



SSMU BOARD OF DIRECTORS PUBLIC MINUTES

September 22, 2022

The Board of Directors meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be held in the SSMU Boardroom and by teleconference on Thursday, September 22, 2022 at 18:00.

Present: Alexandre Ashkir (Chair, non-voting), Jaz Kaur (Parliamentarian, non-voting), Risann Wright (Officer), Val Masny (Officer), Kerry Yang (Officer), Marco Pizarro (Officer, non-voting), Cat Williams (Officer, non-voting), Hassanatou Koulibaly (Officer, non-voting), Benson Wan (Council Member), Charlotte Gurung (Council Member), Asiyah Siddique (Member at Large)

1. Call to Order: **18:08**

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 18:08.

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 takes attendance.

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

Seeing no additions or corrections, Director Wright motions to adopt the agenda. Director Masny seconds the motion to adopt.

Seeing no opposition, the agenda is adopted as distributed.

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

Director Wright presents the Executive Committee Public Report. She stands for questions.



The Chair entertains questions on this report.

Seeing no questions, Director Yang motions to ratify the report. Director Gurung seconds the motion to ratify the report.

Seeing no opposition, the Executive Committee Public Report is approved.

a. Announcement by President regarding IT

Director Wright reminds everyone to complete the two-factor authentication for their Director emails, there is a two-week window before the next meeting to do so.

6. Nominating Committee Public Report

The Parliamentarian presents the report. She states that the Committee ratified the decision regarding Judicial Board justices, and presents the redacted version. She spoke about mandates and memberships, and the Committee is looking for members and directors, which took place over the summer. She presents a summary of the application cycle. There is more information in the Confidential Report.

Question:

Director Masny asks if Directors should have been part of this Committee during the summer, since they are part of voting members.

Answer:

The Parliamentarian answers that she did not send anything out about this Committee.

Director Masny states that they will not motion to ratify this report because the Board was not a part of this process.

The Chair states that they have left the discussion time, and if they wish to discuss this further they can motion to reopen the debate, or have the full report presented in the Confidential Session, or they can remove the item from the agenda.

Director Wan motions to postpone this motion until after the confidential session. Director Gurung seconds the motion to postpone the motion.



Director Masny is opposed.

The Chair entertains a vote by placard.

The motion is postponed until after the confidential session.

7. Minutes for Approval:

- a. Board of Directors Public Minutes 2022-09-08 – **APPROVED**

Seeing no corrections, the minutes stand approved as distributed.

8. Email Approvals:

- a. Legislative Council Motions for Ratification 2022-09-15 – **APPROVED BY EMAIL
2022-09-19**

All Legislative Council Motions have been ratified and approved by email vote on September 19, 2022.

9. Motions for Approval:

- a. Motion to approve a total amount of \$13,089.51 (tax incl.) for SAESEM (Director Masny) – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

Director Masny states that they owe this amount to SAESEM for the Trash2Treasure program to collect used furniture and distribute it. This amount was signed off by former Director Eric Sader, but never brought to the Board. Before giving this money, they want to have this amount authorised. The quote is attached.

The Chair entertains a question period.

Seeing no questions, the Chair entertains a debate period.

Officer Pizarro states that former Director Sader signed this cheque already.

Director Masny motions to approve this motion by unanimous consent. Director Yang seconds the motion to approve.

Seeing no opposition, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, motion 9a is approved.



- b. Motion to approve the spending of up to \$65,000 on reusable menstrual products (menstrual pads, menstrual cups, and menstrual underwear) from period aisle for the monthly menstrual pick-up (Director Yang) – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

Director Yang states that there is a budget for this, and the Fund is supposed to accumulate in a separate account. Previously, the money was accumulating in the general SSMU budget, but Director Yang recently moved it back to the Menstrual Health Fund. There is quite a bit of money in there, and they want to spend the money according to the policy. He wants to buy products from Period Aisle, because the reusable menstrual products are very popular, and the budget can allow it.

The Chair entertains a question period.

Question:

Director Wan asks how long the \$65,000 will last for the products.

Answer:

Director Yang answers that this money will last for 8 months of monthly pickup. They also applied to the Sustainability Fund, so they could receive more money for further rounds. If they get the grant, the \$65,000 will last for two (2) months and if they do not get it the money will last for 3 months.

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

Director Yang motions to approve by unanimous consent. Director Wright seconds the motion to approve.

Seeing no opposition, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, motion 9b is approved.

Director Wan motions to suspend the rules to add a discussion item: N95 Mask Distribution. Director Masny seconds the motion to suspend the rules.

Seeing no opposition, the rules are suspended and the discussion item is added.

10. For Discussion:

- a. Legislative Council Reports; too many!



The Chair states that this point was brought up at the Steering Committee meeting, because there were a lot of reports submitted. They concluded that it would take at least an hour at each meeting to get through all the reports. The report schedule is on the Legislative Council drive, but the Chair wants to initiate a discussion at the Board level about these reports. A suggestion that was made is that the reports are reduced to one per faculty, per semester, which could help. It definitely needs to be discussed, because each report is at least 5-10 minutes. The Chair shares his screen with the report schedule. He presents the report schedule, and presents the reports for the next meeting, 10 Councillor reports and 5 Committee reports.

Question:

Director Masny asks why this is an issue this year, since the Legislative Council met monthly last year as well.

Answer:

The Chair answers that they started meeting once per month during the Winter 2022 semester, and now that they are doing it again and have decided to present the reports earlier in the agenda, it is becoming an issue. It was already an issue, however, last semester.

Officer Pizarro suggests asking people to read reports before the meeting and then entertain a question period.

Director Wan states that the reason there was not an issue last semester, because many Councillors and Committees did not submit reports. Theoretically, if everyone presented their report, it would have taken a lot longer.

Question:

The Chair agrees. He asks the Parliamentarian for clarification, since she is the one who receives the reports.

Answer:

The Parliamentarian states that a lot of people did not turn in their reports on time, since they take a long time to make. One time, they had to postpone all the reports.

Director Yang suggests having one report per faculty instead of one per councillor.



Question:

Director Mansy asks if it is one report per semester per councillor.

Answer:

The Chair answers yes.

Director Wright suggests presenting the highlights instead of a full report, and giving emphasis to the question period.

Director Masny is concerned that people would not have time to read the reports before the meeting. They suggest asking councillors for their opinion.

Question:

The Chair asks the Board if they want to send out a form to Councillors to get their opinion.

Answer:

Director Masny thinks this is a good idea, and adds an action item: Chair to draft a survey to be submitted to councillors to get their opinion on having 1 report per faculty instead of per councillor as well as to remove or shorten the presentation of the reports and put emphasis on the question period instead.

- i. **Action Item:** Speaker to draft a survey to be submitted to councillors to get their opinion on having 1 report per faculty instead of per councillor as well as to remove or shorten the presentation of the reports and put emphasis on the question period instead – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

The Chair entertains a vote by unanimous consent.

Seeing no opposition, Action Item 10.a.i. is approved unanimously.

- b. Accountability Committee

The Chair states that there has been a discussion to reduce the Accountability Committee to the Speaker, the Parliamentarian and the President, and reduce the scope of the Committee.



The Parliamentarian states that she did a lot of work on this over the summer, and agrees with the Chair, because it is very hard to get interest for the Committee. Currently, the Committee meets on an ad-hoc basis. The Parliamentarian thinks that they should meet at least once a semester, and then they present their reports at the beginning and the end of the Winter semester.

Question:

Director Wan asks how many meetings the Accountability Committee has had since August 2021.

Answer:

The Chair answers that they had 2 meetings, but none of them were proper since there were not enough voting members.

The Parliamentarian adds that they also had 2 directors who voted.

Question:

Director Wan asks, when the Committee met, what topics were discussed.

Answer:

The Parliamentarian answers that they focus on absences, missing or late reports, and behavioural concerns in the Legislative Council.

Director Masny is worried about having no members at large, since the Board cannot hold itself accountable. They think they should continue to have members at large on the committee.

The Parliamentarian states that another suggestion could be having an incentive for members at large to join the committee.

Director Yang states that students are not engaging because they do not see a purpose, but offering incentives could work well.

Director Wan states that it is important to have members at large, because they hold the Board and Councillors accountable. He is not in favour of giving incentives, but thinks that they could consult the general public to see why people are not interested.



Director Gurung thinks that this discussion should be discussed later.

Officer Pizarro suggests having the Judicial Board members at large on the Accountability Committee.

Director Gurung thinks that this could work, but the initial problem would remain.

Director Masny states that Judicial Board members are supposed to be as impartial as possible, and bringing them into this committee could impede on this ability.

Director Wright states that she is concerned about compensation for this committee, because it could raise concerns about conflicts of interest.

Director Gurung states that they discussed this last year, and had the legal team look into it. She believes that the Board is not allowed to give compensation to Directors.

Director Masny states that this was brought forward due to difficulty to find members at large, which requires a bigger discussion about Directors, Councillors and Chairs of the Committees. They think it is important to have this conversation at another time.

Question:

Director Gurung asks Director Masny if they are talking about the Committees in general.

Answer:

Director Masny is speaking about committees in general, since it is hard to fill the seats that are required, and they think it brings a larger question about SSMU's operations.

Director Wright clarifies that she is concerned about compensation for the Accountability Committee, but she is open to discussion about compensation in general as well.

c. BoD - Members-at-large Recruitment Process (Parliamentarian)

The Parliamentarian states that the application for Members at Large positions have been open since the beginning of the summer, but they have received no applications. When the semester started, things started to pick up, and they have received a few applications. In order to expedite the process, she asks if Directors will sit in on interviews with the Parliamentarian. She would appreciate any help.



Director Masny states that they need to recruit for the Nominating Committee before they elect members to the Board. Otherwise, they are making decisions without holding themselves accountable. They cannot approve nominations that were chosen by two (2) individuals.

The Parliamentarian points out that applications for Members at Large for the Nominating Committee have been open since the beginning of the summer as well, and it has been promoted a lot. She has actively worked on it, but they have not received any applications. Delaying the process would affect the composition of the Board, so that is why the Parliamentarian is trying to expedite the process, but she is okay with trying to fill the Nominating Committee before the Board.

Question:

Director Gurung asks the Parliamentarian if the Nominating Committee is recruiting Members at Large to start in November or to replace the ones who have graduated. So, she asks if the Members would be in office for a full term or only until November.

Answer:

The Parliamentarian answers that she is recruiting for both. Based on the interviews, the Nominating Committee can decide how long the terms will be.

Question:

Director Gurung notes that she has heard that there is only one person from the Legislative Council who wants to be a Council Representative, and she asks what the Board is going to do about that.

Answer:

The Parliamentarian answers that this does not fall under the Nominating Committee's scope, who is only responsible for Members at Large for the Board.

Question:

Director Wan adds that councillors are involved in nominating themselves to the Legislative Council at its meeting. They are opening up those seats spontaneously. He asks if they have spoken to the Governance Manager, since they are in a dire need for more Directors and Members at Large, and if she thinks they should fill the Nominating Committee or the Board first.

Answer:



Director Wright answers that they are in dire need of members, and the priority has been placed on getting the Board seats filled. They have around a month to do so, since many terms expire in November.

Question:

Director Gurung inquires if they can expedite the process of recruiting Directors to fill this term's seats until November 14. And then, they could re-run the process after working on the Nominating Committee seats.

Answer:

Director Masny responds that this could work, but they are still concerned that the Board members who were elected with the improper Nominating Committee would be re-elected in November. In the manners of recruitment, social media was used, but there are alternatives that have not been explored.

Director Yang states that it is more important to fill the Board seats right now, because they have more authority. Also, the Board is composed of mostly Directors right now, and it is important to get diverse opinions on the Board.

Director Gurung adds that Director Masny's concerns would be exacerbated if they do not fill the Board seats soon. The executives can out-vote the Board, and once she leaves, another viewpoint will be gone. Director Masny's concerns about diversity will be actualised no matter what, and the consequences will be dire.

Question:

Officer Pizarro asks if they could consider letting international students become Directors, or if this would make the whole situation more complicated. He believes that international students have more desire to get involved, which could help the Board's situation.

Answer:

Director Gurung answers that there is a legal reason that this cannot be done. They might have to contact their legal team to do this, and the problem is more pressing than that.



Director Masny states that they have started to look into this, and they don't have a legal requirement, but the issue is with alcohol permits. It is not clear what this entails, and once Director Masny has finished this report they can report their findings.

Question:

Director Yang asks how the search is going for the International Student Representative.

Answer:

The Parliamentarian answers that the applications are not open yet, since they are finishing up with the Judicial Board Justices, then opening the Board applications, and then doing the International Student Representative applications.

Director Masny recommends that they recruit Members at Large and Nominating Committee Members at Large at the same time. They ask the Parliamentarian to diversify the recruitment methods, in order to be able to recruit members that cannot be reached through the internet.

Officer Pizarro suggests that the Parliamentarian asks the SSMU staff for help with this.

Director Masny suggests having a Q & A session for students to meet Directors, so that they can have a better idea of what the role entails and if it interests them.

Question:

Director Wan states that former Director Paige Collins had suggested that. He asks if these sessions were well-attended.

Answer:

The Chair answers that he does not remember, but he can check the minutes.

Director Masny adds an action item: the Parliamentarian to hold an information session about being a Member at Large on the Board of Directors, possibly at the y-intersection.

The Chair reads out the Action Item regulations. He suggests that this could work as a motion, since it is quite long.

Director Masny asks for suggestions on a date for this event, they suggest October 6.



Director Gurung asks if they could set up a date for tabling at the y-intersection, and they could promote the Q & A session. Director Masny is amenable to this.

Director Gurung amends the action item: to have the Parliamentarian organise tabling at the y-intersection with a date to be set by October 1, and an in-person event with the President.

Director Wright asks for clarification on the event. Director Gurung clarifies the event.

The Chair notes that they need to ask the Parliamentarian if she is available to plan this event.

The Parliamentarian answers that she will need help, since she is quite busy with school, clubs, and work.

The Chair suggests having 2-3 Directors attend the meeting.

Officer Pizarro suggests tabling before the General Assembly, because they can then advertise the Q & A session at the GA. He suggests that Director Masny plan this, because they are good at planning events.

Director Masny expresses desire to plan the tabling session if another Director can help with the Q & A.

Question:

Director Gurung asks if she can send the action item by chat and have the Chair read it out.

Answer:

The Chair answers yes. He suggests making this an official motion.

Director Gurung asks if everyone is amenable to this.

Director Masny asks who is willing to work on the Q & A session.

Director Wright states that she would not be able to take this on, but could offer support. She suggests that this falls within the VP Internal's portfolio.

The Chair states that Director Williams had to leave.



Director Gurung asks if they can have an action item for the tabling at the y-intersection, and then write up a motion after Director Wright connects with Director Williams.

Director Masny states that the main point of tabling is to have a later event. They suggest having the Events team plan this, because they would appreciate not doing this alone.

Director Wright states that she can be there for support.

Director Masny recommends that they organise the tabling, and for them, Directors Wright and Williams to organise the Q & A.

Director Gurung states that she can help, but she is very busy and her schedule might impede planning.

Director Wright asks for more clarification on the timeline.

Director Gurung states that tabling is easy to set up, and she suggested October 1, and then they would have the Q & A about a week later.

Director Masny echoes Officer Pizarro's comment about presenting the date for the Q & A at the GA, because there will hopefully be a large attendance. If they have the GA the 29, they can table the week after that.

Director Gurung states that they need to leave and then join back.

Director Masny retracts their action item. Director Yang seconds the motion to retract the action item.

Seeing no opposition, the action item is retracted.

- d. Governance Reform Committee (President)
 - i. 2 Directors needed

Director Wright states that the Governance Reform Committee (GRC) needs 2 seats for Directors, and asks if there is any interest. They can reach out to herself or the Policy and Advocacy Coordinator (PAC) if they are interested.

Question:

Officer Pizarro asks if the only available Directors are Directors Wan, Siddique and Gurung.

Answer:



Director Wright answers that any Director who is not helping the committee in another capacity can join.

There is no further discussion.

e. N95 mask distribution

Question:

Director Wan states that last year, the Board decided to purchase N95 masks and distribute them on campus. He asks if all the masks have been distributed, and if not, how many are left. If there are masks left, he asks what they plan to do with them.

Answer:

Director Yang clarifies that there are masks in his office, and he has been putting them out in the office for people to take. People have been taking them every day.

Director Masny states that they also have some in their office, and they use them for protests. It is hard for them to estimate how many masks they have.

Question:

Director Wan notes that he finds it hard to believe that students need N95s. He asks how the Board would feel about donating the masks to someone or somewhere who needs those masks. He suggests hospitals or clinics, because that would be a better use of those resources.

Answer:

Director Masny responds that it depends on the numbers. If there are a lot of masks leftover, it makes sense, but it is also important to consider immuno-compromised students who would feel more comfortable having those masks. They also remind everyone that it has been proven that medical masks are less efficient than N95s.

Director Yang is open to this idea. Given the pace of the distribution, he has already gone through about a box of N95s. So, by the end of the semester, they might have run out. He echoes Director Masny's point.



Director Wan proposes an action item: For the Executive Committee to do a rough inventory (to the nearest 100) of the amount of N95 masks on the SSMU premises before the next Board meeting.

- i. **Action Item:** for Executive Committee to do a rough inventory (to the nearest 100) of the amount of N95 masks on the SSMU premises before the next board meeting – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

The Chair entertains a vote by unanimous consent.

Seeing no opposition, the action item is unanimously approved.

11. Confidential Session: **19:34**

The Board of Directors enters into a confidential session at 19:34.

12. Nominating Committee Redacted Report – **APPROVED**

Director Wan states that the Board decided that they will adopt the report, and they have some suggestions on how to improve the workings of the Committee, including letting Directors know when the interviews are going on. In this instance, they are happy with the process.

Director Wan motions to vote on this report by placard. Director Yang seconds the motion.

The Chair entertains a vote by placard.

With 4 votes in favour and 1 vote against, the Nominating Committee Redacted Report is approved.

13. Next Meeting Date:

- a. Thursday, October 20, 2022 at 6:00PM EST

Question:

Officer Pizarro asks why they are skipping the next meeting.

Answer:

Director Masny answers that there is a Legislative Council meeting that week.



The Chair states that next week is the General Assembly, the week after is the Legislative Council meeting, the following week is Thanksgiving and Reading Break, and then the Board meeting will take place the week after.

Question:

Officer Pizarro asks if this has already been agreed upon.

Answer:

The Chair answers that it was agreed upon. If there is any urgent business, a special meeting can be called.

The Chair proposes a two-minute recess to present the Standing Rules.

Director Masny motions for a two-minute recess. Director Yang seconds the motion for a two-minute recess.

Seeing no opposition, the Board enters a two-minute recess.

They return from the recess at 19:18.

Director Masny motions to suspend the rules to add two motions: Motion to mandate Officer Marco Pizzaro to organise tabling at the Y-intersection by October 12, 2022; tabling will promote applications for roles at SSMU, in particular Board of Directors and nomination members-at large and will advertise a Q and A event with existing Directors, and: Motion to mandate Director Val Masny to organise a Q and A with existing Directors by October 22, 2022; the Q and A event will promote applications for roles at SSMU in particular Board of Directors and nomination members at large, the event will have minimum of 3 current Directors.

Director Gurung seconds the motions.

The Chair entertains a vote on suspending the rules.

Seeing no opposition, the rules are suspended and the motions are added.

14. Motion to mandate Officer Marco Pizzaro to organise tabling at the Y-intersection by October 12, 2022; tabling will promote applications for roles at SSMU, in particular Board of Directors and nomination members-at large and will advertise a Q and A event with existing Directors –

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED



Director Masny presents the motion, per the Board's previous discussions. Officer Pizarro has volunteered to organise the tabling at the y-intersection.

The Chair entertains a question period.

Director Gurung motions to call the question on this motion and the following motion.

The Chair asks if Director Gurung would like to vote by bloc. Director Gurung answers yes. Director Masny seconds the motion to call the question.

Seeing no opposition, the Chair entertains a vote.

Director Wright states that she would still like to help with these events.

Seeing no opposition, the motions are approved.

15. Motion to mandate Director Val Masny to organise a Q and A with existing Directors by October 22, 2022; the Q and A event will promote applications for roles at SSMU in particular Board of Directors and nomination members at large, the event will have minimum of 3 current Directors – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

16. Adjournment: **20:25**

The Chair adjourns the meeting at 20:25.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Risann Wright'.

Risann Wright, SSMU President