



SSMU BOARD OF DIRECTORS PUBLIC MINUTES

November 18, 2021

The Board of Directors meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be held by teleconference on Thursday, November 18, 2021 at 18:00.

Present: Alexandre Ashkir (Chair, non-voting), Eric Sader (Officer), Claire Downie (Officer), Karla Heisele Cubilla (Officer), Sarah Paulin (Officer), Sacha Delouvrier (Officer, non-voting), Ghania Javed (Council Member), Yara Coussa (Council Member), Benson Wan (Legislative Councillor), Charlotte Gurung (Council Member)

Absent: Darshan Daryanani (Officer, non-voting), Daniel Dufour (General Manager, non-voting)

1. Call to Order: **18:11**

The Chair calls to order the meeting at 18:11 on November 18, 2021.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The Chair 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 Chair notes the absences of Officer Daryanani and the General Manager.

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

Director Paulin adds to the agenda the item 5.c.

Director Paulin motions to adopt the Agenda, seconded by Director Coussa. There is no opposition.

The Agenda is adopted.



5. Presentations and Guest Speakers:

a. Lobby Platform Presentation

Director Heisele Cubilla introduces the platform for student groups. Online platforms are an isolated experience and affect connectivity to classes, so Lobby Platform is an experience to watch presentations, have fun and keep chatting while in classes. Student groups can host social seminars, conferences and events in an all encompassing manner. The platform is time efficient and interactive. It is also highly secure and protective.

The Directors review a video of the platform. Various universities have implemented this platform.

Question period:

There are no questions.

b. Presentation by the OOI Office of Investments

Victoria, representative of the McGill Office of Investments (OOI), presents responsible investment practices. Specifically for the endowment. OOI reports to pension, vice principal, administration and finance, endowment reports to the board of governors. Pension plans are built from each member, and the endowment fund is McGill's money. This is the fourth largest endowment being 1.8 million assets are under management. Managers have constraints and these generate a benchmark return. Pool vehicles and units of funds give exposure to other companies. The goal of the endowment considers GSI considerations. Counselor recommendations are also given in the presentation with access to further links for more information.

In 2015, Divest McGill submitted to arguments to divest from fossil fuel. They acknowledged the importance of climate change. In 2016, there was a first assessment of GSI practices. In 2017 established a fossil fuel free fund, and investment internally managed by McGill students. In 2020 approved counselor recommendations and implementation plans. OOI focuses on operationalizing investment plans with a growing commitment. OOI does not invest in the Military regime in Vermont and Tobacco companies.

The target is a related target, compared to a benchmark. Calculating footprint within the target, as a normalized metric. Reducing carbon emissions is calculated through every provider, and commitments with managers, replacing to lower carbon footprint. Engagement with one investor amplifies the rest of the portfolio. Impact investments, renewals and green bonds, invest in tech green solutions. On track for the target by 2025. Engagement is a responsible investment strategy to have dialogue with portfolio companies to enhance their green portfolio. Victoria remarks the impact is



visible and the program with other universities gives more voice to other companies. For further information, the SRI report is publicly available. SRI recommendations will be reviewed again by the board in 2025.

Question period:

Question:

Director Downie asks why McGill University has not fully divested.

Answer:

Victoria answers that OOI is not tasked with that decision. The mandate is given by McGill University, and the reasons to choose recommendations are available at the SRI report.

The Chair shares the link with the board and compromises to send contact information and all information discussed by email.

Question:

Director Coussa asks about the counselors contact or other contact to advocate for Divest.

Answer:

Victoria answers that OOI is approved by the Board of Governors.

There are no further questions.

6. Executive Committee Public Report – **APPROVED**

Director Paulin presents the Public Report. The SSMU marketplace will be revamped. Many hiring motions, and approving for Legislative Council dates (last year). There have been more hiring motions, passed by the Executive Committee.

Question period:

There are no questions.

Director Sader motions to approve the Public Report, seconded by Director Downie. There is no opposition.



The report is approved.

7. Minutes for Approval:

The Chair presents the minutes.

Director Claire notes one minute document had parts confidential and public as there was discussion between the two forums. This was deemed an unfortunate session.

a. Board of Directors Public Minutes 2021-07-22 – **APPROVED**

Director Sader motions to approve the minutes, seconded by Director Wan. There is no opposition.

The Minutes are approved.

b. Board of Directors Public Minutes 2021-08-19 – **APPROVED**

Director Sader motions to approve the minutes Seconded by Director Coussa. There is no opposition. \

The Minutes are approved.

8. Motions for Approval:

The Chair presents the motions for approval.

a. Motion to ratify the Services Review Committee Report 2021-11-11 – **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

Director Heisele Cubilla presents the motion. Services are being reviewed in the constitution and reviewed by students. The grading has been established of who is going to be in charge of the events.

There are no questions nor debate.

Director Heisele Cubilla motions to approve by unanimous consent. Seconded by Director Javed. There is no opposition. The motion is approved.

b. Motion to ratify the Clubs Committee Report 2021-11-11 – **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

Director Heisele Cubilla presents the motion. There were approved Several interim status clubs, and in order to receive full status. The rejections are provided back with comments. Two Clubs constitutions were approved. Every change to status returns to the clubs with comments.



There are no questions nor debate.

Director Wan motions to approve by unanimous consent. Seconded by Director Heisele Cubilla. There is no opposition. The motion is approved.

c. Motion to approve the committee allocations of the Board of Directors 2021-2022 –
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Director Paulin presents the motion. The Chair goes through every committee, and if three (3) people want to join a committee, then there is a vote on who should join the committee. The Chair skips accountability as everyone is a Council member and are not eligible to sit on this committee.

Director Paulin clarifies that every Director must join a committee.

Director Wan and Director Heisele Cubilla join the Finance Committee.

Director Wan joins the Funding Committee.

Director Gurung and Director Coussa join the Gendered and Sexual Violence Policy (GSVP) Committee

Director Javed and Director Downie join the Health and Dental Review Committee

Director Gurung, Director Javed and Director Coussa join the Human Resources (HR) Committee.

Director Sader and Director Paulin join the Nominating Committee.

Governance reform committee and SSAMMOSA Committee are remaining vacant with Board seats.

Director Sader motions to approve by unanimous consent, seconded by Director Coussa. There is no opposition.

The motion is approved.

9. For Discussion:

The Chair calls for board members who want to bring points of discussion.

Director Coussa inquires about a question period as Agenda item #10 and to suspend the Rules. With $\frac{3}{4}$ in favour of Directors for Question Period to be added. There are no points for discussion.



10. Question Period:

a. Questions from constituents

Director Coussa mentions that questions have been submitted by email. Director Paulin clarifies that questions may have been sent by the constituents.

Question submitted by a constituent:

“Is the president a member of the Board? Why or why not. The constitution says that the president should be. If not, then a president should be according to internal regulations.”

The Chair clarifies that one or many questions may or may not be answered as one or all at the same time.

Answer:

Director Sader responds that the president is a non voting member of the board due to eligibility requirements in Canada. The Speaker was appointed as Chair by the Board of Directors per the Constitution.

Question submitted by a constituent:

“Why was the membership of the members at large not released at large during the general assembly?”

Answer:

Director Sader responds that due to inability of quorum, the meeting was turned into a consultative form. All motions were referred back to the Legislative Council. However, per SSMU Constitution, Article 6.5, the ratification of Board members can't be ratified as a referendum or by General Assembly.

Question submitted by a constituent:

“As the board is the highest governing body, it has gotten away with a lot of things through confidentiality. How will the board be more transparent and accountable?”

Answer:

Director Sader responds that the Board of Directors is responsible for human resources and financial matters of the Society. Which as with any other non-profit corporation, may be confidential. Per fiduciary duties, Board members keep the interest of the student body and



ensure to be as transparent as possible within matters for the society. He claims that the Board is exploring new ways with discussions on the SSMU website.

Question submitted by a constituent:

“What are the new goals of the board of directors?”

Answer:

Director Coussa responds that they are to represent the student body and SSMU. Making it accessible to everybody.

Question submitted by a constituent:

“Where is the general manager?”

Answer:

Director Coussa responds that the General Manager is on leave, he is a member of the Board in a non-voting capacity and attending meetings as required.

Question submitted by a constituent:

“As the same members keep coming back in different roles, some people have been at SSMU for three years. How does the hiring process work? Why are members allowed to serve in different capacities? Is this democratic? Is there a way to reform the board?”

Answer:

Director Coussa responds that Board members serve on a one year mandate on the SSMU Directors whether nominated by the Legislative Council or through the application process within the nominating committee. If Board members decide to reapply, this is a different process defined at SSMU constitution and Internal Regulations.

Question submitted by a constituent:

“Six months later we are still mandating accountability for the McGill Blacklist. When will SSMU publish a Master plan for racist surveillance and within the SSMU? When will SSMU publicly acknowledge the rampant decades old climate of anti-pastelentian surveillance and intimidation at McGill including the Doxin of over 20 McGill students and six faculty members?”

Answer:

Director Sader responds that a third party organization is investigating the Blacklist circulating at McGill University. The SSMU helps to ensure safety for all students on campus and within



McGill. The SSMU has made a statement regarding an independent investigation 2021 about an investigation on Doxxing that made public acknowledgement.

Question submitted by a constituent:

“Why was Director Alexander Karasick not suspended when such grave allegations came to light?”

Answer:

Director Sader responds that SSMU conducted a third party organization in order to ensure the safety of members, and the Board is waiting on the investigation results.

Question submitted by a constituent:

“When will University Affairs Secretary General Lauren Hill be suspended until the conclusion of the proper SSMU investigation into the property of the Blacklist?”

Answer:

Director Sader responds that SSMU conducted a third party organization in order to ensure the safety of members, and the Board is waiting on the investigation.

Question submitted by a constituent:

The board is in charge of HR matters and employees. Why are employees restricted from speaking with the media? What will the consequences be?

Answer:

Director Sader responds that this is not a matter of restriction, but of privacy. The SSMU's employees are not politicians nor representatives of the SSMU. Hence, they are not obligated to speak to the media. It must be remembered that SSMU is a Non-Profit Organization whose individuals depend on their careers and livelihood. The Board ensures a step by step process in order to ensure the wellbeing of individuals.

Question submitted by a constituent:

“The board of directors supervises HR and oversees the HR committee and HR policy. How is the board dealing with allegations of a toxic environment at SSMU? Is the board going to continue with the same practices?”

Answer:



Director Sader responds that in order to address the issue, the Board has reformed the Human Resources Committee. The Committee no longer consists of Executives and removed from everyday leadership. For past decisions, Director Sader may be able to address concerns on a case to case basis. Although Directors could be the target of an investigation of wrongful behavior, then removing them from the body will increase accountability. One equity Commissioner will be joining the Human Resources Committee as integrated today.

The Chair notes the end of questions. The Chair mentions that questions were not written properly as a matter of parliamentary procedure. In the future, the Chair will be stricter on forming questions and ask for proper parliamentary procedure. Leading or inserting too many questions in one may be troublesome to respond. Members are encouraged to ask questions, but in an independent manner.

There are no further questions.

11. Confidential Session: **19:24**

The Board of Directors enters into a Confidential Session at 19:24.

12. Motion to approve \$24,000 CAD for the purchase of 2,000 monthly seats in a 12 month contract for the Lobby Platform – **POSTPONED INDEFINITELY**

The motion is postponed indefinitely.

13. Adjournment: **22:47**

The Board of Directors meeting is adjourned at 22:47.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Eric Sader'.

Éric Sader, Vice-President (Finance)