order at this time, as the person who answers questions should be the mover or the seconder of the motion. However, during the debate period, the delegate can answer.

Councillor Coussa answers that she appreciates VP Finance's concerns, and the two of them could speak about the motion should VP Finance vote in opposition.

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The Speaker reminds everyone to direct questions and answers in the debate period to him, that way the debate is non-personal.

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**Question:**

VP Student Life asks why she, the VP External Affairs Affairs, the Ancillary Services Manager and the Clubs Committee, and Service Committee were not consulted on this motion.

**Answer:**

Councillor Coussa responds that she is not the one who drafted the motion and apologizes that these consultations were done.

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**Question:**

VP External Affairs Affairs asks, considering that the motion affects finances and operations, External and Student Life portfolios, why there are no sustainability actions listed on the motion.

**Answer:**

Councillor Coussa answers that she does not have an answer at this time.

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**Question:**

VP Finance asks the Speaker if, as shown in the appendix of the motion, there is a reference to VP External Affairs Affairs, and much of the Appendix is focused on preventing VP External Affairs Affairs from having discretion on the allocation of funding. This makes the process of approving the motion difficult, as it would need to go through the Legislative Council, where funding could be denied. This would limit VP Finance's own ability to deny funding. Given their constitutional right and requirement to authorize or deny expenditures within the Society, VP Finance asks if the mover of the motion could explain why the changes are attempting to override the Constitution, something that Internal Regulations do not have the authority to do.

**Answer:**

Councillor Coussa responds that she doesn't have an answer at this time.

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**Question:**

Councillor Wan asks why the motion seems to be creating greater stakes between affiliated and non-affiliated campaigns and if they could indicate the current list of campaigns, so they could understand which groups the motion will affect.

**Answer:**



Councillor Coussa responds that it is Divest McGill, Divest for Human Rights, and the Democratization groups.

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VP Student Life motions to extend the question period by three (3) minutes, and VP External Affairs seconds it. Councillor Saad opposes the motion.

The Speaker entertains a vote on the motion to extend question period on the Motion, and asks that only Councillors who are eligible, to vote. The Speaker decides to proceed with a vote using the “Raise Hand” feature on Zoom. The motion fails, and the question period is over.

Debate Period:

Councillor Wan states that they are concerned about the motion, since the Councillors involved were not able to answer questions regarding it. Further, he is concerned as the Executives were not consulted on the motion, however it affects their portfolio and how they manage their role. He is worried that the Motion attempts to settle a dispute between campaigns and the Executives, and perhaps the issues should be resolved internally instead of being presented as a motion. As such, he cannot vote in favour of the motion, as it does not seem to be well-formulated.

The Speaker mentions that the speaking time is one (1) minute unless there is a motion to amend the speaking time.

VP Finance states that they are disappointed in the motion and it was surprising to him that it is presented to the Legislative Council. He expresses concern that the mover and the seconder were unable to answer questions about the motion and states that the motion was drafted by member of the gallery Buraga, who previously served as SSMU President, and as such lacks knowledge of the governance procedures that contradict the Constitution. As a whole, the motion is unworkable and will be unconstitutional and unenforceable. VP Finance expresses his confusion as to the purpose of the motion, and will maintain his position within the Constitution and states that he will do what the Constitution mandates him to do.

Member of the Gallery Buraga states that they are here on behalf of Divest McGill, one of the SSMU's Affiliated Campaigns. He regrets the inability of the mover and the seconder to answer questions regarding the motion, but they did do much of the writing of the motion. Buraga thanks the mover and seconder for presenting the motion to the Legislative Council. They know that their speaking time is limited, so they wanted to offer the possibility for Councillors to ask their questions and they are willing to answer them to the best of their abilities. This motion is important to Divest McGill because in the past they have had difficulties accessing the Society's resources in the past.





VP External Affairs reiterates that it is not appropriate that the motion was presented without the consultation of the relevant SSMU departments or any Executives, as well as the fact that the writers of the motion did not ensure that the Internal Regulations of student groups are currently being edited, which is an ongoing project by the VP Student Life. He clarifies that this motion would render VP Student Life's project ineffective and overshadowed. The Society is a non-for profit organization, which is something VP External Affairs expected a former SSMU President to understand. This means that they have a very limited campaign budget.

The Speaker ends VP External Affairs's speaking time. The Speaker reminds members of Council to address their debate to him and insist on being cautious with their language, since they are speaking to the Speaker.

VP Student Life states that she has been working on amending the Internal Regulations of Student Groups for the past three (3) months, as it is a lengthy process. She has been doing consultations, and the motion in question was supposed to be presented next semester, so she believes that they can work together to ensure that all opinions and suggestions are included in the amendment. She was also surprised when she saw the motion, and she does not think that the movers are prepared or have done enough consultations to move this motion. She recommends that something be done to better prepare the motion and include all suggestions, with the proper channels.

Councillor Coussa states that she understands that the necessary consultations have not been completed, and for that she apologizes. However, she indicates that there is no need to be rude to the mover and the seconder who wish to emphasize the concerns of advocacy groups on campus. She asks the VP Finance to apologize, because they were rude in their previous comments. She thanks VP Student Life for being respectful and she will be glad to meet with her to discuss Internal Regulation consultations. She would like to point out that that is how corrections are done in meetings.

Councillor Saad asks for a Point of Order. He asks if the Speaker would be open to a motion to move to voting.

The Speaker thanks Councillor Coussa for reminding the Council of the proper way to speak. He asks that Councillors have compassion and respect for each other, and the Members of the Gallery. He requires that everyone be respected. Direct attacks will not be tolerated, and the Speaker asks that 'cleaner' language be used. He states that the debate period has ended and he will be taking motions to extend.

VP External Affairs motions to Postpone the motion until proper consultations are done.

Councillor Wan asks for a Point of Order. He states that the motion to call the question was called before the motion to postpone, so it must be considered before the motion to postpone is approved.



The Speaker states that the motion was never considered, because the debate had ended and they had entered the motion period. If there is an insistence from Councillor Saad, the Speaker can consider the motion to call the question, but he believes that motion was insisted upon because they were in debate. The Speaker asks for clarification from Councillor Saad.

Councillor Saad answers that the Speaker is correct in the interpretation.

The Speaker asks if Councillor Wan would like to motion to Call the Question.

Councillor Wan states that no, they would not like a motion to call the question since the motion to postpone was called before their motion, which makes it invalid.

The Speaker asks for a second on the motion to postpone until consultations have been done.

VP Student Life seconds the motion.

The Speaker entertains a vote on the motion to postpone. The vote requires  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority, and will be done with the “Raise Hand” feature.

In Favour: 21

In Opposition: 1

The motion to postpone passes, and it will be postponed until enough consultations have been done.

c. Motion Regarding the Fall 2021 Budget 2021-11-25 -- **APPROVED**

VP Finance asks if he will have time to present his presentation as well.

The Speaker grants this.

VP Finance states that their presentation usually happens in October, however due to operational concerns and increased accuracy of the review, the Board of Directors delayed it. All the numbers are available in the Excel sheet, but he believed a presentation would be best to avoid confusion. He will be going over the SSMU budget structure, the process they use to create the budget and the considerations and changes that were made. The structure is made up of 80 departments, general departments, general ledger accounts, restricted funds. They have an operational budget, which funds the departments' operations and they have restricted funds which are used for specific things, such as the clubs fund or the Shatner Building fund. They also have jail accounts, which have categories such as food and beverage. These combine to make expenses fall into either the restricted funds or the jail account. He presents the list of departments and jail accounts. The 2021 budget revision was drafted in part by VP Finance, the accounting team, the managers and officers of each department. The idea was



to make changes on the budget, the actual numbers they had seen in the past, and what they received from the student body. The Board postponed the presentation as VP Finance needed more time to receive the accurate financial numbers, especially because SSMU are now transitioning back to in-person activities. The Finance Committee was consulted in early November to get a preliminary idea of what the budget would include, and VP Finance would have liked to meet with them again, but the timeline did not work. He will be working with them closely for the 2022 Budget Review, which will be written in January and February. Their considerations include the fact that they are a non-profit organization, which means that they cannot make profits year after year; budget surpluses and shortfalls, based on predictions they will have \$300,000 more in revenue than was predicted, because they had a conservative budget this year, since they did not know how the pandemic would affect enrollment. However, there were mistakes in the previous budget, such as the non-existent inclusion of \$100,000 in revenue from Events, which was likely an error from the separation from the Gerts and Events portfolios. Further, they did not get revenues from mini-courses this year because they were not offered. It was difficult to predict revenue and expenses for Gerts, as it is a newly opened Bar and Cafe. Revenue was more than predicted, but expenses are hard to be certain of, which was taken into account when the budget was written. The main priority for staffing requirements is to hire more staff to better distribute the work, since staff is overworked. The major changes include revenues from the General Membership fee, which accounted for \$1.4 million in revenue this semester, which had a rate of prediction of 92%, which has been more accurate historically, which means they predicted \$1.3 million in revenue. The revenue for Events was not even close to the estimate of \$100,000, because the prediction was made for pre-pandemic years, so VP Finance removed it from the budget. They spent \$50,000 less on salaries than was budgeted for, so the money was reallocated. Many categories were off by a few thousand dollars, based on the previous year's predictions. However, the inaccuracies cancel each other out so rather than micromanage all the categories, VP Finance ensured that everything was as clear as possible. Due to the return to in-person courses, mini-courses were put to the side, but there is a chance they will be back in the winter. Since this is far from certain, he completely removed mini-courses from the budget, which gives them a more conservative budget. Gerts has been very successful, and sales are better than expected, the measures put in place worked quite well. However, there are some logistical considerations that have led to a lack of clarity on expenses. He kept revenue predictions the same, and added a \$5,000/month addition for expenses. Gerts opened in September rather than originally-planned June, so VP Finance removed the revenue for those months, which led to an overall reduction in the revenues of the SSMU. The changes in staff will help SSMU fulfill its mission and continue to provide quality services to SSMU Members. They are looking to hire as many people as the budget will allow, and have already hired a Gerts Administrative Assistant and a full-time Translator (who was hired in October rather than January, which was originally planned). They are looking to hire a full-time Graphic Designer, an Equity and Policy Specialist in the Human Resources Department, a full-time Human Resources Coordinator, a Governance Coordinator and an Events Coordinator. This will help staff divide the workload accordingly. The revised budget comes with a deficit of \$26,000, which is small and very manageable, because SSMU underspends on their budgets, and they have a \$466,000 surplus from the previous year, thanks to the pandemic, which allows them to have a buffer. He reminds everyone that budgets are predictions and that they often underestimate their expenses, and the Executive Committee and



the Board of Directors have the power to add expenses to the budget, and they can deviate from the budget to keep everything running smoothly should they need to do so. They need to keep in mind that the new staff will only start in January, so that will make up only five (5) months of salaries, and it will hopefully be funded by an increase in Membership fees. The hires are sustainable, however the rampant inflation in Canada means that they need to match the inflation to the increase in Membership fees (5%). A fee increase is affordable and necessary at some point in the future. The staffing increase will also be in line with the Five-Year Plan, as it is a long-term plan for the Society.

VP Finance presents the motion.

Question Period:

There are no questions.

Debate Period:

There is no debate.

Councillor Saad motions to move to a vote, seconded by VP External Affairs.

Voting Procedure:

In Favour: 24 votes

In Opposition: None

Abstaining: 1

The motion is approved.

d. Motion Regarding the Absence of the SSMU President 2021-11-25 -- **APPROVED**

Councillor Saad presents the motion. He states that the President has been absent from his duties for the past few months, and presents their record of his absences. The Executives declined to answer when asked questions about his absence, and Councillor Saad feels as though the Legislative Council has been left in the dark. At the end of the day, this is the last meeting before the end of the semester, so presenting this motion is urgent. The President represents members of the student body, which he is not doing. The Council is unaware of whether he is being paid, but they need to hold him accountable, which is the main goal of the motion. In terms of risk factors and resource implications, the President has a salary of \$32,000, but his absence leads to a lack of leadership, although the other Executives have been doing a great job of taking over his work. This is not a sustainable situation since it allows for similar situations to happen in the future. It is a dangerous precedent to set, and the



motion calls on the Board of Directors to call a special General Assembly, per section 13.2 of the SSMU constitution. After the General Assembly, a motion will be presented to hold a school-wide referendum to vote on asking the Board of Directors to initiate an impeachment if no letter of resignation is received within 48 hours of the ratification of the motion.

VP Student Life points out that it appears changes were made to the Motion after the Steering Committee reviewed the motion, so she is unsure about this motion at this point.

The Speaker states that there may have been a miscommunication between Councillor Saad and himself.

Councillor Saad states that there was a miscommunication, but he did not modify the motion, only changed it to include the motion, as they knew that some of the concerns now included in the motion would be brought up during the Legislative Council meeting.

The Speaker reminds Councillor Saad to kindly discontinue from amending or adding comments on the Motion. He asks that Councillor Saad not make changes to the Motion after it has been sent to the Steering Committee, unless otherwise specified by the Steering Committee.

Councillor Saad apologizes and reads the Speaker's statement on the motion.

In light of the motion, the Speaker wishes to remind the Council that all Motions approved by the Legislative Council must be ratified by the Board of Directors before standing as actionable items for the Society, and the deadlines must begin by the date of ratification and any reference to actions by Legislative Council also inherently include the Board of Directors. It must also be noted that as the Legislative Council does not have jurisdiction over the employment status, and other HR matters concerning employees; this motion can serve only as a suggestion. The Speaker clarifies that the reason that the statement was shared to make it clear that it was agreed upon by all involved parties.

Question Period:

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**Question:**

VP Student Life asks if the comments can be resolved in the document, as they are not about the Motion.

**Answer:**

The Speaker notes to VP Student Life if she can refuse the comments, as they are not allowed to amend the Motion once it has been reviewed by the Steering Committee.

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**Question:**

VP Internal Affairs asks, with some of the changes made, the motion is no longer constitutional, if the motion would need to be postponed.

**Answer:**

The Speaker answers that there were no changes made, but if VP Internal Affairs is calling the constitutionality of the motion into question, the Steering Committee can be called for a brief recess, where they will further discuss the motion further. The Motion has been reviewed by the Steering Committee, and the motion is currently constitutional.

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**Question:**

VP External Affairs states that, according to Section 10.6 of the Constitution, an Officer can be removed from office through a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote of a General Assembly called by the Board of Directors. In the motion for approval section, the third paragraph states that the Legislative Council calls for the President to submit a letter of resignation within 48 hours. It goes on to say that, if no letter of resignation is submitted, the Legislative Council calls for a special General Assembly meeting. He asks how this will be addressed considering that the Legislative Council does not have the power to call a Special General Assembly meeting to that effect.

**Answer:**

The Speaker answers that, at the time when the statement was written, they can assume that any mention of the Legislative Council calling on something means that the Legislative Council will call on something through the Board of Directors. In this case, the approval of the Board of Directors would be needed, as all motions that pass through the Legislative Council do not become valid until ratified by the Board of Directors. As such, there needs to be mutual consent between the Legislative Council and the Board of Directors. This was resolved by the Steering Committee.

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**Question:**

VP External Affairs asks a follow-up question. He states that, in the last part of the motion for approval, it says that it would call for a university-wide referendum to impeach the SSMU President. As per his reading of the constitution, the impeachment would be at the special General Assembly, while the General Assembly would not call for a referendum but vote directly on the matter. He asks if his information is correct.

VP External Affairs states that there would be a debate if the motion were to go to the Special General Assembly. However, they wouldn't call for a referendum, they would present a motion for impeachment at the meeting. The impeachment would be effective immediately if it passes with  $\frac{2}{3}$  of votes for it, and if there were 350 members present at the meeting.

**Answer:**



The Speaker answers that they understand the problem and will be taking questions on the floor and then calling for the Steering Committee to meet in a Breakout Room to confirm the reading of the constitution by the Committee. If it is not, further discussion will be had.

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**Question:**

Councillor Tiniacos asks, because the mover of the motion had already decided to make some changes, if they could submit amendments to the motions and solve the constitutional issues raised by the Executives.

**Answer:**

The Speaker responds that that would be in order. The reason the comments were resolved is to make it clear that they need to be submitted as amendments. The Steering Committee does not want Councillors to modify motions after they have gone through the Steering Committee, which has happened before. They have had cases where councillors modify motions without telling the executives, which makes the motion invalid, and where the modified motion was presented to the Legislative Council.

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Councillor Saad states that the modifications they proposed can be rewritten on the spot, and they can move on those amendments without requiring the two-minute break. The Speaker answers that the amendments can be presented during the debate period, and states that the motion should not have been presented with the constitutional concerns.

The Parliamentarian asks for the amendments to be sent by email.

The Speaker entertains a two-minute break, to take the Steering Committee into a breakout room.

The Speaker states that the Council reviewed the amendments proposed by Councillor Saad and the Steering Committee's amendments. The Steering Committee's amendment reviewed the constitutional concern in the last point, by striking to call for a University-wide Referendum. The amendments by Councillor Saad were to his own motion.

**Question Period:**

There are no questions.

**Debate Period:**

There is no debate on this Motion.



Councillor Saad motions for a vote by roll-call, seconded by Councillor Zhang.

The Speaker asks that everyone who joined late to message him via Zoom to ensure they are present.

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**Question:**

VP Finance asks if, since the motion is being signed and ratified by the Board of Directors, the vote needs to be passed with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority or if it is only the Board of Directors that requires the  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority.

**Answer:**

The Speaker answers that the Legislative Council only needs to pass the motion by a simple majority, because the motion is not a special motion. It would be special in a Board of Directors meeting because, within two (2) weeks of the ratification, the Board would be mandated to vote on a special General Assembly. The Special General Assembly vote will be held when the Special General Assembly is voted on, and when it comes to the motion, it and the ratification are per procedure. He states that VP Finance can contact them by email if they need further information.

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The Speaker asks for confirmation of everyone's presence.

Vote by Roll Call:

In Favour: Councillor Coussa, Councillor Infeld, Councillor Javed, Councillor Holten, Councillor Beaulieu-Shearer, Councillor Liao, Councillor Pelletier, Councillor Bellia, Councillor Anderson, Councillor Applegate, Councillor Desrochers, Councillor Saad, Councillor Zhang, Councillor Khodadadi, Councillor Khamis, Councillor Qazi, Councillor Tiniacos, Councillor Claret

In Opposition: None

Abstaining: Councillor Gurung, Councillor Djossou, Councillor Wan, Councillor D'Amore, VP University Affairs, VP Student Life, VP Internal Affairs, VP External Affairs, VP Finance

The motion is approved.

12. Reports by Committees:

a. Executive Committee





VP Internal Affairs presents the report. She presents multiple hiring motions, and they have been revamping the SSMU Marketplace, where students can exchange used books and include lease transfers. They have hired a Gerts administrative assistant, and VP Internal Affairs was appointed as Speaker for the previous Legislative Council meeting and an honorarium was approved.

There are no questions on the Executive Committee Report.

b. Funding Committee -- **APPROVED**

Councillor Saad presents the report. The goal of the Funding Committee is to approve funding requests from various funds from SSMU. The Committee has been going through many applications, and Councillor Saad presents a list, which includes the Desautels Women in Business fund. They are well-financed from corporate sponsors, with \$12,000 from external sponsors, and this fund has been approved. There is also the Humanitarian Crisis Management Simulation fund, requesting money for their 2022 Budget. The Funding Committee approved funding Jam for Justice, who are trying to break even in order to donate revenue from their events; McGill Sense Aware, who wanted to hire an ASL instructor. Dance Pack Studio funding was approved, as well as McGill Students for Geriatric Health, who had a profitable Krispy Kreme campaign, but were looking for funding to cover the costs of the donuts, but they were not funded because their campaign was profitable, and they could keep doing what they were doing. The Project X McGill team has an event in Toronto, funded in part by the Committee. In terms of advancements, they are looking to modify some policies to allow for food to be included in requests, especially when it is of importance to the club, or when it is motivation for members to show up. Councillor Saad tells everyone that if they know any club leaders, to tell them to get their numbers in order, because budgets are often hard to navigate.

The Parliamentarian states that the Funding Committee's report needs to be approved by the Council.

VP Internal Affairs moves to vote, seconded by VP Finance.

The report is approved.

c. Services Committee -- **POSTPONED**

The Services Committee report is postponed.

d. Accountability Committee -- **POSTPONED**

The Accountability Committee report is postponed.

e. Equity Committee -- **POSTPONED**

The Equity Committee report is postponed.



f. Gender and Sexuality Advocacy Committee -- **POSTPONED**

The Gender and Sexuality Advocacy Committee report is postponed.

g. Indigenous Affairs Committee -- **POSTPONED**

The Indigenous Affairs Committee report is postponed.

The Speaker reminds all committees to email the Parliamentarian should they need to postpone their report.

h. Community Engagement Committee -- **POSTPONED**

The Community Engagement Committee report is postponed.

i. SSAMMOSA Committee -- **POSTPONED**

The SSAMMOSA Committee report is postponed.

j. Black Affairs Committee -- **POSTPONED**

The Black Affairs Committee report is postponed.

k. Accessibility Committee -- **POSTPONED**

The Accessibility Committee report is postponed.

l. Affordable Student Housing Committee -- **POSTPONED**

The Affordable Student Housing Committee report is postponed.

13. Reports by Councillors

a. Councillor Bellia (Engineering) -- **POSTPONED**

Councillor Bellia's report is postponed.

The Speaker reminds Councillors that it is their obligation to send their reports to the Legislative Council, and asks Councillor Bellia to send them an email with their reasoning for failing to send their report.

b. Councillor Khamis (Science)



Councillor Khamis states that some councillors presented their reports in the previous weeks, they would like to update everyone on what the SUS has been doing. Their team met with the Office of Science Education to discuss collaborative initiatives for the next few months, which is also part of the President's portfolio. They had more meetings with the OSC, planning for the Science Gala and meeting with departments within the Science Faculty. The Academic portfolio ran the Graduate Fair with AUS, in early November, which was very successful. Their VP Communications is working on some constitutional amendments for departments within the faculty. Their VP Internal is working on various events. The Science Internal Committee is working on a ski trip for the winter semester, and a Halloween event and a Trivia Night took place this semester and the planned Tie-Dye event will be moved to next semester. They will be working with the SUS Mental Health Committee for this event. Science Games are being planned, and Hype Night occurred on November 15. Registration will be opening soon for the January event. VP External Affairs is continuing to run Science After Hours every Tuesday night at Gerts. VP Sustainability is running several committees, including the Mental Health Committee, which had a meditation session on November 10. The Environment Committee ran a de-stressing event in Jeanne-Mance park in October, as well as a sustainable thrift crawl the previous week, and are working on a sustainable cookbook initiative, and they are searching for recipes. The Social Sustainability Committee conducted an interview with War Child McGill, which is on their Instagram page, and they are having a sale coming up. The previous week was the SUS Charity Week, where proceeds were raised for Dans La Rue Montreal. \$700 was raised. Councillor Khamis stands for question and states that they are available by email and FaceBook for contact.

There are no questions on the report.

c. Councillor Javed (Arts)

Councillor Javed presents herself. She states that the AUS has been working on getting the MoA signed, which will hopefully be done soon. The AUS website has been redesigned, and SNAX is up and running. BDA has been running slowly, because they have been unable to get their permits, however the VP Social has been working on that. The Executives have been cleaning up the lounge, because McGill was supposed to move the furniture, but they didn't so the Executives did it. VP Internal is working on some merchandise, including rugby shirts and tote bags. She is also working on PPE recycling, and she will be reaching out to the McGill Office of Sustainability for funding. VP External Affairs is working on the Graduate Fair with SUS, which went quite well. VP Academics is working on peer tutoring and the Essay Centre, which are both up and running. They also had their elections and referendum. All the referendum questions passed. VP Internal is also working with the First-Year Arts Council, and they are planning a Quebec City trip for the first-year arts students. The last AUS Legislative Council meeting was the previous Wednesday, and many motions were passed. Councillor Javed has been attending AUS and Executive Committee meetings every week, and working on the MoA with the AUS President and other Arts Representative. She sits on the Arts Faculty Council, and Curriculum Committee. She is also on the Steering Committee for SSMU, and represents the Council on the Board of Directors. Training will take place soon for the Board of Directors. She sits on the Human Resources Committee and the Health and Dental Committee, and has been working with the



McGill Coalition Against Bill 2, and they are handing out pins and flyers the next day and week. She is also working with the McGill Coalition against Bill 21, and they handed out pins and flyers the week of the meeting and the previous week. She sits on the Equity Committee for the Society, which has not yet met. She, along with another arts representative, have decorated their office.

There are no questions on the report.

d. Councillor Applegate (FYC)

Councillor Applegate states that, since they are the First-Year representative they are also the VP External Affairs for the First Year Council (FYC), which is an elected body of five (5) executive members, who help first-year students transition into university life. They plan events and come up with solutions to problems. FYC met for the first time on October 29, and they had their first event the previous Tuesday at Gerts. They had some logistical issues, but it was a success overall. They also will plan a mental health week, with dates to be determined. The Free Foot event dates are also to be determined. FYC has also decided to organize an inter-faculty prom in March, and will try to organize more events in the Winter semester. They will reach out to first-year representatives in January to do a round-table, because they want to know what is going well and what is not going so well, and whether the faculty councils need support or assistance. The Councillor will also try to produce a calendar for academic deadlines and events. They have set office hours, which are Mondays from 5:30 to 6:30 for the remainder of the Fall semester. They will reevaluate when the Winter semester starts. In terms of social media, they are working on the promotion of their Instagram page, and will work on event promotion through FaceBook. They will also put together a YouTube video to help incoming students get as much information as possible. They will put together a map of resources available, as they feel that first-year students do not know about all the resources McGill has to offer. They will be reaching out shortly to the Inter-Residence Council, because they want to work closely with them, as Residence is a big part of the first-year student body. Their VP Finance has provided a budget outline, however it is still vague, as they have not paid for much yet. Their funds will go to prizes, renting locations and event-specific costs. Councillor Applegate assures the Council that they will provide a more detailed budget outline in the next report. They will try to organize as many social events as possible during the winter semester, as pandemic restrictions loosen. They want socials to be a combination of mixers and non-party events, so that events can be as inclusive as possible. Finally, they encourage all faculties and councils to organize events of their own for their first-year students, since it is important to have faculty spirit, to improve first-year students' school spirit. Councillor Applegate offers the FYC's help.

There are no questions on the report.

e. Councillor Claret (Services)

Councillor Claret states that the Services Committee met three (3) times this semester, October 27, November 10, and November 24. They are doing well, reviewing services using Google Forms. They should be done by January. Services were happy with the referendum, as they will be able to do what



they wish with the fee increase. Some services had some trouble in the beginning of the semester procuring volunteers. Councillor Claret is looking forward to Activities Night in January. Services can now use the 3501 Peel Street building to host workshops and events.

There are no questions on the report.

f. Councillor Djossou (Athletics)

Councillor Djossou states that the Varsity Council has had weekly meetings since the summer, and they moved to in-person meetings at the beginning of the semester. Their last meeting was the previous Wednesday. They usually talk about how to bring the community together, from planning events to advertising them. They had their first in-person event on October 26. The Varsity Council is currently trying to get McGill athletes to collaborate with the Yellow Door organization, which is being coordinated via email, hoping to be completed by December 10. They are thinking about pairing athletes with those who need help with technology. In the future, they want to host a dodgeball competition and a skiing activity in January. The Student Athletic Council had their last meeting on November 19, and the next one is mid-January. They have been trying to bring committees together, to help the whole student body. Many concerns have been raised about the loss of revenues, so they are working on that as well. They gained two new members on the Finance Committee, and one on the Hall of Fame Committee, so all committee members have been selected. They are looking to host a coffee giveaway in early January. The McGill Athletics and Recreation Advisory Board had their first meeting on September 29, and one the previous Wednesday. They are trying to refer offers, and have plans for renovations, but are unsure if they are going to happen given the financial circumstances. The Varsity Council also launched a new listserv and are happy with the turnout. They were supposed to host an event for the last player game, but the team lost so they will not be doing it. They were thinking about hosting the next meeting in early January. The Varsity Council is trying to get the Quebec Government to finance a part of the MacDonald Campus renovations. Councillor Djossou highlights the success of McGill athletes, and lists all athletes who have won awards. They invite everyone to watch their report to watch all games and events of McGill athletes and the Services Committee.

The Speaker ensures all students who have won awards have been recognized.

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**Question:**

Councillor Wan asks if there are any facilities at the Outaouais Campus.

**Answer:**

Councillor Djossou answers that there are, to their knowledge, no facilities at the Outaouais Campus.



There are no further questions on the report.

g. Councillor D'Amore (PTOT)

Councillor D'Amore states that the POTUS Council had their first meeting on October 5, and their second meeting will be held on November 30. POTUS held elections for the UN representatives and QY representatives in September, and revised the constitution, including setting limits to speaking times during meetings, and they are implementing executive reports at the end of each year. They have bi-weekly emails sent out, to let PTOT students know about events and updates. Presidents also work on summarizing POTUS roles for accreditation. They had quite a few events at the beginning of the year, including Frosh, which included in-person and online events. They also had a Second-Year Frosh in partnership with the Education Faculty. They had a "Welcome Back" barbecue, on October 4. They had a Halloween event with Education on October 27. They are participating in Science Games, which will take place from January 18 to 22. They participate in Hype Night on November 15. They also had a charity bowling night on November 12, with funds going to the Malaria Consortium. They had a Graffiti Night the previous night, and are planning an end of semester party. There are currently two PTOT intramural teams, soccer and spikeball. Councillor D'Amore sits on the Health and Dental Committee, but has not been reached out to yet.

There are no questions on the report.

h. Councillor Eiley (Nursing) -- **POSTPONED**

Councillor Eiley's report is postponed.

14. Executive Reports:

a. VP University Affairs

VP University Affairs states that she has been working with the McGill Coalition Against Bill 2, who released a statement, and members have been tabling on campus and will continue to do so the next week. She encourages everyone to stop by and show their support for groups affected by Bill 2. The menstrual hygiene products pick-up program launched, so people can place one-time or recurring orders for menstrual products, which include pads, tampons, reusable pads, menstrual cups and period underwear. She presents the remainder of her meetings, notably interviews for a new Student Rights Research Advocacy Commissioner, and a check-in with the Indigenous Affairs Commissioner. There were other interviews held, and she assisted the Coalition Against Bill 21 with some firing and buttoning. VP University Affairs stands for questions.

b. VP Finance



VP Finance states that SSMU has hired an administrative assistant for Gerts, who will handle inventory and logistics, and they are finishing fixing their inventory shortfalls and continuing to make Gerts as efficient as possible. The financial audit has been completed, and VP Finance thanks the Accounting team for their work on it and states that it has been filed with the government and the financial statements will be uploaded on the website as soon as possible. The Clubs and Services credit cards are still delayed, and they are waiting on an answer from RBC, who they have been having many issues with this year. He plans to meet with the RBC representative and work the issues out in the next week or two. The club banking access should be completed for anyone, and they have gotten the new club accounts from RBC. VP Finance has been revising the Services budget, and it has mostly been submitted and he is going over them with the Services Finance Coordinator the next week. The Budget Revision has been completed, and has been presented today. The accrual of the Winter fees was completed as well, which presents a picture of what they have to work for, the Finances are currently doing well. The Hiring Committee has been going strong, approving applications. VP Finance worked with RBC to get a better DIC for their investments, they went from 35 basis points to 95, and they are making much more money from their accounts. They have also moved the Awards and Distinctions Fund into investments, which has been approved. Hopefully it will double the distinctions, so that more scholarships will be available for students. The referendum budget had some small issues, but the second referendum ran smoothly. The projects that VP Finance will be working on for the remainder of the calendar year include the Budget and Reporting System project, which has had some discrepancies between the actual and previous year's budget, in many fields. Some are better and some are worse, which makes projections hard to do, so VP Finance will figure out what went wrong with writing the budget and try to address it. He is hoping to be done by January, so that the next budget will be clearer and more accurate. He is also looking to change the budgeting system to make it easier to read, which would provide members of the Legislative Council with a deeper understanding of the budget. He is also planning a membership fee increase for the Winter semester, as inflation is a major issue. He states that because of inflation alone, the SSMU's expenses will rise by \$200,000 next year, so they need to increase membership fees. He will also be working on the Five-Year Plan, and SSAMMOSA will be part of this discussion.

There are no questions on the report.

#### c. VP Student Life

VP Student Life states that there have been three (3) internal conflict mediations, one resolved, one ongoing. She prepared two MoUs with one service and one club, and placed sanctions on clubs to ensure everything is up to date. She also went to the SSMU Mental Health Team's check-in. The Mental Health Committee's social media is being rebranded, and VP Student Life encourages everyone to follow them on Instagram. The SSMU Mental Health team has proposed a mental wellness proposal to the CSS. They are partnering with the Concordia Student Union (CSU) for a winter festival, which will be a huge event. Students will have free access to the lobby platform for three months, as they are having a President and Vice-President social in January. Activities Night Winter semester planning has started, and the dates are January 17 to 19 2022, at the University Centre in-person and virtually. She



is working to establish partnerships with Bricks, Venture Canada and Lifeline. All SSMU students will get a \$1,200 discount on their rent with Bricks. Consultations are ongoing for the amendments of the Internal Regulations of Student Groups, which she hopes will be presented at the next Legislative Council meeting. The master list of clubs is finished, and the confidential student group information portal will be implemented for Winter 2022. The student portal is ongoing, and they want to have all services and forms in the portal by January 2022. They are restructuring the website. Student groups can now join the Getting Involved Microsoft Teams, to share their events and volunteer opportunities. Student Life social media is going well, and they are Gerts and Student Life merchandise coming soon. The Student Life Engagement Fund is being revised, which will be presented mid-winter. VP Student Life had MoA meetings with the McGill Farmer's Market, the Staff Newsletter. She further notes that the Clubs and Services Coordinator has been moved under the Student Life portfolio. Winter 2022 pandemic protocols are done, and the information will be released the first week of December. Committees have been working as usual.

There are no questions on the report.

d. VP External Affairs

Le Vice-Président (affaires externes) constate qu'en termes de projets de mobilisation, le Bureau a travaillé sur l'accessibilité du portfolio, il travaille pour changer le site Web et les réseaux sociaux, pour améliorer la communication avec les étudiants. De plus, le Vice-Président a commencé à revoir le plan de l'Association étudiante, et il enverra un courriel à tous les membres avec l'information sur les consultations. Finalement, sur l'affaire de l'Hôpital Royal Victoria, il décide quoi faire après la réunion de l'OCPM. Il travaille aussi sur des initiatives pour le référendum de l'hiver. Il va rencontrer plusieurs écoles au niveau provincial et municipal pour mettre en place une coalition et continuer l'effort pour retravailler les affaires francophones. Avec la Commissaire des affaires noires, il a commencé à travailler sur le plan de McGill anti-racisme. Il aimerait commencer la création d'un comité sur la représentation externe de l'AEUM. L'audition publique de l'OCPM est passée et le mémoire de l'association des affaires étudiantes a été soumis avec succès. Cette semaine, à EPUC, les politiques préliminaires ont été passées et sont en train d'être finalisées avant la traduction. En termes de gouvernance, la Coordination aux affaires externes travaillera désormais en partenariat avec le Commissaire des affaires externes afin de présider le Comité sur la représentation externe, un projet encore en création, et pour superviser d'autres employés du Bureau des affaires externes. Ils sont en train d'engager une Commissaire à l'engagement communautaire et une autre personne pour un deuxième poste de Commissaire aux affaires externes. Ils sont en train de revoir et d'écrire des politiques sur la consultation. Certains rendez-vous importants qui ont eu lieu incluent toutes les branches d'EPUC. Le Vice-Président des affaires externes a rencontré le président de SUS et la représentante des médias. Il continue à travailler sur un plan à long-terme sur le portfolio des affaires externes.

Il n'y a pas de questions sur le rapport du vice-président (affaires externes).





e. VP Internal Affairs

VP Internal states that they had the Burnout Ball the previous Friday at Gerts, and the café is now open. SSPN has had their weekly meetings and the FAC-O theme has been finalized. Francophone Affairs had their first meeting as well, and their goals for the year were discussed. The First-Year Commissioner and VP Internal Affairs had a check-in with the executives of the First-Year Council, and went over goals and plans for the year; the first event was planned. They are also planning smaller events in the upcoming semester. In regards to Alumni Affairs, there was a Centreide meeting that VP Internal Affairs attended. She had a meeting with the Communications team to brainstorm for December items. They are also doing the Executive check-in, and trying to be more transparent and having a friendly face on social media. The Steering Committee has met, and VP Internal held meetings with the Governance Manager. She is hoping to organize Board of Directors training for the new Directors. She had a meeting with the Chief of Justice, to discuss changes that need to be made to the Judicial Board to increase their rights. She had meetings with the Anti-Violence Coordinators (AVCs), because they now have monthly meetings. She has weekly meetings with the Dean of Students, and with McGill Administration. They started doing a monthly report to the Board of Directors, which includes staff updates, so the Board is aware of the SSMU's activities.

15. Adjournment: **21:38**

Councillor Wan moves to adjourn the meeting, seconded by VP Internal Affairs.

The Speaker adjourns the meeting at 21:38.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric S', is written above a horizontal line.

Éric Sader, Vice-President (Finance)