



SSMU LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PUBLIC MINUTES

January 20, 2022

The regular monthly Legislative Council Meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be held by teleconference, on January 20, 2022 at 18:00.

1. Call to Order: **18:05**

The Speaker calls the meeting to order at 18:05 on January 20, 2022.

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 takes attendance.

The Speaker reminds Councillors that they can provide their preferred pronouns for the minutes, and if there are any changes to contact the Governance Manager.

Present are: Councillors Coussa, Infeld, Javed, Gurung, Holton, Djoussou, Beaulieu-Shearer, Yu, Liao, Anderson, Desrochers, Saad, Zhang, Wan, Khodadadi, Eiley, D'Amore, Khamis, Qazi, Tiniacos, Claret, Dakdouki, VP University Affairs, VP Student Life, VP Internal Affairs, VP External Affairs and VP Sader.

Absent are Councillors Awan, Belia, Applegate, Zveiris, as well as the SSMU President.

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

The Speaker asks for any agenda corrections to be presented.

VP Internal Affairs adds an announcement on behalf of the Governance Manager that she will be providing.



Councillor Coussa motions to adopt the agenda, seconded by VP Finance.

With no opposition, the Agenda is adopted.

5. Adoption of the Minutes:

a. Legislative Council Public Minutes 2021-11-11 – **APPROVED**

The Speaker presents the minutes from the Legislative Council meeting from November 11, 2021.

The Speaker reminds everyone to review the minutes prior to the meeting, to ensure everything that has been said is accurate.

With no changes or corrections to the minutes, these are approved.

b. Legislative Council Public Minutes 2021-11-25 – **APPROVED**

The Speaker presents the minutes from the Legislative Council meeting from November 25, 2021.

With no changes or corrections to the minutes, they are approved.

6. Report of the Steering Committee

The Speaker states that the Steering Committee met that Tuesday, January 18, 2021. All were present except for the Governance Manager and the President. They reviewed all the motions, with particular attention to the Motion Regarding the Amendment of the Standing Rules, as it is specifically within their jurisdiction. The Motion Regarding Amendments to the Internal Regulations of Student Groups was stricken, as it was tabled indefinitely at the last meeting. The Committee asks Councillors to keep the following in mind: they shall to prepare referendum questions for the next meeting, and a tutorial will be distributed; the Committee asks that Councillors review the changes to the schedule, as meetings will now be once a month; and they ask everyone to be kind to fellow Councillors. He further notes that there will be a brief confidential session this evening.

7. Guest Speakers

a. Eric Van Eyken, President of Scarlet Key Society

Eric Van Eyken presents himself as a McGill alumni from 2005 and 2009, and is a former VP Finance for the SSMU, and states that he will be speaking about the Scarlet Key Society. For the last 100 years, the McGill Scarlet Key Society recognizes extraordinary leadership by students, at the undergraduate and graduate level. The applications are now open, and Van Eyken had the chance to speak with VP Student Life and Finance, and hopefully everyone knows about this and can help nominate people for



the award. There is an annual pinning ceremony, where nominations are made and the award is given by the Principal, at the Faculty Club, and it is a nice evening where McGill alumni are present. It recognizes between 12 to 15 outstanding students. Van Eyken is working with both VPs to introduce a \$1000 bursary, which will be given to recipients, given that executives can move forward with it. They welcome everyone to Google search the McGill Scarlet Key Society, and VP Student Life will be promoting the award through listserv.

Question Period:

Question:

VP Student Life asks if GPAs matter for the award, and if someone can nominate themselves.

Answer:

Van Eyken responds that the GPA does not matter, as long as the student is in good standing and isn't failing. The Society understands leadership, and being a leader may have an impact on grades. But, being a leader also involves taking care of oneself and ensuring that courses are passed. As for the second question, he confirms that an individual can nominate themselves, but they generally require two reference letters, ideally by peers. Ideally, all those with SSMU who know leaders can be references. It is important that gender and ethnic diversity is highlighted, as it was not done in the past, so Eric encourages all to apply for the award. Van Eyken continues that a lot of awards go to students in athletics, because it requires leadership and teamwork. Before the pandemic, they would have a reunion during homecoming, and it is a great opportunity to meet former McGill student leaders, and hear about their struggles, for example about French or gender at McGill, reforming governance, or assisting the community.

Question:

Councillor Holton asks when the nominations are due for the award.

Answer:

Van Eyken states that the date is in Mid-February, and the awards are given in late March or early April.

Van Eyken thanks the SSMU for their time and is looking forward to receiving the applications.

8. Announcements:

- a. Announcement concerning 5 year plan consultations



VP Internal Affairs states that the Students' Society At McGill for Maintaining Operations and Strategic Advancement (SSAMMOSA) Committee has met, and they have been doing work over the past month, working on the Five Year Plan. Intense consultations have been done with permanent staff, but she would love to get Councillors' input on the Five Year Plan. This plan has the most student input, and VP Internal would love for this to continue. She states that there are a few councillors in the meeting that are part of SSAMMOSA, who take on different aspects of the plan. If anyone has anything they want to add to the plan, whether it is operational, in clubs and services or advocacy. If anyone wants any information, VP Internal Affairs asks them to reach out to her by email. The plan will be presented in April 2022 for final approval.

b. Announcement AUS Town Hall on Return to Classes

Councillor Coussa states that the Arts Undergraduate Society (AUS) will be holding a Town Hall the next day to discuss the return to in person planned for January 24, 2022. Many students have expressed concerns about the return, and many others want to return in-person. The Town Hall will serve as a place where students can express their concerns to the AUS representatives, and the Dean of Arts will make an appearance. Councillor Coussa invites all other faculties to have an assembly for students to voice their concerns, because those who are immuno-compromised are feeling helpless, and are not being helped by the administration. They note that the Faculty of Law has met, and the Faculty of Social Work has gone on strike. They ask that councillors contact them by FaceBook or email if they need help planning a Town Hall for their faculty.

c. Announcement on behalf of Governance Manager

VP Internal Affairs states that the Governance Manager wanted to remind everyone of a few dates and events coming up that are very important. The referendum period has begun, so groups need to send their questions to elections@ssmu.ca or deo@ssmu.ca, or VP Finance, before February 1, 2022. If anyone has any questions, they can contact the Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, who will help with motions, at pac@ssmu.ca. The executive elections begin on February 1, 2022. If anyone wishes to nominate themselves, kits are available at elections.ssmu.ca and the deadline to nominate yourself is February 21, 2022. The SSMU General Assembly is February 21, 2022, and she invites everyone to invite their constituents to the meeting, as there are a few motions being presented for approval. VP Internal Affairs states that she can send an email with all the information in the announcement.

VP Finance makes an announcement. He apologizes to Councillors Coussa and Javed for the remarks he made at the November 25, 2021 meeting. During the Council meeting, he made unprofessional remarks targeting individual councillors. As such, he violated standing rules and the general decorum required when engaging in debate, and contributed to an unsafe environment for individuals wishing to present motions. Doing so was wrong, and even though he did not mean to, he caused distress. He recognizes that his comments were directed to People of Colour, and he should have been more cognizant of his words. As an Executive, he participates in the Legislative Council with a position of power, and his comments were magnified. He will ensure this behaviour does not happen again.



There are no further announcements.

9. Question Period

The Speaker reminds all that the questions for the question period have been pre-submitted, but Councillors will have the chance to discuss questions. The Steering Committee has decided to begin writing the questions in advance for accessibility measures, and they will be on the document, so it will be clear to all which questions will be asked.

Question from Constituents:

“What advocacy is SSMU doing for the safe return to campus?”

Answer:

VP University Affairs states that she did not see this question ahead of time, but encourages everyone to stay posted and keep a watch on SSMU social media. On Monday, they announced that they are going to be providing respirator-style masks on a pay-what-you-can basis to vulnerable students, and will hopefully be announcing the details in the coming days. She encourages all to stay engaged at McGill Senate, the student Student Caucus who asked questions recently to McGill’s Administration. VP University Affairs is available by email for concerns about accessibility measures. She has reached out to professors to encourage them to provide accommodations. Lastly, they are always open to suggestions to aid the student population.

Question:

“Are there going to be rapid tests on campus like in previous semesters or other facilities that the school is planning to offer to students such as the KN95 masks?”

Answer:

VP University Affairs states that McGill University has announced that they will not be providing rapid tests to asymptomatic individuals, which is in line with the provincial guidelines. They are allocating their tests to symptomatic individuals who work or live in residences. She is hoping that the University will bring back asymptomatic testing as soon as the province suggests they can, and that they expand eligibility, because while it is good that students living in residence can access rapid tests, all students are back on campus. She encourages people to access tests through the Clicsanté website.

Question:



“Are students being consulted for making the best decision for a safe campus return? If yes, how and how many?”

Answer:

VP University Affairs states that, as with many issues that SSMU advocates for, it is up to the Executive Committee, Legislative Council and Board of Directors to identify the issue and decide how to move forward. In this case, she felt that advocating for students and other immuno-compromised community members needed to be a priority, because there are many students whose needs are not being acknowledged nor met by the University. She believes that this is in line with the positions SSMU takes for advocating for other marginalised groups. She directs anyone who has concerns about representation to reach out to them, and to continue to participate in student government.

Question:

“Executives initially said the President’s absence was a political issue that staff weren’t involved with, but they are now characterising it as an HR issue. What prompted this change in characterisation?”

Answer:

VP Finance answers that the President’s absence is a HR issue, because any member of staff is characterised as a member of the human resources of the Society, as such, anything that happens with staff is an HR issue. He does not recall the Executives ever describing the President’s absence as a political issue, and staff are involved because their jobs are affected under the President’s absence. However, the staff has been managing quite well during his absence. It is an HR issue, not a Legislative Council issue.

The Speaker reminds the Council that questions in the question period are addressed to the Legislative Council, and in his experience all questions have been directed to Executives. Questions can be asked to the Society in general, as they are broad in scope. They can be to the Legislative Council or Executives.

Question:

“Why doesn’t the Society have an up-to-date copy of the Employee Manual on its website, pursuant to article 13.2 of the HR Policy?”

With no answer, the Speaker moves to the next question.



Question:

“What is the total budget of legal fees, and how much of it has been spent?”

Answer:

VP Finance responds that the total budget should be available on the SSMU’s website, but this budget for the 2022 financial year, which ends on May 31, 2022, is \$188,903.05. To be clear, it doesn’t only encompass legal fees, because legal fees are under the professional fees umbrella, so only a portion of the budget is used for legal fees. VP Finance is not sure how much of the budget has been spent on legal fees. At this time, he cannot access his accounting software, but estimates that they are on-par for spending less than what was budgeted, so around \$90,000, but up to \$100,000. For context, in the previous year, the SSMU spent \$250,000 on professional fees. They often spend a lot on professional fees, which is the reality of being involved with legal and staff implications throughout the year, and situations where groups choose to pursue the Society on legal terms.

Question:

Councillor Saad states that, on December 31, 2021, the SSMU President posted on his Facebook that he had graduated from McGill. He asks why he has not been removed from office, and if there have been developments on the situation.

Answer:

VP Internal Affairs responds that the President must be elected when they are a full-time student, they can graduate and still finish their term.

Question:

Councillor Zhang asks the Executives if they believe that SSMU should be held accountable for the student body above all other parties, including the Board of Directors, and whether or not they believe that this is currently the situation.

Answer:

VP Finance answers that the student body is the ultimate membership of the Society, and they behave in the interests of their shareholders. However, within that, the Board of Directors must act in their duty towards the company and membership of the Society, which requires them to sometimes make decisions that may be opposed or misunderstood by the student body, because they have specific access to information given their roles as Directors. SSMU Directors are beholden by law to act in the interests of the student body, and he believes that they have acted within their duty to the membership.



Question:

Councillor Tiniacos states that previously in this meeting, VP University Affairs stated that consultations are made within the Executive Committee or go to the Legislative Council or the Board of Directors. He is concerned about the absence of the President, as it has been discussed in every meeting, yet the Executives have not answered their questions. They ask if the Executives listen to what Councillors have to say.

Answer:

VP Finance states that they listen to their members. Fundamentally, the Board has a duty to act in ways that benefit the corporation, and that is what SSMU is motivated by, to ensure that the membership is being served properly, based on information. He repeats that the Legislative Council is not involved in Human Resource matters. As individuals, they can ask questions, but Executives are within their right to answer or not answer these questions, as they cannot reveal some information publicly. They have been clear on that, and that is not them ignoring the membership but doing their jobs. He is certain that in some situations, revealing confidential information could open the SSMU up to lawsuits, which is why the SSMU spends as much money as they do on professional fees. In general with HR issues, confidentiality needs to be maintained at all costs, and these issues need to be recognised by the Legislative Council. At the end of the day, he recognises that Councillors are doing their jobs in holding SSMU accountable, and they are doing their jobs as Executives by not answering their questions, as is their duty.

Question:

Councillor Saad states that in SSMU's statement, they said that there had been an absence of leadership in the administration for the resumption of in-person classes. He asks how SSMU can use such language concerning leadership when they do not have a President, and have not had one since the beginning of the term.

Answer:

VP University Affairs responds that she does not believe that this was Councillor Saad's intention, but she has been filling in for the President on all of the administrative pandemic issues since his leave began, and when they say they were not consulted in meaningful ways, they mean that in meetings with administration, they were not given the chance to disagree or advocate for the student body. She does not believe that the President's absence is related to this matter.

There are no further questions.

10. Recess, Consent Items



The Speaker reminds everyone that a consent item is within voting directions. It is a simple vote on every motion that is presented in the meeting. If the motion is unanimously approved, there will not be a question nor debate period. If there is one vote to debate the motion, it will be debated. The Speaker reminds everyone to use their Councillor email addresses when answering polls, as it makes it easier for the Speaker to tally the votes.

11. Discussion:

a. Generative Discussion on the moratorium on ancillary fees

The Speaker states that the time limit of 20 minutes will be quite strict, to ensure that the discussion does not turn into debate, and they will begin with a 1-minute speaking time for those who wish to speak.

Councillor Djoussou states that the moratorium has been greatly detrimental for the Athletic and Recreation Council, which is mostly constituted by students. As such, they have seen, especially during the pandemic, that physical health is part of mental health, and he would like to ask the Council how they are going to address this situation, and how they will help those who have been greatly impacted by the moratorium.

VP Finance notes that there are actually two (2) moratoriums; one passed in 2017 and is no longer in effect as of February 22, 2022. That was a moratorium that would require the school to give SSMU an updated budget before they would accept an increase in ancillary fees. If anyone wants to renew that policy, it can be done. There is another moratorium passed in 2020 that will last until 2024, that covers the moratorium of fees until McGill divests from specific investments, which is focused on oil and gas. He does not know if demilitarisation or other types of divestments were included in that motion.

VP University Affairs adds that the second moratorium mentioned is in place until 2024, or until McGill divests from specified investments, which include oil, gas and other fossil fuels. She believes that some discussions have been centred around the first moratorium, but the second one is still in effect.

VP Finance states that on one hand, it makes sense to use these measures to pressure McGill University, because ancillary fees are a great way for the school to make money. It is important to recognize that it is a great tool that can be used to pressure the administration. However, he thinks it is important to recognize that the punishment goes not only to the McGill Administration, but also to members of the Athletics department and athletes. VP Finance is not certain where he stands on the matter, but thinks it is important to try to come up with alternatives that would help the athletics department while continuing to pressure the administration.

Councillor Djoussou highlights that it is not only Varsity athletes who use the facilities, but offer different activities to students, such as the Fitness Centre and classes, squash courts, and basketball courts. It is not just Varsity athletes who are penalised by the moratorium, but other students who



want to utilise the facilities for fun, and to de-stress. The fact that the moratorium is preventing them from offering certain activities is a factor of concern for Athletics and Varsity as well as Recreation.

Member of the Gallery, Chloée Parsons, addresses something said by VP Finance about the fact that there is an athletics fee while classes are online. Athletics and Recreation continues to offer services while the building is closed, for example trivia nights, e-sports. It is an outlet for students to get involved. They also offer equipment rentals to members of the community. There are many services outside of Varsity athletics, and what is happening with the moratorium is that it is preventing Athletics and Recreation from collecting fees that go towards maintaining the facilities, and those funds are taken away from students. What they are seeing is that long-term benefits to students are being taken away because the funds need to be allocated to the building.

Question:

Councillor Infeld asks what Councillor Djoussou sees as long-term effects on the student body of the moratorium.

Answer:

Councillor Djoussou answers that there are current renovations that need to be done, including ventilation. As of right now, the money that would be used for services is being used for renovations, and their biggest fear is that services will crumble due to the lack of funding.

Member of the Gallery, Chloée Parsons, answers that some of the imminent repairs include the air conditioning in the Fieldhouse and gym, which affects all students, because students use those facilities for exams. Re-tiling the pool will cause a leak, which will cause the service to become unavailable until it is fixed. It could also cause an increase in the price of the services for students, such as accessing the gym, rentals, intramurals and the sports medicine clinic. All those services would be inflated if students wanted to continue accessing them, or it would mean a diminishment in services. She continues that she understands that currently the moratoriums are preventing them from putting forth a motion to vote on bringing back the facility improvement fee for Athletics and Recreation. It is important to point out that Athletics and Recreation is not funded by the University; rather, they receive an allocation from the University that the government gives them. They are not in a position to take a stand regarding divestment, it is a public relations nightmare and it is outside of the scope of Athletics and Recreation. Students are losing out on services because Athletics and Recreation has their hands tied at this point.

Question:

VP Finance asks if the money paid by the student body for the improvement of facilities goes to McGill. He understands that the goal of the moratorium is to take away a route of revenue to



put pressure on the McGill Administration, and force them to consider and implement steps towards divestment. That comes with the assumption that the moratorium is working. He asks if that is an accurate assumption, and if not, who is getting the money.

Answer:

Member of the Gallery, Chloée Parsons, answers that Athletics and Recreation presents a balanced budget, funds coming in are spent and any funds accrued are for specific things, which must be accrued so that improvements can be made. The money is made by Athletics and Recreation, and stays within the Committee. Money received is put towards services for students, and no money goes to the University.

Question:

Councillor Holton asks why the Athletic Department cannot take a stand on divestment.

Answer:

Member of the Gallery, Chloée Parsons answers that they brought that information to Athletics, who then said that they cannot take a position on divestment. She thinks it has something to do with Public Relations, and the fact that a statement would not benefit Athletics and Recreation since the University is above them financially. It could do more harm than good in terms of relations with the University.

Councillor Tiniacos states that they were present during those meetings, when they represented MacDonald Campus. They checked on the website, and the purpose of the motion was to put pressure on the University, and at that point the VP Finance stated that that money is always offered by McGill to put into Athletics, but once they heard that SSMU would not move forward with the moratorium, they removed it as a consequence. McGill University did have the money, but they kept removing it because SSMU will not pay its share due to the moratorium.

Councillor Djoussou adds that they think it is an important matter, but thinks it is possible to pressure administration without making the students suffer. He would like to ensure that they can work with anyone to ensure that the money used is also used in a green way.

Member of the Gallery, Chloée Parsons adds that Athletics is trying to become more sustainable, so without divestment there is a possibility to make divestment-adjacent decisions. For example, electric zambonis were purchased for the arena. Parsons notes that there is a new director of Athletics and Recreation who is looking to change things up, and care about what students have to say. This is an important issue, and the director is ready to make changes. They have had more meetings this year than ever, thanks to this director. Parsons responds to Councillor Tiniacos' question and is not certain about how the fee works, but when they conceived the fund in the 1980s, the University agreed that if students contributed, they would match it, and they have continued to do so. However, without the



money coming from students, the University not only does not contribute but takes whatever money they would have allocated to facility improvements for Athletics and Recreation elsewhere. So, the University has gained funds by not giving money to Athletics and Recreation.

VP Finance states that students are still contributing money, but the University is now refusing to match those contributions. He asks where the decision to match funds came from, and if it was part of an agreement with McGill of which they are now in violation of.

Chloée Parsons states that there are two funds; the ones that students continue to pay (Athletics Fees) and the Facility Improvement fee, which goes into the Facility Improvement Fund. The University does not match the Athletics Fees, only the Facility Improvement Fund. The money that would have been collected for the Improvement Fund is not being collected, so Athletics and Recreation needs to reallocate money to cover improvements.

12. New Business:

Councillor Javed proposes an amendment to point 12b, to change the name from *Motion Regarding the Creation of an Anti-Racism Master Plan within the SSMU 2022-01-20* to *Motion Regarding the Creation of an Anti-Surveillance Master Plan within the SSMU 2022-01-20*, seconded by Councillor Coussa.

There are 22 votes in favour of this amendment, and no votes against, and the name of the motion is amended.

- a. Motion Regarding Progress Updates on SSMU Divestment and Demilitarisation Campaign Mandate 2022-01-20 – **APPROVED**

Councillor Coussa presents this motion and states that it would ensure that SSMU Executives are actively advocating for divestment and demilitarisation, in accordance with the mandates outlined in the Climate Justice Policy, the Policy on Harmful Military Technology, and the Divest for Human Rights (DHR) Policy, at the levels of student body and University, as well as at the McGill Senate and the Board of Governors. The motion mandates VP External and University Affairs to prepare reports on their outreach and advocacy conducted in accordance with the mandates. These reports are expected to be presented during the presentation section of the March 24, 2022 section of the Legislative Council meeting. It also mandates the VP Finance to present a report of the Society's own investments with companies linked with fossil fuel extraction, such as RBC, and companies involved in any activities described in the Climate Justice Policy, the Policy on Harmful Military Technology, and the DHR Policy. The report would describe SSMU's relationship with corporations and explain how SSMU is working towards divestment.

The Speaker entertains a five-minute Question Period.



Question:

Councillor Djoussou asks if the development steps will be taken into account in terms of the moratorium.

Answer:

Councillor Coussa answers that it does not involve the topic of the general discussion, but they would be happy to discuss that with Councillor Djoussou and come up with ideas to address their problems. It mentions how SSMU is pressuring McGill to divest, which is what the policy mandates them to do.

With no further questions, the Speaker moves to a Debate Period.

VP Finance states that this is an excellent motion that brings up a lot of time. The SSMU cannot legally invest in categories in the presentation, which hurts their revenues for a good cause. A presentation to RBC could be done, as they have an ongoing banking relationship with them. It is important to be honest to the student body about who the SSMU is dealing with.

VP University Affairs thanks Councillor Coussa for her hard work on this, and states that a lot of students want accountability from their elected representatives, but they do not necessarily know what to look for, so presenting it in such a motion is a good initiative to ensure accountability. She encourages everyone to vote for this motion.

With no further debate, the Speaker exhausts debate period and moves to voting period.

The Speaker states that the voting form for this motion on the Councillor Voting Directions, marked #1, and the link will be sent.

There are 21 votes in favour and 4 abstentions, and the motion passes.

The Speaker states that most motions have had an average of 26 votes for a Council of 33 people, and encourages everyone to vote, as it is urgent.

- b. Motion Regarding the Creation of an Anti-Surveillance Master Plan within the SSMU
2022-01-20 – **APPROVED**

Councillor Coussa states that she is presenting a motion in response to the concerns of students and campus groups regarding racist surveillance. Students have long been active in debate and activism, and recent online harassment has been putting students in danger and impeding on their freedom of



speech. Students of Colour are particularly vulnerable to become victims of racial surveillance. Organisations are posting individuals' profiles on their website in an attempt to silence opinions. Posting this information silences people, creates harm and compromises their safety, and the information posted on the website serves as a mechanism for people to respond with malicious intent and has been used for a blacklist for companies not to hire certain people. McGill students and staff of Palestinian, Jewish and Arab descent have been the victims of blacklisting and intimidation tactics in recent years to due their profiles on activism. These practises oppress marginalised groups and prevent debate on campus. Students involved in Tibetan advocacy and Hong-Kong related activism have been subject to harassment and threats. Intimidation impacts students' health and discourages them from being advocates. Some students have reported that it has stopped them from applying for leadership positions on campus, as such, these examples highlight how students have been victims of racist surveillance at McGill University.

Councillor Javed states that since the implementation of Bill 21 in Quebec, a law that discriminates against public sector employees who wear religious symbols, Muslim teachers and students have been victims of discrimination, and have reported surveillance and intimidation when avocating for change, such as for the reversal of Bill 21. Per the Equity Policy, the SSMU is mandated to protect racialised students. As such, the motion seeks to establish a clear channel of support for students.

Councillor Coussa motions to extend the speaking time by 45 seconds.

With no opposition to extending the speaking time, the Speaker gives Councillors Coussa and Javed 45 additional seconds.

Councillor Javed continues that the Plan will aim to combat and end racist surveillance at McGill University, as such, it commits SSMU to demand that McGill condemns organisations that blacklist, and mandates SSMU to come up with a Master Plan to combat racist surveillance.

Councillor Coussa reminds everyone to debate political stances, that is not the goal of the motion. The goal is to protect students so that they feel safe on campus. They feel that it is the SSMU and McGill University's responsibility to protect students and ensure that they feel safe on campus. As they enter debate and question period, she reminds everyone to be mindful of their tone.

The Speaker entertains a five-minute Question Period.

Question:

VP External Affairs thanks Councillors Coussa and Javed for their work on this motion. He asks how a master plan can be implemented and worked with on a broader level than McGill University, and how the master plan can be applied with other student unions.

Answer:



Councillor Coussa responds that the master plan will give resources to McGill students and students who are victims of racial surveillance. She believes their primary responsibility is toward the McGill community, since they have been elected by McGill students, but it is good to help everyone.

Councillor Javed adds that this motion would create a body of people who would work on the master plan, and they can talk to different campus unions to work in collaboration with them.

Question:

Councillor Wan asks Councillors Coussa and Javed that, since the motion targets the Executive Committee, if it would make sense for the Executive Committee to draft the master plan, and to allow the Executive Committee to choose the Commissioner and Committee for this motion.

Answer:

Councillor Coussa answers that they have drafted the motion with the VP Internal Affairs and with the knowledge of the Executive Committee, which means that the motion will be worked on by the VP Internal Affairs with their collaboration and that of the Commissioner.

Question:

Councillor Wan asks if that means that the VP Internal and the Executive Committee have agreed on the necessary members for such a committee.

Answer:

Councillor Coussa confirms in the affirmative.

Question:

Member of the Gallery, Abuali, asks on what basis they would be able to advance this motion if the McGill Administration does not recognize the racial discrimination taking place at this time.

Answer:

Councillor Coussa responds that part of the motion mandate for VP University Affairs to actively mandate for the recognition of this racial discrimination to the administration. The SSMU is independent from McGill, so the SSMU operates separately; but they want McGill University to protect their students as well.

Councillor Wan motions to extend the question period by 30 seconds.



With no opposition to the extension, the Speaker extends the question period by 30 seconds.

Question:

Councillor Wan noticed in the preamble of the motion that groups include students for Hong Kong Right Side, and wonders if student groups involved in Hong Kong, Tibetan and Uighur rights were consulted in this motion.

Answer:

Councillor Coussa responds that they have consulted the Divest for Human Rights group, and a lot of clubs have not been active this semester, but members of these clubs have been consulted on these matters.

Councillor Javed adds that a lot of coalitions have overlapping membership with various other human rights clubs, so even if they are not running this year, the students that have been involved in the clubs are now involved in the coalitions. She believes that enough consultation has been done.

Councillor Coussa adds that these groups are part of DHR.

The Speaker exhausts the Question Period and enters the Debate Period.

VP University Affairs thanks Councillors Coussa and Javed for the thoughtful motion; spaces like SSMU have historically marginalised certain groups, so she encourages the support of the motion, as it is an important step in changing the path of student government and SSMU.

Member of the Gallery, Abuali, asks if a new motion will need to be drafted and presented at a General Assembly about accepting the specific forms of racial discrimination as they are.

VP External asks the Speaker to ask the Member of the Gallery Abuali to rephrase the question.

Question:

Member of the Gallery Abuali clarifies that they were talking about the basis upon which Councillor Coussa can advance this motion if racism is not acknowledged in the Palestinian Student Group's EDI policy. They inquire if they need to craft an additional motion to present it to the General Assembly.

Answer:

Councillor Javed responds that in order to change the University's Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), they need to go into a General Assembly or pass a motion in the GA. Since the motion mandates the VPs University Affairs and External to advocate to McGill University to condemn organisation and the surveillance on student groups, she does not believe there is a need for another motion to be passed



as the motion does that itself. However, if the Member of the Gallery Abuali wishes to do so, they can email Councillors Coussa or Javed.

Councillor Coussa reiterates that the motion does a good job of mandating the VPs University Affairs and External Affairs to work towards McGill University's recognition of discrimination against Palestinian and Arab students. If Member of the Gallery Abuali does not feel the same, they can speak to Councillors Coussa and Javed about it. It is also important to remember that SSMU and McGill are separate entities and SSMU works for students at the McGill level. So, the SSMU and McGill University do not share the same values.

Member of the Gallery Abuali thanks Councillors Coussa and Javed for their answers.

VP External Affairs notes that it will be part of the VPs University Affairs, External and Internal Affairs' mandates in future years to advocate for the recognition of racial discrimination to the University, but there are already systems in place through which Executives can advocate to McGill Administration, such as the McGill Senate. He speaks for VP University Affairs and himself when he says that he looks forward to advocating for this issue.

Member of the Gallery, [name inaudible], states that, as a McGill constituent, this motion is important, because surveillance and doxxing pose fundamental threats to democracy for student bodies like SSMU, because it threatens accessibility to SSMU for certain students, and it threatens students' safety. As a constituent, they hope that members see that this is an important motion for the democracy of the SSMU. Moreover, it is one that allows for the greater realisation of EDI principles that McGill administration and SSMU claim to support. They hope that in recognition of that claim, that the motion will pass.

The Speaker thanks Members of the Gallery for their important contribution to the Legislative Council meetings.

The Political Campaign Coordinator, Andreas, thanks Councillors Coussa and Javed for bringing up this motion and for including Campaign Coordinators, who work with a lot of groups who are affected by doxxing and surveillance on a regular basis. It is important for the SSMU to show that they support these students.

Member of the Gallery, Abuali, reiterates that doxxing is extremely harmful and it is not something that is random, it hinders future employment opportunities, as they are charged with false claims. There have been instances where the information of McGill students, who have been doxxed, has been used for inappropriate and illegal services. It is not something to be taken lightly.

Councillor Coussa motions to call the question, seconded by VP University Affairs.



With no opposition, the question is called and the Speaker entertains a voting period. The Speaker sends the link to the voting form.

There are 24 votes in favour, and 2 abstentions, the motion is approved.

Councillor Wan motions for a ten-minute recess, seconded by Councillor Javed.

[The Legislative Council meeting resumes at 20:23.]

c. Motion Regarding the Vice-President (Sustainability and Operations) 2022-01-20 –
APPROVED

VP Internal Affairs presents the motion and notes that this is a motion that has been presented to the Legislative Council for three (3) years in a row. For a few years, there was no need for a VP Sustainability and Operations. As she was doing consultations for this motion, she spoke with the Operations team, Ancillary Services Manager and the Building Director, who believe that VP Sustainability and Operations is not needed anymore, as there has been a lot of work in the constitutional reformations that should pass next fall to completely remove the VP Sustainability and Operations from the SSMU Constitution. This motion prolongs the decision made last January that stated that the VP Operations is not needed, that the VP Sustainability and Operations will be removed from the Constitution once the reformations are done in the future. The VP Sustainability and Operations' tasks will be redistributed among the other Executives.

Question Period:

Question:

Councillor Infeld asks, should the motion not be approved and VP Operations is reinstated, what the financial impact would be, as they imagine they would be paid the typical SSMU Executive salary. They ask if the money would be taken from other funds, and if anything else would be affected because of the new need for money.

Answer:

VP Internal Affairs responds that she is not certain where the money has been distributed, but the reinstatement of VP Sustainability and Operations would involve paying another salary, which is another reason why they have deliberated on the need for a VP Sustainability and Operations. All the Executives believe the job can be handled by six (6) Executives, and adding a seventh executive would take money from other services offered by the SSMU.

VP Finance adds that this [additional salary] would not affect much because they would move things around to make it work. Money would be diverted from other things in the budget. They



would be \$30,000 underspent on any given category. In a theoretical sense, the money would be diverted, but in a literal sense, the job will not come back as it is redundant.

With no further questions, the Question Period is elapsed and the Speaker entertains a Debate Period.

With no points for debate, the Speaker moves to the voting period.

The Speaker closes the voting period. There are 24 votes in favour, two (2) votes against and one (1) abstention. The motion is approved .

- d. Motion Regarding Amendments to the Steering Committee Terms of Reference
2022-01-20 – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

This motion was unanimously approved during Consent Items and was not debated during the meeting.

- e. Motion Regarding Amendments to the Standing Rules for the 2021-2022 Legislative Council 2022-01-20 – **APPROVED**

VP Internal Affairs presents the motion and states that it clarifies some issues that the Steering Committee has noticed when it comes to virtual debate. All sections that are highlighted in the document are new proposed additions, and everything stricken will be removed from the Rules. New additions such as the “Raise Hand” function on Zoom have been added, and when it comes to motion-writing, the mover and the seconder cannot both be from the Steering Committee, to ensure diversity, unless it pertains to internal working of the Legislative Council. VP Internal Affairs notes that this Motion is common, as changes to the Standing Rules need to be made to ensure smooth sailing of the Legislative Council.

The Speaker entertains a question period.

Question:

Councillor Djoussou asks about point 1.20, if motions that are submitted late are automatically disapproved.

Answer:

VP Internal Affairs responds that she believes it is up to the Steering Committee’s discretion to decide how to proceed when there are late motions. This point makes the procedure more formal and sets a precedent for what can and cannot be accepted, and ensures that there are no late motions.



The Speaker points out that this clause was re-written to make it clearer.

Councillor Coussa states that they have been using this rule in the Steering Committee despite this change.

With no further questions, the Speaker exhausts the Question Period and entertains a Debate Period.

The Speaker exhausts the Debate Period and moves to the voting period.

There are 23 votes in favour and 2 abstentions. The motion is approved.

13. Reports by Committees:

a. Executive Committee

VP Internal Affairs presents the Executive Committee's report, which includes a lot of motions. Those motions included hiring an Internal Affairs Coordinator, updating the job description of the Policy and Advocacy Coordinator. Other motions included hiring a Website Project Coordinator, an interim HR Director and Consultant, and a motion to approve the McGill Coalition Against Bill 21 statement. The Executives have hired a Community Engagement Commissioner and extended the contracts of MSERT staff.

b. Accountability Committee – **POSTPONED**

The Accountability Committee's report is postponed.

c. Gender and Sexuality Advocacy Committee

The Gender and Sexuality Advocacy Committee's report was not received by the Parliamentarian.

14. Reports by Councillors:

a. Councillor Khamis (Science)

Councillor Khamis states that the Science Undergraduate Society (SUS) General Assembly is set for February 16, 2022 and they have received their committee positions. They are continuing to plan for their OSE poster showcase, and the SUS gala, which was supposed to be held in early February, had to be postponed due to the pandemic. Virtual Academia Week is being held next week, and they are meeting with departmental VP Academics throughout the month. There have been updates on the



SUS constitution and bylaws, and on the website, including departmental pages, Legislative Council and Senate pages and SUS committee information. They have resumed the PR and Constitution Affairs Committees. Science Games have been cancelled, and registrants have been refunded for all except merchandise, which will be distributed. The Committee is exploring alternative activities to hold during the semester. The Grad Ball committee is hiring, and the Science Internal Committee had to cancel their ski trip, but they are planning for social media engagement activities, beginning the next week. The Sustainability Committee is recruiting and is planning Charity Week. Social Sustainability is looking for new members. Councillor Khamis recommends that all who have questions reach out by email or FaceBook.

There are no questions on the report.

b. Councillor Javed (Arts)

Councillor Javed states that she is trying to make her reports more fun by making it a PowerPoint. She does not have any office hours this semester, but she is available by email communication. She presents the motions; they had their first Arts Undergraduate Society (AUS) Legislative Council meeting on January 12, 2022. There have been AUS bylaw changes. They hired a new senator, who is already involved with the caucus. Their first-year trip to Carnaval was cancelled, and they have started to launch the AUS store, and they have another order of rugby shirts that arrived that day. The AUS VP Academics are working on note taking for courses, which will be presented soon. The VP Academics wants to start a working relationship with AUS Alumni. The AUS VP Social is recruiting for the Grad Ball, and the VP Communications has decided to do Instagram takeovers for all the executives. They are also getting N95 masks, and are having a Town Hall the next day regarding online, in-person and hybrid learning.

Councillor Javed sits on the SSMU Board of Directors. Further, the SSMU Human Resource Committee met last semester, and the Health and Dental Review Committee met that week. She sits on the Steering Committee, and the Equity Committee, who has not met yet this semester. She is working with the McGill Coalition Against Bills 2 and 21; for the Coalition Against Bill 2, they will be sending listservs for students to use, and for Bill 21 they have released a statement in support for the teacher that was let go due to her religious symbol and a panel. Councillor Javed and Councillor Coussa are working with the SSMU VP Student Life to introduce spaces on campus such as multi-faith spaces, advocacy spaces and quiet spaces. They are also working on a note-taking initiative with VP University Affairs. She sits on the AUS's Executive Committee, Curriculum Committee, and Legislative Council. The AUS Executives have been meeting with the Dean of Student Affairs to discuss the process of dealing with Sexual Violence Cases, and Councillor Javed is starting a South Asian Student Association. She stands for questions.

Question:



Councillor Qazi asks where the AUS got their rugby shirts.

Answer:

Councillor Javed believes they were from an online vendor.

Councillor Coussa states that she can send Councillor Qazi the information to purchase rugby shirts.

With no other questions, the Speaker encourages all Councillors to make their reports interesting, because it allows the others to understand the information better.

c. Councillor Eiley (Nursing) – **POSTPONED TO END OF SEMESTER**

Councillor Eiley's report has been postponed to the end of the semester.

d. Councillor Djoussou (Athletics)

Councillor Djoussou states that they had the first Varsity Council meeting of the year on January 12, 2022, where they shared concerns on the current pandemic situation and how to help athletes, and issued a statement concerning the frustration felt by the Athletic Committee concerning the lack of guidelines. The full statement is on their Instagram page. As of December 21, 2021, all recreational and varsity activities are cancelled until January 4, 2022. The cancellation was renewed on January 4 until January 17, when teams were allowed to return to practice in small groups. Competition will be allowed to resume 14 days after teams receive permission to practice at full capacity. Some recreational activities are allowed, such as lap swimming, singles tennis and badminton, individual basketball workouts, jogging and recreational skating. On the Macdonald campus, singles badminton, individual basketball workout and recreational skating are now allowed. For Internal Affairs, they were present at Activities Night on January 17 and 18, where they showcased their services. They will have their first MARAB meeting of the year on February 1, 2022, and the first SAC meeting of the year was the previous day. Councillor Djoussou highlights the achievements of certain football and hockey athletes. The McGill football and basketball teams participated in a gift-wrapping session for the Montreal Community Cares foundation.

There are no questions on the report.

e. Councillor Liao (Education)

Councillor Liao wishes everyone a good return to campus. He states that the Education Undergraduate Society (EdUS) has approved a second Equity Commissioner and initiated the nomination period for the next executive council. They are finalising the organisation of Speak on Campus that will occur on February 12, 2022. On the President's side, they are writing a statement pertaining to the firing of a



professor at Bishop's University. For Academics, they will have a PedTalk about motivation presented by a beloved professor on January 26. VP Communications relaunched the EdUS website. The EdUS VP Externals are working on the Virtual Career Fair, and will host a spikeball/sport event to replace the Fun Run event that was cancelled last semester. VP Finance's 2021 audit will soon be worked on. VP Internal is planning a trivia night with SAPEK in February before Field Experiences, and they are currently creating the Graduation Ball Committee. VP Student Wellness plans to create care packages this semester, as they were very popular. Councillor Liao is available for questions by email, FaceBook and during office hours.

There are no questions on the report.

f. Councillor Desrochers (Law)

Le conseiller Desrochers annonce que l'Association Étudiante de Droit (AÉD) a repris les Mardis Moka en présentiel, et ils essayent de les tenir à distance. L'AÉD a aussi plusieurs activités avec des cabinets d'avocats. Ils continuent avec des "coffee houses," qui permettent aux étudiants de se rassembler. Il y a eu un rassemblement hier sur les modalités de reprise de cours, ils savent qu'il y a beaucoup de démarches pour obtenir un mode 'hybride' ce semestre. Beaucoup de professeurs ont été contactés par la faculté, et demain, le doyen planifie tenir une séance d'information et d'écoute pour les étudiant.e.s à cet égard. Il y aura une Assemblée Générale spéciale concernant une grève potentielle, si les mesures ne sont pas suffisantes pour accommoder les étudiants. Il y a des professeurs et étudiant.e.s qui sont concernés par le retour en classe avec un nombre de cas élevés, et ils essayent d'accommoder les étudiants en offrant des masques N95, pour assurer une plus grande sécurité.

Il n'y a pas de questions sur le rapport.

g. Councillor Yu (Dentistry)

Councillor Yu states that there is not much going on, they had a meeting on January 17, 2022, and it was uneventful. The Funding Committee had a lot of rollover money. The Health and Dental Committee had their first meeting on January 18, 2022, and they spoke about student insurance. The CAPS advisory group meeting dates conflict with Councillor Yu's schedule, and they are still discussing potential adjustments to the dates. The CAG group has no news.

h. Councillor Beaulieu-Shearer (Outaouais)

Councillor Beaulieu-Shearer states that MedGames have been moved to the spring. Past events include Frosh, split between Montreal and Gatineau; general council meetings for the MSS, one in September discussing MSS funding for the class of 2024, and MD and PhD representation, social events and the Sustainable Sustainability Committee, and another meeting in november discussing MD and PhD representation and the structure of IFMSA. They had a general assembly on November 30, where two main motions included fee reductions for Campus Outaouais students and MD and PhD



representation. Med 1 had their post-exam events, and Med 2 had their white coat ceremony and their end of FMD party. VP Finance has been contacting banks and other organisations to give lunch conferences and discussing with members of the faculty for reducing fees that are not applicable to Campus Outaouais students. VP Student Life has been trying to develop more student spaces on campus, and VP External has been contacting the University of Ottawa in order to coordinate future events.

There are no questions on the report.

15. Executive Reports:

a. VP Finance

VP Finance presents the report and announces that the SSMU closed their account with Scotiabank, verified the long-standing accounts and transferred the money to other accounts. VP Finance reviewed hiring and staff requirements for the 5-Year Plan, and had discussions with Divest McGill and other groups about how to simplify their internal accounting. He is continuing to set up access to clubs, and banking services contracts have been assigned to the CFC and hopefully will be done this week. The club credit cards should be on their way, but VP Finance had to submit them all again because RBC lost their contract. The audit deadline report has passed, and he has some emails from students who are looking for extensions, most of which will be extended. VP Finance further states that he has been working on the 2023 budget, and they have requested budgets from each department at SSMU. They are keeping an eye on whether a base fee increase will be necessary for the upcoming referendum, but VP Finance hopes not. The inflation rate may require a fee increase, because with inflation they would be spending \$200,000 more than in past years. They are looking to rework some budgetary methods to simplify the production of budgets for specific departments. Funding Committee meetings are going strong. The OADF investment enables the SSMU to offer around \$15,000 for Awards of Distinction, and VP Finance hopes to increase it by \$5,000 by the end of the fiscal year. He wants to modify the Internal Regulations of Finance to increase the amount of Awards of Distinction per year, as they can only give \$8,000, and they have more to give this year. They are exploring a partnership with the Scarlet Key Association for the awards. VP Finance met with the McGill Administration to discuss two referendum questions, and he discussed with them that the Nightline question was correct, but there was an issue with the MUSTBUS referendum question. The SSMU is looking into an alternative to MUSBTUS this semester. He met with the SSMU Daycare Union. Lastly, in terms of projects, he is looking to change budgetary practises and the membership fee, and is looking to bring two (2) motions concerning fee consultation to the Legislative Council in the future.

There are no questions on the report.

b. VP Student Life



VP External Affairs presents the report on behalf of VP Student Life this evening. In terms of student groups, there is an ongoing mediation between a student and a student group that will remain confidential due to the content. The Triple Play platform is now available for all student groups for free, which will allow student groups to interact with their members. The Club audit is ongoing, and Student Group Internal Regulations are still under consultation, and will be presented at the next meeting. Activities Night was a great success. VP Student Life has been replanning operations for Winter 2022, and looking at conducting and Executive Social. In terms of mental health, VP Student Life took part in the Mental Health Roundtable, and wants to put together a guide to mental health resources. The mental health team is looking to do a virtual retreat, and the student life portfolio is looking to have an action week. They have been working on a resource evaluation of SSMU for services relating to mental health and how they can better care for students. VP Student Life met with the Family Life sub-committee on December 14, 2021 to discuss the possible expansion of the SSMU daycare, and has been working with the External Affairs Policy and Mobilisation Researcher on consultations to renew the Family Care policy. In regards to projects, there is a possible partnership with the Concordia Student Union for events in February. Triple Play has been partnering with SSMU and helping through the contract for SSMondays, Activities Night and Student Group events. The SSMU Portal phases 1 and 2 will be launched this semester and two (2) employees were hired to work part-time on the project. VP External Affairs announces a possible partnership with the Scarlet Key. VP Student Life is looking for new spaces at the University Centre. The SSMU and Gerts merch arrived, and e-commerce will be launched soon. SSMU website updates should be done soon, and Mini-Courses are back and registration is open. SSMondays will include 1 SSMU event every week.

There are no questions on the report.

c. VP University Affairs

VP University Affairs states that she has been planning mask distribution, (SSMU released a statement saying they would be providing masks to students on a pay-what-you-can basis), and they are getting ready to announce more details. She has been working with Councillors Javed and Coussa on SSMU-run note-taking, and consultations suggest that it might be better to support faculty- and departmental-level note-taking programs. There were issues in the McGill Fieldhouse with exams, and an uptake in issues with OSD-administered exams. She assisted minorly in the distribution of the statement from the McGill Coalition Against Bill 21. She had meetings with the Senate, and interesting comments were made by the McGill President. They had an Arts Senator take office, and she is also the new Student Rights Researcher and Advocacy Commissioner.

There are no questions on the report.

d. VP External Affairs

VP External Affairs states that over the last month, he has been working on increasing External Affairs accessibility, because students feel detached from the portfolio. They are planning motions for the



Winter Referendum, and reviewing the McGill Anti-Black Racism Plan. They created an external representation committee, which will advocate and decide on SSMU's relationship with student unions and external groups, particularly Undergraduates of Canadian Research Intensive Universities (UCRU), a group of the ten (10) most research-intensive student unions for advocacy. VP External Affairs has been reviewing the advocacy section of the SSMU Master Plan, and he has been helping VP University Affairs with the return to campus. The UCRU Lobby Week is next week, and topics include: student financial aid, supporting student employment, improving mental health support, and supporting students with disabilities. Policies are drafted, and SSMU took a large part in the drafting and the translation of policies. The first round of training for UCRU is complete. Digital infrastructure is focused on rebranding the External Affairs portfolio with a new set of cards, a new logo, rebuilding the website and creating, updating templates for social media posting, and reviewing the internal structure of the portfolio. This will help student groups in the long-run because they will be able to have a larger and more accessible platform to advocate on their behalf. In regard to governance, a Policy and Mobilisation Researcher has been onboarded and is hard at work. In other news, long-term portfolio plans are being built, so that there is more direction for future heirs. Consultations are ongoing, to ensure it is accurate. Upcoming projects in the form of motions will include: the consultation policy, the black affairs fee levy, and the external representation committee.

There are no questions on the report.

e. VP Internal Affairs

VP Internal Affairs states that she has been working on a data collection policy that will be presented at the GRC next week. She wrote two motions that were presented today, and is working on a media and transparency plan that is in its final stages. She has been working on the 5-year plan, and on the operations and staffing side of it. She has started writing the document that suggests all the edits for the 5-year plan. SPN is back online, and they had their first meeting, where they decided to do small-scale events and their first event will be a Valentine's Day speed-dating event. Francophone Affairs had their first meeting on Monday, and they have great ideas, including the revamping of the Five Year Plan. Regarding communications, they are working on making their social media pages as interactive as possible. She had a check-in with the First Years First commissioner, and there was a First-Year Council meet and greet in December, and they are sending out a when2meet. She has done a lot of check-ins and weekly meetings.

There are no questions on the report.

16. Confidential Session: **21:21**

The Legislative Council enters into a Confidential Session at 21:21.

17. Adjournment: **21:23**



Councillor Javed motions to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councillor Claret.

The Legislative Council meeting is adjourned at 21:23.

Darshan Daryanani

Darshan Daryanani, President

APPROVED