



# SSMU LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PUBLIC MINUTES

February 17, 2022

The regular monthly Legislative Council Meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be held by teleconference, on February 17, 2022 at 18:00.

***CW: Gender violence, sexism, harassment, and anxiety. These Minutes may include content that a reader may find offensive.***

## 1. Call to Order: **18:09**

The Speaker calls the meeting to order at 18:09 on February 17, 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.

Present are: Councillors Coussa, Infeld, Javed, Holten, Djoussou, Beaulieu-Shearer, Dakdouki, Wen-Liu, Liao, Murakami, Thomas, Applegate, Desrochers, Saad, Zhang, Wan, Khodadadi, Eiley, D'Amore, Khamis, Qazi, Tiniacos, Claret, as well as SSMU President, VP University Affairs, VP Student Life, VP Internal, VP External, and VP Finance.

Absent are: Councillors Bellia and Zveiris.

The Speaker notes that there are four new Councillors in the Council: Councillors Murakami, Thomas, President Daryanani, and the Speaker On-Call. He reminds everyone that they could add their preferred pronouns in their Zoom name.

## 4. Adoption of the Agenda – **ADOPTED**



VP External Affairs asks to add a motion regarding referendum question on the creation of a Black Affairs Fee levy. He also adds an announcement.

The Speaker calls a recess so that the Steering Committee can discuss the added motion.

The Legislative Council Public Session resumes at 18:22.

VP Internal Affairs motions to adopt the agenda, seconded by Councillor Saad.

Seeing no opposition to the adoption of the agenda, it is adopted.

5. Adoption of Minutes:

a. Legislative Council Public Minutes 2022-01-20 – **APPROVED**

Seeing no corrections to the minutes, they stand approved as distributed.

6. Report of the Steering Committee

The Speaker states that the Steering Committee met on February 8, 2022, and there were no guest speakers. The Committee reviewed four motions, and later received four motions and reviewed the fifth motion. The Steering Committee reminds Councillors to read all documents submitted for Legislative Council, they will be made public on Monday before the meeting. He asks them to consider if each motion needs to be debated and voted on, and consent votes are always in order. Time suggested by the Steering Committee appears in brackets beside each agenda item, and they ask that Councillors format their motions and justify them. Seeing the late five motions, he reminds everyone to send their motions on time, as they received a lot of late motions. In typical circumstances, late motions would not have been presented, and they only take one late motion. Now that there is only one meeting per month, this becomes a bigger issue. The Committee only accepted these late motions because many of them concern the upcoming General Assembly. The Speaker insists that it is important to send urgent motions in on time. Finally, the Speaker notes that there will be a brief confidential session this evening.

7. Guest Speaker

a. Presentation by Divest McGill

Bryan Buraga presents the history of McGill Ancillary Fees and SSMU moratorium. He asks that questions are kept until the end. He states that divestment is a political statement attacking the political legitimacy of an industry, removing its social ability to operate. In their case, they are advocating for McGill to remove their investments from the fossil fuel industry and redirect that money to more ethical portfolios. Their campaign goals are complete divestment from the top 200 fossil fuel



companies, to mobilise supporters of divestment to stand in solidarity with Indigenous and marginalised students on campus, and to educate the McGill community on climate action. The SSMU and Divest McGill's interactions stem from climate justice policies, the SSMU provides material and financial resources to Divest McGill through the Office of VP External Affairs, but they run autonomously as an organisation. Ancillary fees are mandatory fees for students, dedicated to a unit or program. They require approval from students via a referendum, and in the past, the University has gone to SSMU to get its approval to get a particular fee for the referendum. Ancillary fees currently support student services and Athletics and Recreation. Student Services encompasses many units that don't receive financial support from the University's main budget. They rely mainly on external funding, ancillary fees, rent and product provision. Student services get \$184.33 per full-time student.

Ancillary Fees also support initiatives, such as Access McGill, which help provide money for physical infrastructure to make McGill accessible to students with disabilities. There is also a fee that supports refugee students at McGill, as well as the McGill Writing Centre fee. In Winter 2017, SSMU held a General Assembly to approve a moratorium against Ancillary Fee increases. The motion was passed stating that SSMU will not consider referendum questions concerning ancillary fee increases until a moratorium is implemented on increases to overhead charges on fee-funded units, and provide information to executives and ensure that budgets are approved with students. Overhead charges are fees charged to students for "central administrative services," which include counting, legal, and IT.

Buraga presents the amount of money taken from Student Services to fund these central administrative services. The [McGill] Administration uses overhead charges to convert a portion of restricted fee funding, into discretionary money that can be redistributed to the operating budget. This approach is comparable to SSMU taking money out of the Club Fund to pay for accounting services, and then announcing that they don't have enough resources to support student groups. The SSMU had an agreement with McGill University, signed in 2010, that forces SSMU (on request from the University) to send referendum questions to referendum without approval from the Legislative Council or the Board of Directors. As a result, the 2017 motion for a moratorium was not adopted. However, the graduate students did not have a similar agreement, and when Athletics went to them to ask for an Ancillary fee increase, they said no. The SSMU endorsed 'no' votes on the referendum question about an Athletics ancillary fee increase, but the student body ended up passing it. A few years later, the change the name campaign (campaign to change the name of the Men's sports teams led by the Indigenous Student's Alliance) protested a fee increase that would enable McGill athletics and limit Indigenous students from using facilities meant to be open to all students. As a result, the referendum question failed. At the following Legislative Council meeting, VP External Affairs (2017-2018) wrote a statement on behalf of the Indigenous Affairs Commissioner, which said that SSMU had failed to stand as an ally for Indigenous students. By including the question, the SSMU failed to realise that McGill Athletics Facilities exist as physically hostile environments for Indigenous students, and the racist name is manifested in athletics facilities. That summer, the name change happened, and the current moratorium was implemented in Fall 2019. The Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility, tasked with determining divestment, reconsidered divestment. The Committee set a deadline for the end of the year to decide whether the University would divest. At the time, he was the



SSMU President, and they consulted with Divest McGill to figure out how to apply financial pressure on the University, to get them to divest. They identified ancillary fees as the way to do that. At the October 2019 Legislative Council meeting, the Policy on the Moratorium on Ancillary Fees for fossil fuel divestment passed, and the motion discussed after that was the Athletics fee question, and considering the previous motion, it was not approved. The current moratorium prevents consideration on new Ancillary Fees or increases to existing fees that the University would like SSMU to send to approval by referendum until McGill University divests from fossil fuels and pledges to refrain from investing in fossil fuel companies in the future. If the University decides to use the contractual obligation that SSMU send a fee directly to referendum, the executives should be mandated to form a no-referendum committee to explain that this is in violation of the moratorium. It was recommended by PJSS that the University move towards de-carbonisation, not divestment. De-carbonisation removes carbon-intensive companies from the University's investment portfolios, but does not make a political statement nor remove its investments in the fossil fuel industry as a whole. As the Board of Governors was about to plan a motion to decarbonise, Divest McGill mobilised. The University's promotion of decarbonisation is "greenwashing," as it has not planned to divest and continues to ignore student demands to divest. There was a mass student walkout when the decision was made. Financial pressure is effective, and the point is to impose a cost on the University, and over time, the more it will use in terms of finances. This amount that will be lost will eventually surpass the amount it is investing in fossil fuels. Further, the University stated that donors are hesitant to donate as a result of the moratorium, which increases financial pressure. The moratorium is SSMU's most impactful manner to achieve divestment. The Athletics Facility Improvement Fee has withheld \$1.2 million from the University and the Dean of Libraries approached SSMU to put forward the Flat Lux Fee, which would have paid for the renovations to the McLennan-Redpath Library Complex. They were asking for \$30 a term for 4 terms, and because of the moratorium, the SSMU responded with 'no'. In total, the moratorium has withheld over \$4 million from McGill University, not including the impact of donors' withhold of money. Divest McGill believes that the moratorium cannot be amended, as this would jeopardise the momentum of the campaign as the University is the last of the big three (3) universities in Canada to announce a plan to divest. This would send the message that students no longer care about divestment, and Divest McGill is counting on the Legislative Council to uphold the Society's dedication to stand in solidarity with them as they continue their fight.

Question Period:

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**Question:**

Councillor Wan thanks Bryan Buraga for his presentation. He asks what Divest McGill's position is on the two(2) motions presented about ancillary and athletic fees.

**Answer:**

The Speaker reminds everyone to speak to him rather than to the person the question addresses.



Buraga states that Divest McGill is in opposition of both motions.

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**Question:**

Councillor Holton is concerned that SSMU is not properly leveraging the moratorium, and asks for details on measures that Divest is taking and measures SSMU should be taking to ensure that McGill feels pressure from students and from outside groups, like incoming students, alumni, and journalists.

**Answer:**

Buraga answers that the Divest McGill campaign uses many tactics, including working within and outside the University to achieve their goals, including with the University's CAMSR [Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility] process, which have not amounted to divestment. Protests bring media attention to the cause, and occupations have been done. They have been using different methods to pressure the University, and are interested in hearing ideas. He asks for details about the concerns of constituents who were concerned about not enough leverage.

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**Question:**

The Speaker asks for an email address for Divest McGill.

**Answer:**

Buraga answers that it is [divestmcgill@gmail.com](mailto:divestmcgill@gmail.com).

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**Question:**

Councillor Parsons states that the presenter mentioned that Divest McGill believes this is the most effective approach to getting the University to divest. They ask what evidence they have that proves this, and what other things the University has done to acknowledge divestment.

**Answer:**

Bryan Buraga answers that part of the motion was announcing to the McGill Board of Governors that SSMU was taking this position, and that there would be financial consequences for the University should this continue. The SSMU is among the University's biggest donors, giving millions of dollars on behalf of students. In addition to communicating with the Board of Governors, this tactic led the University to decarbonisation, but lessens the harm caused by investment in some fossil fuel companies. They were targeting social licences, and the University is not doing that.

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**Question:**



Member of the gallery Mulvaney asks how the presenter would respond to student groups on campus who feel as though they have been negatively affected by this moratorium on Ancillary Fees, but believe in divestment and having a climate justice policy, but the means of this moratorium have not benefited them.

**Answer:**

Buraga gives the example of Member of the gallery Parsons, the Athletics Councillor, and another person from Athletics, who were concerned about the effect of the moratorium on the Athletics Improvement Fund. The choice not to fund Athletics properly was made by McGill Administration, and at the time they were proposing matching the improvement fee. Even if students did not contribute, the University could have kept their donations, but they decided not to. The structure of the University's self-funded units consistently deprives Student Services, Athletics and Recreation, and the funding they need. Unfortunately, it is not ideal, but Divest McGill is working with what they have, and their concern about the lack of funding has been expressed to the Athletics Department. Divest McGill is willing to lend resources and let the public know about their plight and get Athletics the funding they need from external sources, and put pressure on the administration to properly fund these units. They are trying to minimise the harm caused to the student body.

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Seeing no further questions, the Speaker thanks the presenter, Bryan Buraga for his time.

The Speaker reminds councillors to put their preferred title in their Zoom name.

8. Presentations:

a. Student Support Presentation

VP Student Life states that they are presenting a motion later, and Ajamu is the Student Support Founder, and wanted to give some information before Councillors vote on the motion.

Ajamu states that they are the CEO Student Support, and supporting students is very important to them because they were homeless at 16, and became one of Canada's Top 20 Under 20, because they had access to support services. Student Support helps students access services for mental health, career, academics and physical well-being. The way they do that is by reaching out to student service organisations and helping students access them at an affordable rate. Udemy has over 40 million students worldwide, and it is a great place to go to learn skills that matter in the job market. Calm is a great application for students that don't feel comfortable reaching out to someone for mental health support, and it is used by 30 million people worldwide. Grammarly helps students organise their writing so that it shines in the best light. For students to access these services, it can be expensive. Calm is \$76.00, Grammarly \$144.00 USD, and Udemy is \$360.00 USD, minus taxes. These services will cost around \$700.00, and other factors increase prices of services. Through a \$9.99 opt-outable fee per





semester, all students can access these services all year round. The next most important thing is the number of students who will use the service if the referendum passes. The presenter presents statistics, and expects an 8% use rate for McGill students. The presenter gives some examples from Notre-Dame and Ryerson Universities. UdeMY has communicated with them that within a few months, they will have a 70% uptake and Grammarly was purchased by 3,000 students at Ryerson University for \$11/month, and have asked for another 1500 subscriptions, almost a 100% usage rate. If not for this referendum, Calm would cost students \$77.00. They want to be conservative with goals, so they think in the first year of the program they will hit a 20% usage rate. Adding up the total costs, it is around \$2.4 million. Student Support will collect under \$400,000 in student fees, after a 15% opt-out. They present more statistics which show that they will be saving students around \$2 million. For advertising, they will be at every major event, such as Frosh, Activities Night. They will also create jobs on-campus and hire students to pitch in lecture halls and classrooms, to make sure students know about the service. In the winter, they will report the use of services to the Legislative Council and executives, to see how successful the service has been. They ask to give students the choice on whether they want these services for \$9.99 per semester. Usually, a successful referendum will make the fee last for five (5) years, but they know the services have been used by over 10,000 organisations, and they want to make sure these services are right for McGill and will be successful. Next February, they will present the statistics, and the Council can vote to continue the services.

Question Period:

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**Question:**

Councillor Wan asks if the service is independent, and if all students attempt to use it, if more spots will need to be made available. Second, he asks how the budget for the fee will be presented in the referendum.

**Answer:**

Ajamu answers that all students will be able to use the services. They ask for clarification on the second question.

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**Question:**

Councillor Wan clarifies that he was asking if a budget would be provided on the programs.

**Answer:**

Ajamu answers in the affirmative, and that they submitted a proposal to VP Finance.

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The Speaker asks the presenter to email him the cost breakdown.



**Question:**

Member of the gallery Bryan Buraga states that to his understanding, the SSMU already has a Keep.me.SAFE fee, which does the same thing as what Calm does. Considering that this would create an overlap, he asks if these services are a whole or if SSMU can opt out of Calm.

**Answer:**

VP Student Life notes that they created this package because there is no overlap, as Keep.me.SAFE offers other services that Calm doesn't. They can discuss adding other options.

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**Question:**

Member of the gallery Val Masny asks what the benefit is of investing in this corporate package instead of investing in services for students on campus.

**Answer:**

VP Student Life responds that they have services on campus, but there are operational limits, so this is for general services unlike campus services, that all students can use.

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**Question:**

Member of the Gallery Parsons asks for clarification. They ask if going forward with the Student Support services would mean the addition of a new ancillary fee.

**Answer:**

Ajamu answers that if Council votes tonight, it will be put in the referendum and students will vote if they want this ancillary fee. If it passes, it would be an additional fee for a year, and then the Executives will vote again based on the usage.

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**Question:**

VP University Affairs asks if Member of the Gallery Parsons's question was related to the moratorium on new ancillary fees.

**Answer:**

Member of the Gallery Parsons responds in the affirmative.

VP University Affairs answers that this fee would go to student services, funded by students and provided through SSMU, so it does not violate the moratorium, which concerns fees directed at McGill.

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**Question:**

Member of the Gallery Parsons asks if McGill was not collecting overhead fees, if a self-funded unit be considered a third party given that it would be unrelated to McGill.

**Answer:**

Member of the gallery Buraga answers that the self-funded unit is connected to the University, it would be related and would place pressure on the University even if overhead fees were not collected.

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The Speaker announces that one more question will be taken.

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**Question:**

Member of the gallery Bryan Buraga asks how Student Support is funded, whether it is a for-profit organisation or a non-for profit, and asks what overhead the company collects from the fees.

**Answer:**

Ajamu answers that Student Support is a social enterprise, and is incorporated as a for-profit. For each school, it is different, and the company will start getting more overhead when they get 200,000 to 300,000 students, in a few years. Student Support will collect around 5-7% at McGill, but when they go to more schools it will increase.

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The Speaker states that the budget has been shared in the Google Drive, and sends the link in the chat.

Ajamu states that the information will be on page 4 of the appendix.

The Speaker moves to the next Agenda item.

b. Athletics and Recreation Presentation (VP Student Life and Councillor Djossou)

Councillor Djossou states that the Athletics and Recreation Ancillary Fee is a fee charged to support services and activities provided by Athletics and Recreation. Currently Athletics and Recreation is receiving money through an ancillary fee, which can only be used for basic operations on both campuses. It cannot be used for repairs that support the program. Undergraduate students currently pay \$150.00 per semester. The moratorium was implemented in 2019, and the goal is to block additions or increases in ancillary fees as long as McGill University does not divest from companies whose main business is the extraction of fossil fuels, to encourage McGill to divest. Currently, McGill



can obtain money from the government, tuition and donations. Per Quebec law, the money they receive can only be used for academic purposes, with the exception of giving a third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of funding to student services. The moratorium has been detrimental to self-funded units like Athletics and Recreation, and libraries. This means that self-funded units can only receive money through ancillary fees or via donations.

By freezing funding from McGill, Councillor Djossou continues such units cannot ask for money for repairs on either campus. As of right now, McGill is recognized for research and academic excellence, and Athletics is not a big incentive for incoming students. While McGill Administration won't fully divest, the moratorium continues to place great pressure on Athletics, which prevents them from providing services, not only varsity students but other people as well. They are trying to find a solution, and will present a motion later to show what they want to do. Student unions can put pressure on the Administration without hurting student groups, because the Administration has other sources of funding whereas the groups do not. It is important to note that the motions that will be presented later are not meant to bypass Divest McGill, they want to ensure that the student body does not continue to suffer.

Question Period:

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**Question:**

Councillor Wan states that pressure was mentioned in the presentation. He asks how much pressure has been exerted on administration on behalf of Athletics for issues such as building repairs.

Councillor Djoussou asks for clarification.

Councillor Wan asks if there has been pressure put on the administration to cover maintenance and repair fees.

**Answer:**

Councillor Djoussou answers that, as a self-funded unit, Athletics must find their own money, and that is why the issue is present.

VP Student Life notes that they are paying one fee, for the programming and maintenance of the building. The fee and the motion are for a facility improvement fund.

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**Question:**

Conseillère Coussa demande s'il y a un moyen d'atteindre le but du Conseiller Djoussou sans aller à l'encontre des buts de *Divest McGill*.



**Réponse:**

Conseiller Djoussou répond qu'il essaye de trouver un moyen de faire ceci, car il sait que le travail de Divest McGill est important, et ils ont essayé de trouver des moyens, mais c'est complexe et ils n'ont pas été capables de trouver une solution qui répond aux problèmes sans devoir créer un amendement. Ceci est leur dernier recours pour soulager le problème des rénovations urgentes.

Councillor Djoussou reminds everyone that the fee they want to introduce has been an issue since 1984. They want students to be able to help other students.

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**Question:**

Member of the gallery Masny asks why this motion was presented instead of campaigning to the University to give funds to Athletics and Recreation. Perhaps Varsity Athletes could be used to pressure the University into increasing funds without damaging the work done by Divest McGill.

**Answer:**

Councillor Djoussou answers that there is only a third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of the money that can be given to services outside academics, and they don't have a say in how McGill invests, and this is why they cannot pressure McGill to divest.

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**Question:**

Member of the Gallery Botham asks if athletics has worked to pressure McGill into changing their stance on divestment, because it seems to be a means of resolving the issue.

**Answer:**

Councillor Djoussou repeats that they do not have a say in McGill's investments and how they spend their money, and it would be a PR [public relations] nightmare. McGill doesn't just give them money, Athletics must request it.

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**Question:**

Member of the gallery Garfinkel asks if Councillor Djoussou could get into specifics into ways the moratorium has harmed Athletics' services and their ability to improve student services. They inquire about specific projects that have been affected by the moratorium.

**Answer:**

Councillor Djoussou answers the fee was in place until 2019, and not reviewed because of the moratorium and the Change the Name campaign. They believe that there are a lot of different aspects that contribute, and defers their time to Member of the gallery Parsons.



Member of the Gallery Parsons answers that a few examples are the addition of the mezzanine in the gym, which has more privacy. Another example is the Rutherford Field, which they share with the City of Montreal. Many intramural sports use this space, which benefits a lot of students. Some imminent repairs include the pool, which need to be retiled, and there is the possibility that they won't come up with the money and would have to suspend the services. It will take approximately five (5) years for Athletics to come up with the funds to retiling the pool. Money is being taken from elsewhere to do repairs, because the reserve fund is being depleted, which means that student services will suffer.

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**Question:**

Member of the gallery Thomin states that Councillor Djoussou mentioned that McGill University can only direct one third of investments to student services, and there is a limit on asking the University for money. However, Bryan Buraga previously stated in the presentation, that before the moratorium, McGill had offered to match the income amounted by ancillary fees, which implies that they have money for these services. Thomin inquires if they have considered demanding and/or lobbying for this money.

**Answer:**

Councillor Djoussou defers their speaking time to Member of the gallery Parsons.

Member of the gallery Parsons answers that the University has never given that money, but when they saw that students cared about Athletic facilities, they decided to redirect funds to athletics. Now, the students are showing that they do not care, so the school will not redirect the funds. They could pressure, but it may not be worth it.

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**Question:**

Councillor Dakdouki asks if it would help to push back to McGill University, since Athletics is trying to bring back the student fund.

Councillor Djoussou defers their speaking time to Member of the Gallery Parsons.

Member of the Gallery Parsons answers that one of the large issues is that it comes down to student fees. If the students are not willing to pay, the University is not either and they have been firm on that, so they need student support. This is a viable solution, but because so many repairs are imminent, they need student commitment. This will take a lot of time, and they need an imminent solution so that student services can continue. They note that another project is a gender-neutral washroom, a way to reduce harm in facilities and make them approachable to everyone.



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**Question:**

Member of the Gallery Garfinkel asks what current or future projects that are being impacted by the moratorium.

**Answer:**

Member of the Gallery Parsons answers that the bathroom is a past project, as they now have gender-neutral bathrooms. The pool, the ventilation system in the gym and the Fieldhouse as well as the Fieldhouse floor. Molson Stadium needs to be improved, and they want to increase accessibility in the Athletics building.

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The Speaker exhausts the presentation and question period.

9. Announcements:

a. Announcements by VP Paulin

VP Internal Affairs states that the SSMU General Assembly (GA) is on February 21, and all Councillors are mandated to attend. Executive Elections Nominations are ending February 21 at 5pm. She sent an email to the Council about the conflict of interest policy, which is looking for consultations, and feedback is helpful. She has started consultations on the 5-Year Plan, and has a survey that she will send to Council. She asks that Councillors share the survey with constituents and executive teams. VP Internal states that it is SSMU Awards season, a way to honour and bring awareness to the work of the community, such as clubs, and councillors. She will share the link for the nominations.

b. Announcement by President Daryanani

President Daryanani acknowledges the unceded land of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe. He states that in the past two (2) years, he served on the Legislative Council. In March 2021, he was elected as SSMU President. When he came to the position, he knew that SSMU was not the most friendly to students of colour and immigrants, and he has witnessed this firsthand. For this reason, part of his campaign was to make SSMU a more equitable and accessible place. The President continues that the SSMU Board of Directors decided to suspend him with pay three and a half (3 ½) months into his presidency.

VP Internal Affairs calls a Point of Order on the basis that the President revealed confidential information.



The Steering Committee enters a virtual Zoom breakout room to discuss VP Internal's point of order. The Committee decides that the information revealed was not confidential, and they allow the President to continue his announcement.

Member of the Gallery Botham reminds everyone that they are there as an Anti-Violence Coordinator and that if anyone is feeling uncomfortable, they can email them and they can open a breakout room to talk.

The President continues that the SSMU Board of Directors (the Board) did not provide a reason for the suspension, which began on September 23, 2021 and was projected to end November 5, 2021. One (1) week later, on November 12, 2021, his suspension was extended by the Board, who extended it three (3) more times without a determinate end date. On February 13, 2022, he was informed that all reasons to justify the suspension were unfounded and declared inadmissible. The unilateral suspension lasted five (5) months, encompassing half of President Daryanani's term. He collaborated with the process, despite that the Board violated his rights as a SSMU Officer and employee. He clarifies that he never went on a leave of absence. At this time, he expects the Board to make the necessary arrangements to reinstate him as President, so that he can do the job he was elected for.

Despite his formal reinstatement, he has not been permitted to serve as Chairperson of the SSMU Board of Directors, nor attend its meetings, which renders him incapable of completing simple tasks. Going forward, the Board should ensure that after this suspension, he will be allowed to serve on the McGill Senate, on the McGill Board of Governors, and the respective committees to which he was appointed. His role includes acting as chairperson of the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors and various committees. Notwithstanding what he considers to be an injustice, the President is now determined to fulfil his obligations as President, and to complete his mandate. Governance will be at the forefront of the last few months of his presidency. He is ready and willing to answer questions, and respects the confidentiality of the matter.

c. Announcement by the AVCs

SSMU's Anti-Violence Coordinator Botham reminds people of some parts of the Gendered and Sexual Violence Policy (the GSVP). The GSVP covers all members of SSMU, including Staff, elected members and individuals on SSMU property. For more information about accommodations, people can refer to the GSVP, which she will send out to Councillors and Board members. In the Policy, there are provisions for accommodations. This can be used if someone makes a complaint with the intent of having a formal investigation concerning gendered and sexual violence, which can include harassment or other forms of harm. The Coordinator's goal is to ensure that people can access their workplaces and clubs/services safely. People can also access accommodations through disclosures, which is when someone shares information with the intention of receiving support, without having to initiate an investigation. This can be done by emailing the AVCs at [avc@ssmu.ca](mailto:avc@ssmu.ca) or by scheduling a meeting. Some of the accommodations for SSMU staff include a minimum of five (5) days off without affecting their pay, which is decided by herself and the Human Resources Department who will





communicate it with staff's Supervisors. Other accommodations include space accommodations, changes to work schedules, or job-specific accommodations. She wants to ensure that everyone feels safe at work and that they can participate in their jobs. She reminds everyone that this is accessible for all SSMU members.

d. Announcement by VP Delouvrier

VP External Affairs states that the Ferrier Building will now have a space dedicated to Black students on campus, and the funding has been received for the space to be painted and furnished. The SSMU has reached an agreement to ensure that students get equitable access to the space. The opening date is the latest in early March 2022.

10. Question Period:

a. Questions from constituents

**Question submitted by Constituents:**

*"How will you ensure that SSMU remains a safe space for women and gender minorities?"*

**Answer:**

The President states that it is important to acknowledge that SSMU is not necessarily the safest space for gender minorities and marginalised groups. He thinks SSMU needs to focus on their policies to ensure that they are enforced in the best way possible. The SSMU currently has many policies for gender equality, and thinks it is important to ensure that HR and equity processes are at the forefront of SSMU's actions.

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**Question submitted by Constituents:**

*"Do you think that SSMU as it stands today is a safe space for women and gender minorities?"*

**Answer:**

Councillor Coussa answers that SSMU is not a safe space for women nor for gender minorities, and she feels safe saying that as a woman.

Councillor Tiniacos states that their constituents have expressed uncomfortable feelings about the composition of the Executive body. They express that an Executive has made some of Councillor Tiniacos's female friends uncomfortable, within and outside SSMU workplace. At this time, they do not feel as if SSMU is a safe space for women and gender minorities.

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**Question submitted by Constituents:**



*“How are you ensuring that SSMU becomes an anti-oppressive space where all people feel comfortable and safe participating in debates?”*

**Answer:**

VP Student Life states that the silence says a lot, and some of her coworkers are feeling uncomfortable at this time. This is a tense situation, and their policies are not helping. There is so much they can do, but when Directors and Executives don't feel safe, there is a bigger issue at hand.

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**Question submitted by Constituents:**

*“Is it possible to bring the same question forward in a referendum if it was rejected in the last SSMU referendum? Re: councillor and senator payments”*

**Answer:**

VP University Affairs answers that she is the Mover of this motion, and prior to directing the motion, she consulted with the SSMU Senate Caucus and the University Affairs Secretary-General, and no parties saw an issue with re-running the fee. It is updated, and it is not an identical fee. Similarly, the Francisation fee has been presented, which was originally presented two (2) years ago.

VP Finance adds that there are no policies or regulations that make it impossible to bring a question back to referendum. They are a democratic body, and it is the role of the Legislative Council to ensure that questions are legitimate, and to ensure that there is a good reason for the question to be re-run.

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**Question submitted by Constituents:**

*“In September, SSMU circulated a statement saying that the Executive Committee would not be afraid to change the system and call out toxic behaviour. Since then, what has been done to ensure that SSMU is an equitable, non-toxic workplace?”*

**Answer:**

VP Finance answers that they have reformed the Human Resources Committee (HRC) to fix how it works. In the past, the President and VP Finance sat on the body, so it created restrictions that can hold executives and management responsible. They added an Equity commissioner and three (3) Directors to the Committee's composition, so there are no Executive seats on the committee. A complaint that is brought to the Human Resources Department can be directed to the HRC, who can act upon it.

VP University Affairs further indicates that a lot of policies have been amended, but there is a long-standing culture at SSMU where men can behave with impunity and women are not



afforded the same decency as men. She has worked at SSMU for three (3) years, and it is difficult on most days. She is thankful to have worked with great people, and is in awe of the support she receives. However, things don't change. She watched her predecessor be suspended for an act of tone policing. She is surprised by the treatment she receives that a man would never be put through. She wants to change the culture at SSMU but is uncertain of how it can be done.

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**Question submitted by Constituents:**

*“Why was President Daryanani’s return not announced to the student body?”*

**Answer:**

VP External Affairs answers that it seems as though the Board of Directors wanted to allow President Daryanani to announce his own return to the student body.

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There are no further questions submitted in advance by Constituents.

b. Questions from the Floor

**Question:**

Councillor Saad states that the President said that the Board of Directors did not provide any reason for the initial suspension. He asks what the President thinks the most likely reason for the suspension was.

**Answer:**

The President answers that he does not know, and wonders what he could have done to deserve this unilateral suspension.

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**Question:**

Councillor Zhang asks Executives if they can address the issue of confidentiality and why it matters in this case, considering how much of a point of contention it has become in this discussion.

**Answer:**

VP Finance answers that confidentiality is complicated, and they have to ensure that decisions made respect the confidentiality of the individual involved and the company. Confidentiality can also be used to hide issues that exist. It is important to know that when confidentiality is breached, it is not an isolated incident. The Board of Directors has dealt with human resources or legal issues, and the reason they deal with them and guarantee confidentiality is because specific topics and issues need to be confidential, and because they need to ensure that Staff,



memberships and representatives of SSMU feel safe, and that they can trust the system for their grievances and issues to be listened to and not spread around. When there is a breach of confidentiality, the reason it is taken so seriously is not only because that specific matter is being breached, but also because it makes it so that every individual who has felt the need to be heard or talk to Human Resources, now no longer trusts them and will be comfortable bringing their issues to the Board. The reason they sometimes cannot reveal information is because they value safe spaces and the importance of guaranteeing that information can be dealt with successfully and confidentially. He further notes that he values the creation of a safe space and that when individuals provide disclosures, the information will be dealt with in a confidential manner.

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**Question:**

Member of the gallery, Management Senator Arshiyani, asks President Daryanani, if he believes that his rights have been violated and if he is determined to fulfil his mandate, why he has not stepped forward before about what has happened.

**Answer:**

The President responds that he wanted to respect the process and the Board's decision. As such, he fully collaborated until he was reinstated. At this time, he believes it is important for them to acknowledge him to be present.

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**Question:**

Councillor Tiniacos asks how someone can breach confidentiality and explain that they were suspended but do not know the reason, since it was such a long process.

**Answer:**

VP Finance answers that the information remains confidential.

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**Question:**

Councillor Murakami asks VP Finance for this specific case, how does this justification apply with respect to Constituents.

**Answer:**

VP Finance answers that this is a confidential topic, so he cannot speak about confidentiality breaches that have occurred and what the consequences may be. For this case, he cannot discuss what is confidential and what isn't, because that may also be a breach of confidentiality. He states that the Board of Directors has a mandate to ensure that confidentiality is maintained, and he thinks that the Board will do its responsibility.



SSMU's Anti-Violence Coordinator Botham reminds everyone of principles to keep in mind. When talking about questions concerning the safety of women and gender minorities, or maintaining an anti-oppressive space, keeping SSMU's policies in mind and remembering those principles is important. People have been thoughtful with their questions, and they try to minimise harm that has been caused and to think about the effects questions may have.

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**Question:**

Councillor Saad asks if the reason the Board failed to ratify the Motion concerning the absence of the SSMU President [November 2021] is because they were waiting on the result of an investigation.

**Answer:**

VP Finance answers that, because the motion was presented in Public session, the answer to Councillor Saad's question can be found in the public minutes and recordings for that meeting. He believes Councillor Saad was present at that meeting. The public minutes should indicate the result for that motion.

---

**Question:**

Councillor Saad states, on September 22, 2021, one day before the suspension of the President, the McGill Daily published an article titled: "Sexism and Silence in SSMU." The article mentioned that the President had promised a safe space, but members of the Society believed they had received the opposite. Following what VP University Affairs brought up, they ask if the contents of the article have anything to do with the suspension.

**Answer:**

VP Finance answers that he cannot confirm nor deny the existence of any suspension.

VP University Affairs clarifies that her earlier response was not meant to confirm nor deny anything, it was to speak about her own experience as a woman working at SSMU.

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**Question:**

Councillor Zhang asks the President if he, at any point during his leave, considered resigning from his position, considering he did not have the ability to fulfil his mandate.

**Answer:**

President Daryanani answers no.



**Question:**

Member of the gallery, Senator Arshiyani, asks the President how he views his position at SSMU when it comes to the safety of women and gender minorities in the workplace.

**Answer:**

The President answers that safety is important for all, and it is important for them to understand the spaces they occupy, and to make space for everyone, to ensure a safe and inclusive environment, where they can continue to debate positively in a healthy environment, and work together. He ran on a platform to ensure this, and will continue to work on this to ensure safety for everyone.

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**Question:**

Councillor Saad asks the President, if, regardless of the reasons of the suspension, he considered donating or redistributing the salary he received.

**Answer:**

President Daryanani answers that he did not consider this.

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**Question:**

Councillor Tiniacos asks if it is responsible for someone who has been absent for six (6) months and has graduated, to keep the position of SSMU President and keep the salary of \$30,000, when half of the term was not filled.

**Answer:**

The President answers that he did not choose to be removed, and does not have a degree at the moment.

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**Question:**

Councillor Tiniacos asks if any of the Executives believe it to be ethical for their salary to be paid by student money when they are not fulfilling their duties and have been absent for a prolonged period.

**Answer:**

VP Finance answers that it is context-dependent, and he cannot give a concrete answer. He trusts the Board of Directors to make these decisions, and cannot speak on any specific cases.

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**Question:**

Councillor Dakdouki asks for clarification on the positions that President Daryanani was hoping to be reinstated, and what those committees do.

**Answer:**

The President answers that in the Constitution, section 10 outlines the powers and duties of SSMU Officers, and for the President, these include representing SSMU on the McGill Board of Governors and the McGill Senate, as well as the committees to which he was appointed. On the SSMU level, this includes sitting as Chair of the Executive Committee, Chairperson of the Board of Directors, as well as the committee he is supposed to chair, and serving on the Legislative Council.

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**Question:**

Member of the gallery Pople asks, because there has been discussion about the working environment at SSMU, if the President's suspension may be related to the working environment at SSMU, or the treatment received by women at SSMU.

**Answer:**

President Daryanani answers that he agrees that the SSMU working environment is not the friendliest, and thinks the Board would be better to speak about these issues, considering that HR issues also fall under the Board.

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**Question:**

Senator Arshiyani asks President Daryanani if he was barred from attending the McGill Senate at all.

**Answer:**

President Daryanani answers that this may be another question for the Board, and he is not sure how the suspension was communicated to the McGill Senate. He was allowed to attend yesterday, but is unsure whether the Board of Directors has informed McGill Senate.

VP Finance answers that it is confidential information.

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**Question:**

Member of the gallery Buraga states that he has been disappointed with the nature that some executives seem to be taking to this issue. It can be shown just how toxic SSMU is. To see executives so glib about such an important topic is disappointing. He asks Executives to be more considerate about people's feelings about this, instead of not taking this matter seriously and making this an environment that is difficult to be in.



**Answer:**

VP Student Life answers that they are struggling with the policies in place, and are also victims of the structure. She finds it insulting to ask that type of question. They must do their duty to protect the confidential information, and are doing everything in their job mandates.

The Speaker asks everyone to keep a parliamentary tone in this meeting.

VP University Affairs thanks the Member of the gallery Buraga for his question. As an individual who has been harmed significantly by the SSMU's working environment, she feels as though her safety and ability to perform her job are not taken seriously, and that they are sometimes made light of. She encourages everyone to consider the space they are taking up in this meeting, which is a painful time for a lot of people. She states that it is difficult to be a woman at the SSMU right now, and asks everyone to consider their tone and be mindful.

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The Speaker states that they have elapsed question period, and states that if he is accepting motions to extend it.

VP University Affairs motions to extend the question period by 15 minutes, seconded by Councillor Coussa.

Seeing no opposition, the question period is extended by 15 minutes.

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**Question:**

Councillor Khodadadi asks if President Daryanani ever considered taking legal action against SSMU in order to be reinstated as President.

**Answer:**

The President responds that he did, and it took multiple letters from his legal counsel for him to face the Board of Directors. When he reached out, he did not receive a response and he was disappointed that it cost money to face the Board, to ensure that his rights were not being violated. Even then, it still took five (5) months.

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**Question:**

Member of the gallery Pople asks whether President Daryanani's return to the office was announced to Staff.

**Answer:**

VP Internal Affairs responds that the President's return was announced to all permanent staff.



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Member of the gallery, Julia Caddy, states that, as a contract Commissioner, they were not initially informed of the President's return.

**Question:**

Member of the Gallery Garfinkel states that they agree with Member Buraga said earlier, which they believe was directed at men who are on the Executive board. Garfinkel inquires how this decision and change with the President's role will be communicated as transparently as possible to the student body and the McGill community.

**Answer:**

VP University Affairs states that this is out of order. She was not informed that changes were being made to the physical spaces and that people who had previously not been there were now going to be.

VP Finance answers that permanent staff were told, but he is uncertain if the physical space was mentioned, and if contract employees were not informed. He states that they all have ways of dealing with difficult situations, and he himself is very fidgety. There is a reason that he is answering questions, because people are under a lot of stress. He understands that this is a difficult situation and apologises if any of his answers have caused pain, but he does have reactions and his own way of coping with certain situations.

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The Speaker lets the Council know that his stress reaction is laughter, and his laughter is not targeted at anyone.

VP University Affairs clarifies that her earlier comment was not meant to impose specific coping strategies on anyone, but she wants to encourage people to be mindful about the space they are taking up and encourage people to be consistent in their actions, because this is painful for certain people more than others.

The Speaker calls for a five (5) minute recess, until 21:09.

The Legislative Council is back in session at 21:10.

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**Question:**

Member of the gallery Popple states that earlier this week, they emailed SSMU's Equity Commissioners to ask for a copy of SSMU's Psychological Harassment Policy, and were told



that it is an internal document. They ask why this Policy is not available, since others are, or if there is a different way that they can access this document.

**Answer:**

VP Internal Affairs answers that because the document is internal, many sections mentioned in the policy would not be relevant to those who do not work in SSMU.

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**Question:**

Councillor Saad asks at what point do certain aspects of confidentiality need to be sacrificed in the name of transparency, since there is a fine line between confidentiality and withholding information. They ask if there is a process that allows for an appeal to remove confidentiality from certain topics.

**Answer:**

VP Finance answers that when there is a grey area within the confidentiality policy, the Board of Directors' legal team will tell them what should remain confidential. There is no process to make something not confidential, unless it is a specific case where a motion should not have been voted on confidentially, for example a public Legislative Council motion. They will consult the legal team to ensure they are making the best decisions.

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**Question:**

Councillor Qazi asks the President how he felt after hearing the women on his team voice their frustrations at this evening's Legislative Council meeting.

**Answer:**

The President answers that this needs to be looked into, as SSMU is not perfect, and without proper ways to deal with such complaints, it needs to be looked into. He would be happy to work on this for the remainder of his term.

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**Question:**

Member of the gallery Caddy asks if the psychological health and safety of members of Staff and Members of the student body should not be considered a reason to be pursuing with the legal team and whether this is an adequate way to navigate confidentiality.

**Answer:**

VP Finance answers that they try to include it, but that it is less institutionalised than it should be. He would be in favour of adding additional layers of consultation.

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**Question:**

Councillor Coussa asks the male Executives [of the Executive Committee], seeing as reports of sexism have been called out by women Executives and Councillors, if they were to find out that their behaviour made women feel unsafe, if they would resign.

**Answer:**

VP External responds in the affirmative because the number one priority as Executives is the safety of the people they are around. It matters that everyone feels safe and heard.

VP Finance answers yes, because he thinks it is important to be able to admit one's faults, and to apologise for mistakes and participate in the resolution individuals seek. It is important to cooperate, and to ensure a safe space, even if it means removing him as an Executive.

The President agrees with his colleagues that executives and student leaders should be held accountable for their actions. He has an open door policy, where women have come to report instances of sexism or harassment, and he has made sure to follow processes to ensure they can do better. Students should be involved as much as possible in this process, because they represent students and should work with them. A removal, if justified, is in order, and there are clear provisions on how this can happen in the Constitution. He notes that it is important to be respectful at all times, and to engage in active listening, to encourage a safe space and provide support. He is glad to have Anti-Violence Coordinators in attendance because this is one way they can ensure support to improve the safety they pride themselves on providing. The President encourages everyone to reach out to him with suggestions for the improvement of safe spaces at SSMU.

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**Question:**

Member of the Gallery Caddy asks, considering the comments shared tonight, if a council member could outline processes for removal of an Officer.

**Answer:**

VP External answers that the Board of Directors must present an Executive for impeachment, which will be discussed at a Special General Assembly (GA) called by 8 councillors from 4 different faculties or 100 members of SSMU with no more than 50% of members coming from one faculty. The Officer presented for impeachment would have the opportunity to defend themselves at the Special GA. The impeachment would pass with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote, with a quorum of 150 attendees.

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The Speaker states that the Constitution can be found on the SSMU website, and he posts the link in the Zoom virtual chat. The article in question is Article 10.6, on page 20 of the SSMU Constitution.



The President adds that the same provisions as the ones VP External Affairs mentioned exist for Councillors, Board members and other members involved in SSMU representation. It is possible to present a motion for Removal at February 21's General Assembly. He notes it is important to look at these processes to see if they are just, and to ensure accountability and transparency.

VP External calls a Point of Order, as he believes a Special GA needs to be called for the removal of an officer, and it cannot be done at a regular General Assembly.

The Speaker sustains the Point of Order.

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**Question:**

Member of the Gallery Popple states that many Executives have said that they plan on working on improving the environment at SSMU for women and gendered minorities, but it has been made clear that gendered minorities do not feel safe at SSMU. Popple asks how Executives, particularly male Executives, think they are going to be qualified to implement policies to create a better working environment at SSMU when women are clearly not comfortable working with them.

**Answer:**

VP University Affairs answers that this work needs to be done by people of all genders, but men need to do very different work than women, and asks men who work at SSMU to consider that they may be part of the problem, and asks them to talk to women and ask them about how they can take action, because actions speak louder than words.

VP Finance agrees that he is not qualified to make changes, but states that they have hired a HR Director, whose job is to revamp the HR department. He yields his time to VP Internal Affairs.

VP Internal Affairs notes that it is not women who are affected, but all gendered minorities. This needs to be addressed in this conversation.

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The Speaker states that this is a difficult conversation, and people should take the time if needed, and they understand if people need to take breaks. The Dais are available to talk if anyone needs to support, as are the Anti-Violence Coordinators.

The Speaker states that the question period has elapsed. He will take motions for extension.

VP University Affairs motions to extend the question period by 10 minutes, seconded by Councillor Claret.





Councillor Tiniacos asks if they could authorise another Science Representative to read their report, since they do not want to move it now, because the conversation taking place is more important. The Speaker notes that this is in order.

Councillor Tiniacos states that any Science Undergraduate Society (SUS) representative can read it on his behalf, and believes that Councillor Khamis has volunteered to do so.

VP Student Life is opposed to the extension of the question period.

Councillor Coussa motions to vote by a poll.

The Speaker launches the poll. If more votes are received than the number of Councillors, they will vote by hand.

Seeing too many votes, the Speaker entertains a vote by hand.

The Speaker clarifies that every motion has a time limit. In this case, they are voting to extend it, and the council will decide if they want an extension or not.

There are 13 votes in favour of the extension and 10 votes against. The question period is extended.

Councillor Saad asks if there is a time at which the Speaker will end the meeting.

The Speaker answers that he instituted an end time of 22:00 at the beginning of the year, but seeing the special nature of this meeting, they can go beyond this time, to ensure the motions presented are passed. The rest of the Agenda will be postponed.

VP University Affairs states, seeing as the motions are concerning referendum questions, they cannot be postponed. She asks how the Dais would like to proceed.

The Speaker states that this is the main reason to allow the meeting to go later than 22:00, so the meeting will not end until the motions have been discussed. The Dais will proceed the meeting along if they believe they will not get through all the motions.

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**Question:**

VP Finance asks if it is in line to end at 22:00, and reschedule an emergency Legislative Council meeting next week to go through the motions presented.

**Answer:**



The Speaker answers that he does not know if an emergency meeting has been called before, but he does not see why it cannot be done. However, the Legislative Council's membership is larger than other bodies, and they would have to ensure that all Councillors are able to attend the emergency meeting. The other option is to attempt to pass the motions by email. The Speaker hopes to pass these motions tonight. If the Council wishes to end the meeting at 22:00, they will do so.

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VP University Affairs agrees with VP Finance's comment that the motions are important, and thinks it is important to approach these questions with the thought and time they require.

A Member of the Gallery [unknown] urges the Speaker to consider the large number of Members of the gallery present, who would like to speak on the motions and may not be able another day.

The Speaker states that this will be considered.

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**Question:**

VP Finance asks if it would be possible to have a consultative Legislative council session next week, where people can come discuss the motions after having the time to recover from this meeting. Once that happens, they have an electronic vote, so people can watch the recording of the meeting and vote. Individuals can submit statements to be read at the meeting if they cannot attend it, and members of the gallery could do so as well.

**Answer:**

The Speaker states that the best thing to do is to do what they can, and get through the questions as fast as possible. He likes the idea of a consultative Legislative Council, but it is difficult logistically and within the rules.

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Councillor Perez Tiniacos has left the meeting, time unknown.

VP University Affairs suggests that the Speaker move time-sensitive questions to the top of the New Business agenda.

The Speaker notes it in order to suspend the rules and do so.

VP University Affairs motions to suspend the rules to rearrange the motions, seconded by Councillor Coussa.



Seeing no opposition to suspending the rules, the Rules are suspended.

VP University Affairs presents to the Speaker how to rearrange the motions.

The Speaker states that he will read the title of each motion, and people can raise their hands. This will help determine which motions are most pressing.

The Speaker reads through each motion.

The Speaker states that the current order stands.

VP University Affairs motions to postpone the reports.

The Speaker states that once they reach reports they can be postponed.

#### 11. Recess, Consent Items

The Speaker states that within the documents distributed, members can vote on consent items. If the motions receive no debate votes, they will not be debated and will be voted on.

The Speaker entertains a five-minute recess for members to fill out the consent items.

VP University Affairs asks for the link to the consent items.

VP External asks to add Point 12.i. as a possible consent item.

The Speaker adds it.

The results of the consent items are:

- 1) Motion Regarding Amendment on the Moratorium Ancillaries Fees has 10 votes to debate. The Motion will be debated this evening.
- 2) Motion Regarding Reintroduction of the Facility Improvement Fee Referendum Question has eight (8) debate votes. The Motion will be debated this evening.
- 3) Motion Regarding the French Accessibility Fee Referendum Question has one (1) debate vote. The Motion will be debated this evening.
- 4) Motion Regarding Ratification to the Society's Board Of Directors has two (2) debate votes. The Motion will be debated this evening.



- 5) Motion Regarding Referendum Question on the Increase of the 2022 SSMU Membership Fee has two (2) debate votes. The Motion will be debated this evening.
- 6) Motion Regarding the Implementation of the Dialogue Referendum Question has one (1) debate vote. The Motion will be debated this evening.
- 7) Motion Regarding MUSTBUS Fee-Levy has two (2) debate votes. The Motion will be debated this evening.
- 8) Motion Regarding Referendum Question on the Creation of a Black Affairs Fee Levy has one (1) debate vote. The Motion will be debated this evening.

## 12. New Business:

The Speaker states that he will be very strict with time, as it is already 22:00.

- a. Motion Regarding Amendment on the Moratorium Ancillaries Fees 2022-02-17 – **NOT APPROVED**

Councillor Djoussou states that with the help of VP Student Life, they were able to write this motion, as well as with the help of other consultants. The moratorium is in place to prevent referendum questions concerning ancillary fees from being asked at referendum, since McGill has not divested from investments in fossil fuels. The moratorium has been in place since 2019, and the presenter of the motion believes there are other ways to pressure the administration without hurting students. This motion will amend the moratorium to make it possible for Athletics and Recreation to amend it, and to ask referendum questions. This motion aligns with SSMU since it will allow for referendum questions pertaining to the improvement of campus. Councillor Djoussou has consulted many groups such as Divest McGill on this motion. The motion will allow Athletics and Recreation to pose referendum questions about the Facility Improvement Fee. If this motion passes, Athletics and Recreation will be allowed to ask referendum questions.

Question Period:

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**Question:**

The Speaker entertains a question period. He asks Councillor Djoussou if there is anyone else who can answer questions.

**Answer:**

Councillor Djoussou answers that James Mulvaney, Stephanie Molly, and Chloe Parsons can answer questions, as well as the Secunder, VP Student Life.

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Member of the Gallery Garfinkel states that the moratorium's impact increases over time, since more money builds up.

The Speaker reminds everyone that questions need to be concise.

Member of the Gallery Garfinkel cedes their time.

Seeing no questions, the Speaker entertains a debate period.

Debate Period:

VP University Affairs states that she empathises with members of Athletics and Recreation who are being impacted by the moratorium. She strongly opposes the motion, because the moratorium is a useful tool to push McGill towards divestment, and even though debating it this way is conducive to their mandate as a student union. She urges everyone to oppose this Motion.

Member of the gallery Garfinkel states that they are at a critical time in the divestment movement on university campuses and beyond. University of Toronto and Harvard University have just divested, and so many others have as well. McGill University is at an interesting cross-section, and Divest McGill believes they are at a crucial point in their movement. As organisers from other universities have made clear, these movements are only successful when they have an entire community backing them, that can make sure the movement is sustainable over time. The McGill community has shown time and time again that they support this movement. That being said, Garfinkel encourages everyone to keep the pressure on McGill, because they cannot let them divide them.

VP Finance speaks against this Motion. He understands why it is being presented, and understands that it is difficult for Athletics and Recreation to manage without this money, but this moratorium is an effective way to pressure McGill, and he does not know how successful it will be, but believes they should continue to do it. He notes that this is a lot of money, as the fee proposed is \$10 per semester, which is a larger amount than any other SSMU fee. SSMU would be giving McGill a lot of money.

Member of the gallery Masny states that it was brought up earlier that the moratorium would go towards the betterment of Athletics facilities and the improvement of accessibility. However, they think that putting the burden of making facilities accessible on students is wrong, and McGill is responsible for ensuring accessibility. Masny believes they should continue to pressure McGill on divestment and for accessibilisation.

Councillor Coussa empathizes with Councillor Djoussou, but urges councillors to vote 'No' on this motion, because it is their job to vote in the interests of their constituents. Many constituents are pro-divestment, and they cannot vote for something their constituents have fought against. She notes



that it is not the SSMU's role to provide accessibility to buildings, it is McGill's. She thanks Councillor Djoussou for their efforts.

VP Student Life states that they can either give students better facilities, or they can divest. It seems that most want to divest, and in the meeting with the [McGill] Administration, there was no intention of further divesting through this moratorium, so it is not working. She wants to find a better way to pressure McGill, and asks that this is considered when voting on this motion.

Councillor Djoussou reminds everyone that the motion is not against divestment, the only entity that will be allowed to benefit from this money is Athletics and Recreation. He highlights that the current ancillary fee does not seem impactful on the Administration. They have learned throughout the pandemic that physical health is important for mental health, and if they cannot find the way to get money, it is the students who will continue to suffer.

The Speaker states that the Dais will be allowing more speakers.

Member of the gallery Garfinkel acknowledges that Divest McGill emphasises with Athletics, and they are willing to work with them to ensure significant pressure while funding student services. Garfinkel states that divestment is also a critical part of student life, and students want to push for this. As Divest McGill is the most supported campaign on campus, they ask SSMU if they do not support this campaign, which campaigns they will support.

Member of the gallery Parsons states that McGill University is not making more revenue because students decide to put money towards Athletics and Recreation, they take an overhead fee on self-funded units, and the Facility Improvement Fee is a separate fund, so the university is not making extra money from this. They echo Councillor Coussa's point that their duty is to their constituents, and more of them use Athletics services, and over 15,000 students use the fitness centre, participate in intramural sports and fitness classes. This does not include the sports medicine clinic, the pool, or those who use the Athletics facilities for exams.

Councillor Djoussou states that what Member of the Gallery Parsons said is very important. However, there has not been a solution found, despite many talks with Divest McGill. They do not have a say in McGill's investments, and it seems like people emphasise with them, but no one is trying to find a solution. It is important to realise that physical health is a part of mental health.

VP Finance clarifies that McGill University is limiting the money that SSMU can give to the Athletics department, which is mostly funded by student fees due to Canadian law, since tuition cannot be used for sports facilities. He points out that there is no overhead for this fee, but the wording of the motion would allow for increases in the Athletics and Recreation fee, which is already the largest amount of fee collected and has overhead costs.





Councillor Coussa clarifies her point about representing constituents. A lot of her constituents have been emailing her showing their support for Divest McGill, and urges Councillor Djoussou to reach out to her so that they can work with Divest McGill to find a solution that works for everyone, and she believes that the common enemy here is the Administration. McGill University has failed to respond to Athletics' needs, and they should all work together to tackle this issue.

Member of the gallery Dove-McFalls states that it is upsetting that this has become a divided topic, because they are both a Varsity Athlete and a member of Divest McGill. They acknowledge that there is a need for action between these two groups, but have not heard a way that this can happen. It is necessary to vote against this Motion, because the climate crisis is much more important than tiling a pool. They urge people to consider the different scales of the issues at hand.

Member of the gallery Mulvaney states that this is not a clash between McGill Athletics and Divest McGill. Athletics is supportive of the climate movement and the divestment mission. However, this is a chance for the student union to stand up for students. The moratorium would stay in place if the motion passed, so this is not a win-lose situation. This is a chance for the students who use McGill Athletics to have a better experience and to remove the control of students' experience from the administration.

Councillor Djoussou states that VP Finance mentioned that the current wording of the motion could allow for an increase of the other ancillary fee, so an amendment could be made to change that. They remind everyone that McGill Athletics was present during the first few months of the [COVID-19] pandemic, and they did not increase the fees, even though they could not provide all services. They remind everyone that Athletics and Recreation made the fitness centre free for the first half of the Fall 2021 semester, because this acknowledges how important physical health is.

Member of the Gallery Parsons highlights that currently, a lot of the discourse seems to say that McGill Athletics and Recreation and Divest McGill have a common enemy, but the reality is that McGill Athletics has their hands tied. They may bear the McGill name, but fiscally speaking, they can only request for so much money from McGill, because legally, the school cannot give them more money. The reality is that students are the main funders of Athletics and Recreation, and as it stands the funds allocated to services are going to be dipped into just to ensure the building can stay alive. This question was brought up at the 2020 Senate, asking how McGill Athletics could continue to provide services.

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**Question:**

Member of the Gallery Caddy asks if any of the individuals supporting this motion can give information about the student users of the facilities and if there has been polling about whether the clients are unsatisfied with the current status of the building.

**Answer:**



Councillor Djoussou answers that the fee has been used to create an addition to the facility, for example study lounges, the mezzanine in the fitness centre, and there are more ideas. Because of the lack of funding and participation from students, money cannot be brought in by the student body, which makes it impossible to add anything substantial to the facility.

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Councillor Coussa moves to call the question, second by Councillor Javed.

Councillor Djoussou opposes calling the question.

The Speaker entertains a vote on calling the question.

The motion to call the question passes. The Speaker entertains a vote on the motion.

There are 8 votes in favour, 15 votes opposed and one abstention – the Motion fails.

b. Motion Regarding Reintroduction of the Facility Improvement Fee Referendum  
Question 2022-02-17 – **POSTPONED INDEFINITELY**

VP University Affairs believes that this Motion is now moot due to the failure of the previous motion. She moves to postpone this motion indefinitely, seconded by Councillor Djoussou.

Seeing no opposition to postponing the motion, it is postponed indefinitely.

c. Motion Regarding the French Accessibility Fee Referendum Question 2022-02-17 –  
**UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

VP Affaires Internes explique que cette motion suggère qu'au référendum de l'hiver, un frais de 0.25 \$ par semestre serait ajouté pour chaque étudiant, sans droit de retrait. Ils ont un budget qui suggère comment le frais serait administré. En 2020, il y a eu une question d'augmenter le frais, qui a été mal administré par le Conseil Exécutif. Depuis ce temps-là, ils ont engagé une traductrice, alors le plan n'a pas vraiment de soutien, car ils ont déjà administré plusieurs plans qui ont été établis. Une des raisons que le frais n'est pas passé en 2020 est car le frais proposé était 3.00 \$. Avec 0.25 \$, ils peuvent quand même promouvoir la culture francophone, un des mandats de l'AÉUM, une compagnie bilingue. Ils ne font pas assez pour promouvoir la francophonie québécoise ni française, et avec ce frais, l'AÉUM pourrait accueillir plus d'événement culturels, et plaider pour les droits des étudiants francophones, qui ne sont pas poussés par l'Administration McGill. Le frais les donneraient environ 16 000 \$ pour soutenir les étudiants francophones, et promouvoir la langue française aux étudiants anglophones qui aimeraient apprendre le français, mais n'ont pas la chance.

Question Period:



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**Question:**

Membre de la Galerie Buraga demande s'il y a une raison que le frais n'est pas intégré à la cotisation des membres.

**Réponse:**

VP Affaires Internes répond qu'ils veulent vraiment mettre une emphase sur les étudiants francophones, et avec un frais universel, l'argent est distribué différemment, et c'est possible qu'ils n'auraient pas le même montant d'argent à chaque année. L'AEUM veut avoir un frais francophone particulier pour promouvoir la francophonie chez l'AEUM. En fait, plusieurs commissions ont leur propre frais, alors la Commission de la francophonie devrait en avoir une aussi.

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Seeing no further questions, the Speaker entertains a debate period, with a maximum one-minute speaking time and a maximum of five (5) speakers until a motion for an extension is presented.

Conseiller Wan félicite les auteurs de cette résolution pour promouvoir la langue française.

Conseillère Applegate remercie la VP Affaires Internes pour cette motion, et le soutien qu'elle pourra apporter aux étudiants francophones qui manquent de soutien.

VP Finances remercie la VP Affaires Internes pour son travail sur cette motion, comme c'est important en tant que frais, pour s'assurer que les besoins des étudiants francophones sont atteints. Il répond qu'ils demandent un frais séparé de la cotisation des membres pour assurer qu'ils auront des fonds à chaque année. Quand ils font des changements à la cotisation de base, il y a un risque que la quantité d'argent amassé change, et avec un cotisation culturelle, ils ont besoin de garantir que le groupe va avoir ses fonds année après année.

Conseillère Coussa remercie la VP Affaires Internes, mais aussi la Commissaire aux affaires francophones, qui a travaillé pour promouvoir la culture francophone.

Le Président du Conseil législatif accueille un vote.

Le VP Finances demande de vote à l'unanimité, Conseillère Coussa appuie cette motion.

Il n'y a aucune opposition à un vote à l'unanimité.



Le Président du Conseil législatif demande à tous ceux qui sont opposés à cette motion de lever la main.

La motion passe à l'unanimité.

d. Motion Regarding Ratification to the Society's Board Of Directors 2022-02-17 –  
**POSTPONED**

VP Internal Affairs states that she passed a similar motion in the Fall, and the Board of Directors has selected Members at Large to serve on the Board, and this is the motion to ratify their positions. She stands for questions, but this motion is very basic, that passes every fall and winter in order to ratify the Board of Directors.

The Speaker entertains a question period.

Seeing no questions, the Speaker entertains a question period.

Member of the Gallery Buraga asks if the movers are aware that this motion is in direct contravention of the 2017 Judicial Board case, and asks if they would be willing to look at this case and ensure that this is done in a more Constitutional manner next time.

The Speaker asks Member Buraga to forward this case to the Steering Committee, so that they can review it.

VP Internal asks Member Buraga to elaborate.

Member of the Gallery Buraga answers that the 2017 Judicial Board case regarded the separation of members of the Board as ratification. The judgement is available on the SSMU website, and they read the relevant part. “In a situation where a General Assembly elects a partial Board of Directors, [in this case, 8/12], replacement mechanisms to fill the missing seats. The SSMU constitution includes replacement mechanisms under the following circumstances: resignation/removal from office, death, director ceasing to be qualified.” At this point, the Judicial Board ruled that if 12 members are not ratified in the Fall semester, there is no mechanism under the constitution that permits the goal of this motion.

The Speaker asks for a motion for a recess so that the Steering Committee can consult on this.

VP Internal Affairs states that the Governance Manager was consulted on this motion, so perhaps the best way would be to table this motion for now, and refer back with the Dais and the Governance Manager to ensure this is constitutional, and then bring it back through an electric motion.



The Speaker asks if Member of the gallery Buraga could inform him by email the name of the Judicial Board case he is referring to.

The Speaker states that the motion can be approved by email, and debate on the substance of the motion can be debated now.

Councillor Wan motions to table this to an electric motion, pending the review by the Dais, seconded by Councillor Coussa seconds this motion.

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**Question:**

The President asks if Councillor Wan would be amenable to committing the motion back to the Steering Committee, instead of the Dias

**Question:**

Councillor Wan asks why the President would like that amendment.

**Answer:**

President Daryanani answers that the Steering Committee's role is to look at these issues, and it would compose of a more representative committee including Councillors, the Speaker and the Parliamentarian, and provide better insight.

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Councillor Wan would prefer their motion as it stands.

Seeing no opposition, this motion has been postponed.

- e. Motion Regarding Referendum Question on the Increase of the 2022 SSMU Membership Fee 2022-02-17 – **APPROVED**

VP University Affairs states that she did not write the majority of this Motion, and thanks the previous year's VP University Affairs Frizzle (2020-2021) for their work on this Motion. Legislative Councillors and Senators currently do a lot of unpaid labour, and most faculties do not pay their Councillors and Senators. Unpaid labour is problematic, as it allows only those who have the time and money to do it to get their voices heard, and councillors and senators do a lot of work. This motion is crucial, and failed at last year's referendum by 15 votes, and she is confident it can be passed this year. VP University Affairs stands for questions.

The Speaker entertains a question period.

Question Period:



**Question:**

Member of the gallery Masny asks what consultation was done with the SSMUnion in relation to this, since they have been in collective bargaining for some time, and an introduction of such a motion might not be in accordance with their needs.

**Answer:**

VP University Affairs responds that she was a part of the organising committee for the SSMUnion, and served on the SSMUnion's Executive Committee. She believes that the SSMUnion's main opposition to the proposal was that collective bargaining was progressing very slowly, and there were concerns that it was not the priority. She cannot consult directly with the SSMUnion due to a conflict of interest.

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**Question:**

Councillor Wan asks the Mover of the motion if there is a budget available for this motion, and if not, if there will be one available on the ballot at Referendum.

**Answer:**

VP University Affairs responds that there is a budget included.

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**Question:**

Councillor Wan asks if the budget will be included on the ballot at referendum.

**Answer:**

VP University Affairs indicates that the budget should be accessible, and if anyone would like to amend the wording of the question she would be open to that.

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Seeing no further questions, the Speaker entertains a debate period.

**Debate Period:**

Councillor Saad understands the motivation behind this motion, but he believes it will create more problems than solutions. Once paid positions are created, the chances are higher that people run for these positions for the wrong reasons. Indeed, some students who could not run before may now be able to, but there is no guarantee that those students would win. They believe there would be a surplus of dishonesty, manipulation and bad faith once these positions are made paid.



Councillor Wan states that he made a similar comment last year, and he will be personally abstaining from voting on this Motion, as they plan on running for a third (3rd) term as SSMU Representative. Seeing as they would benefit from the monetary gain from this motion, they will abstain, and invite others who are in similar positions to abstain.

Councillor Coussa states that, as a Councillor who is paid by the Arts Undergraduate Society (AUS), AUS Execs have not run into the problems mentioned by Councillor Saad. She believes it is a privilege to run without being paid, and a privilege for one to have the time to do this job. By voting for Senators and Councillors to be paid, the SSMU would become more accessible to a wider body of students.

VP Internal Affairs agrees with Councillor Coussa, as they have a Policy against Unpaid Internships, which is not the same thing. They do not want to promote unpaid labour, and councillors work very hard, and it would motivate more people to run for student government. She hopes that it encourages councillors to become more involved, and sit on more committees and take more initiatives. They have seen great work this year, but Councillors have the opportunity to contribute a lot more, and a reward would motivate them to put in more work.

Member of the gallery Caddy states that it would be wonderful to have more options when voting, and even if people were running for financial incentive, they urge people to think if that would really be an issue.

Councillor Zhang states that not many Councillors have done polls of their students' opinions, which is why this Motion will go to referendum if passed. They believe that there are Councillors who are being paid, and the Executives are paid, and to imply that paying for student government positions is impure, is unfair to those who are paid.

The Speaker states that the debate period has elapsed.

Member of the gallery Masny states that the policy mentioned in the motion has expired.

The Speaker states that Member Masny's statement is out of order. He asks that if there are any future constitutional issues, that those who notice these send him a message.

VP Finance motions to extend the debate period by two (2) minutes, seconded by VP University Affairs.

VP University Affairs asks the Speaker to preview the document to show the Policy on Unpaid Internships. She states that she is happy to strike that section. She does not find it troubling that the policy has expired.

The Speaker states that there can be a vote on whether to strike this section. He asks Member of the Gallery Masny if this is the section they were referring to.





Member of the Gallery Masny confirms in the affirmative, and they do not think it is relevant to strike it, but they could add relevant information.

The Speaker asks VP University Affairs if she would like to strike or amend this section.

VP University Affairs states that it could remain as it stands.

Seeing no opposition, the debate period is extended by 2 minutes.

VP Finance asks how this motion would affect the membership of the SSMUnion. He is concerned that having representatives being members of the Union could cause a conflict of interest, and would cause a worse conflict of interest if they were selected on the Board of Directors. He asks if there is a section of this motion that would prevent members from joining the SSMUnion.

VP University Affairs answers that if a role is created, there is criteria it meets to be a unionisable role. The criteria include hiring and firing power, and discipline power. She notes that there have been people who have been both SSMU employees and councillors, and as far as she knows that has been allowed. Conflict of interest has been dealt with on an individual level. There are ways to ensure that conflicts of interests are respected and that people are not put in inappropriate situations.

The debate period is exhausted. The Speaker entertains a vote.

VP University Affairs motions to vote by form, seconded by Councillor Coussa.

The Speaker opens the voting form.

There are 17 votes in favour, 2 oppositions and 6 abstentions, the motion passes.

The Speaker states that it is late in the evening and straw polls if the Council wishes to continue or end the meeting now. He asks people to react with the check mark if they wish to end now, and an 'x' mark if they wish to continue.

The majority wishes to end the meeting at this point in time. The Speaker asks for a motion to table the rest of the meeting, and for an alternative to passing these motions.

Councillor Saad proposes voting by email, and if students want to comment, they could send in comments and Councillors could read them before voting.

The Speaker states that anyone who wishes to comment can send the Speaker an email with their comment.

Councillor Coussa asks if they could consider all the motions at the same time, because she believes many of them would be voted on by unanimous consent.



VP External seconds Councillor Coussa's motion.

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**Question:**

Councillor Saad asks if many of these motions are still on the list because people wished to debate them.

**Answer:**

The Speaker states that many of these motions only passed for debate by a few votes, and the people who wished to debate them probably changed their minds.

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Councillor Coussa states that if they vote online they will not be able to debate.

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**Question:**

Councillor Wan asks if they are voting on grouping all four motions into the vote by unanimous consent, or voting on passing all four motions by unanimous consent.

**Answer:**

The Speaker responds that the Council will be voting on passing all remaining motions by unanimous consent.

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Councillor Wan opposes this.

The Speaker suggests that they vote on the motions individually by email.

Councillor Coussa motions to approve by unanimous consent all motions except the MUSTBUS motion, VP External Affairs.

The Speaker entertains a vote on all remaining motions except the Motion Regarding MUSTBUS Fee-Levy by unanimous consent by email.

VP Student Life asks which motions will be passed by email.

The Speaker answers that all the motions they have not discussed will be passed by email: Motions 12f, g, and i.



Councillor Coussa motions to table the rest of the agenda, seconded by VP Student Life.

Seeing no opposition, the rest of the meeting is tabled. The Speaker will send a voting form for each motion by email.

- f. Motion Regarding the Implementation of the Dialogue Referendum Question  
2022-02-17 – **POSTPONED TO EMAIL APPROVAL**

This motion is postponed to an email vote.

- g. Motion Regarding MUSTBUS Fee-Levy 2022-02-17 – **POSTPONED TO EMAIL APPROVAL**

This motion is postponed to an email vote.

- h. Motion Regarding Student Support Fee Referendum Question 2022-02-17 –  
**POSTPONED TO EMAIL APPROVAL**

This motion is postponed to an email vote.

- i. Motion Regarding Referendum Question on the Creation of a Black Affairs Fee Levy  
2022-02-17 – **POSTPONED TO EMAIL APPROVAL**

This motion is postponed to an email vote.

### 13. Reports by Committees – **POSTPONED UNTIL MARCH 24**

The Reports by Committees are postponed until the meeting of March 24, 2022.

- a. Executive Committee
- b. Community Engagement Committee
- c. Environment Committee
- d. Mental Health Committee
- e. Comité des affaires francophones
- f. Services Review Committee

### 14. Reports by Councillors – **POSTPONED UNTIL MARCH 24**

Reports by Councillors are postponed until the meeting of March 24, 2022.

- a. Councillor Wan (Medicine)
- b. Councillor Saad (Management)
- c. Councillor Bellia (Engineering)



- d. Councillor Applegate (FYC)
- e. Councillor Awan (Clubs)
- f. Councillor D'Amore (PTOT)
- g. Councillor Tiniacos (Science)
- h. Councillor Gurung (Arts)

15. Executive Reports – **POSTPONED UNTIL MARCH 24**

The Executive Reports are postponed until the meeting of March 24, 2022.

- a. VP Finance
- b. VP Student Life
- c. VP University Affairs
- d. VP External Affairs
- e. VP Internal Affairs

16. Confidential Session – **POSTPONED UNTIL MARCH 24**

The Confidential Session is postponed until the meeting of March 24, 2022.

17. Adjournment: **23:20**

Councillor Claret motions to adjourn the meeting, seconded by VP External.

The meeting is adjourned at 23:20 on February 17, 2022.

*Darshan Daryanani*

Darshan Daryanani, President