



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

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SSMU BOARD OF DIRECTORS PUBLIC MINUTES

October 20, 2022

The Board of Directors meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be held by teleconference on Thursday, October 20, 2022 at 18:00.

Present: Alexandre Ashkir (Chair, non-voting), Jaz Kaur (Parliamentarian, non-voting), Val Masny (Officer), Marco Pizarro (Officer, non-voting), Benson Wan (Council Member), Charlotte Gurung (Council Member), Risann Wright (Officer)

Absent: Kerry Yang (Officer), Hassanatou Koulibaly (Officer, non-voting), Cat Williams (Officer, non-voting), Asiyah Siddique (Member at Large)

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

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 18:09.

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. Due to low attendance, he ensures that the Board meets quorum by taking a short recess.

The Board resumes at 18:17. Director Wright has arrived and quorum has been met.

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

The agenda is distributed.



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Director Wan adds a discussion item: Board Q & A Session.

Seeing no further modifications, Director Wan motions to adopt the agenda.

Director Masny seconds the motion.

Seeing no opposition, the agenda is adopted.

5. Motion to adopt the Board of Directors Standing Rules 2022-2023 – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

The Chair presents the Standing Rules with the modifications made for this year, which include precisions on hybrid meetings and email motions.

The Chair entertains a discussion period.

Question:

Director Wan asks if there is a definitive timeline for a response on items marked 'urgent.'

Answer:

The Chair answers that the Dais would take priority on urgent motions when drafting them. The minimum voting period of 48 hours would be applied.

Director Wan states that, this year, there have been instances where the Board of Directors has been asked to respond to an email motion within 24 hours, which is unfeasible at times.

The Chair states that this section was added to prevent this, as 24 hours is not a feasible timeline. The 72-hour voting period is recommended, but the 48-hour voting period can be used in emergency situations.

Director Wan motions to adopt the Standing Rules. Director Wright seconds the motion.

Seeing no opposition, the Standing Rules are unanimously approved.

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



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Director Wright presents the Executive Committee Public Report, which includes some hirings and a purchase of SSMU merchandise. She stands for questions.

Seeing no opposition and no questions, the Executive Committee Public Report is ratified.

7. Legislative Council Motion for Ratification:

- a. [Motion Regarding the Adoption of a Consultation Policy 2022-09-15](#) – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

Director Masny indicates that they are unsure if they and Director Wan can vote on the ratification of this motion, as the mover and seconder. This motion provides guidelines to people when writing motions, to ensure they consult the appropriate stakeholders. They stand for questions.

The Chair states that they can abstain if they do not feel it is appropriate for them to vote. Since they are acting in a different capacity on the Board than on the Legislative Council, they are allowed to vote.

The Chair entertains a discussion period.

Director Wright motions to enter into voting on this motion. Director Wan seconds this motion.

Seeing no opposition, this motion is ratified.

8. Minutes for Approval:

- a. Board of Directors Public Minutes 2022-08-01 – **APPROVED**
- b. Board of Directors Public Minutes 2022-08-11 – **APPROVED**
- c. Board of Directors Public Minutes 2022-09-22 – **APPROVED**

The minutes have been distributed. Seeing no corrections, the minutes stand approved.

9. Motions for Approval:

- a. Motion to approve the following budget for an activist bootcamp of skill and knowledge sharing: building an activist community (Director Val) – **APPROVED**

Director Masny presents this motion and notes that this summer, they have been working to create this event. The bootcamp is a workshop series organised by student associations across Quebec to



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recognise systems of oppression and marginalisation and provide tools to fight against these. The budget for the event has been reviewed by them and Director Pizarro. The budget is mostly comprised of transportation, food, accessibility and building rentals. Other students' associations are also contributing to the budget, and Director Masny expects other students' associations to contribute. They stand for questions.

Director Wan seconds this motion.

The Chair entertains a question period.

Question:

Director Wan asks the Chair if this motion must go through the Legislative Council approval prior to Board ratification.

Answer:

The Chair answers no, since this motion is budgetary.

Question:

Officer Pizarro asks why Director Wan asked his question.

Answer:

Director Wan answers that certain budgets over \$10,000 must be approved by the Legislative Council, including student groups. He is unsure where this event lies, and he was just wondering, as he sits on the Funding Committee.

The Chair answers that all budgets above \$10,000 need to be approved by the Board of Directors.

Director Wan explains that funding applications to the Funding Committee need to go through the Legislative Council first.

The Chair notes that since this is not a funding application, there is a different process.

Director Masny tells Director Wan that they found that it must be approved by the Board of Directors, but they will make an announcement at the Legislative Council meeting about the event.



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The Chair entertains a debate period.

Question:

Director Wright asks what sort of topics would be covered in the event, should the Board of Directors fund it.

Answer:

Director Masny answers that some topics include the activism community, history of activism, legal rights, cybersecurity, climate justice, defund the police, decolonisation, sex work, gentrification and many more.

Question:

Director Wright asks who might be running some of the workshops.

Answer:

Director Masny answers that they have various community organisations coming, and they have a few speakers confirmed from the Defund the Police Coalition, as well as activist students from McGill, and they plan to invite various clubs and services.

The Chair notes that Officer Koulibaly has arrived at 18:33.

Question:

Director Wan asks when the bootcamp will take place.

Answer:

Director Masny answers that it will take place from November 4 at 16:00 to November 6 at 12:00.

Director Wan states that he is hesitant to bypass the Legislative Council on this motion, since they are SSMU's activist representation groups. By bypassing them, they should hear from them. Seeing as there is a meeting next Tuesday, he would prefer to have this committed to the Legislative Council, and then vote on the motion by email once it has been approved. Director Wan asks how everyone feels about this.



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Question:

Director Gurung asks if there is a requirement for the Legislative Council to review this budget, as they are the political branch of SSMU. This budget seems like an initiative that needs Board approval because of the cost.

Answer:

The Chair answers that there are no rules that state that this must be sent to the Legislative Council.

Director Masny states that they were confused with this approach. This is a budget approval, and there is a mandate in the constitution to create spaces for social justice activism. This is an attempt to do so, and foster students' associations' relationships across Quebec. They can have a vote on this at the Legislative Council, but they could rephrase the motion to include this.

Director Gurung believes that they can vote on it now, since they have voted on similar initiatives before.

Officer Pizarro notes that he had a meeting with previous Executives on Tuesday, and they spoke about the Funding Committee. New events could be brought to the Funding Committee. He asks where this mandate is coming from.

Director Masny states that the need for an activism space is outlined in the Constitution as a broad mandate. There are many ways to achieve the mandate, but Director Masny thought of this event because many student groups partake in activism at McGill and across the province. There is a need to come together and share knowledge to build an activist community.

Director Wright explains that this is beyond the Legislative Council's purview, and thinks it may be helpful to have more information about the initiative before approving the motion. She believes that, in the interest of transparency, a proposal could be done to ensure more understanding of the initiative being funded.

Director Masny states that this is possible in the future, but it is very hard to facilitate groups coming to the event when there is no budget to fund their work.



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Director Gurung echoes Director Wright's statements, and reminds everyone that when the previous VP Student Life presented a large budget, she had the Events Coordinator give the Board a 15-minute presentation about the initiative.

Director Gurung suggests a strawpoll, to inquire if they want to table this motion or vote on it now.

The Chair answers that they could have a strawpoll, propose to table or vote on the motion.

Director Masny states that the next Board meeting is in 3 weeks, which is after the event. It is hard for them to confirm participants without a budget. They could give a presentation, but otherwise the timeline would be too tight.

Director Gurung motions to call the question. Director Masny seconds the motion to call the question.

Director Wright is opposed. She would appreciate a verbal proposal of the motion.

Director Masny is amenable to this.

The Chair suspends the rules to allow Director Masny to give a short presentation.

Director Masny indicates that this activist bootcamp where individuals from all over the province of Québec will share expertise and thoughts or struggles with activism. This event aims to acknowledge the systems of oppression and marginalisation in history, and give tools to fight them and create a sense of community around those oppressed. This event is from November 4-6, 2022, and food will be provided. The goal is to allow for a space that does not exist, because of the fight against student unions in previous years. There is a history of bootcamps happening with a federation that has since been dismantled, and the pandemic has increasingly deteriorated knowledge sharing. Everyone would arrive Friday night, and there would be a full day of workshops on Saturday, and Sunday there would be a few workshops in the morning and a public assembly in the afternoon. Presenters are still being determined, and once everything is finalised at the Board level, Director Masny will invite more student groups.

The Chair entertains a vote on the motion.

Question:

Director Wan asks if they could go back into question period.

Answer:

The Chair states that they are past that point, but he will allow a short question period.



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Question:

Director Wan asks if they are expecting that over half of the events' participants will be from McGill, which would allow for the deficit to be covered.

Answer:

Director Masny answers that they hope that McGill students will be the majority, since they are hosting it. They note that they are in discussion with other student unions who would like to contribute, so it is likely that the \$11,000 deficit will be lower than that. The contributions will be from student groups, and will be proportionate to their student body.

Question:

Director Gurung asks if the other student unions mentioned by Director Masny refer to other schools or faculty associations at McGill.

Answer:

Director Masny answers that they had not considered contacting faculty associations, but they can do that.

Director Wan states that they should be funding based on attendance rather than capacity. McGill student funds should be used for McGill student events, and he thinks that students would not be very happy if their fees were being used for an event where there were not many McGill students. Concordia also has as many, if not more, undergraduate students as McGill, so it would be reasonable for them to fund as much as McGill is funding.

Director Mansy notes that this is an interesting argument, although they are unsure if they can approve a budget based on registration. This is about an effort to publicise this event in McGill circles. A lot of the budget would be going towards security in the University Centre, which is required. Ideally, they would receive more funding than this. They assure Director Wan that McGill students will be notified of the event. The event will also be completely bilingual and hybrid, which might entail more students.

Director Gurung echoes Director Wan's sentiments, particularly with Concordia University's student population. She thinks they need to vote, or the event will not happen. These budgets should be brought to the Board with grace periods, so that further inquiry can be done to avoid this situation. The cost from SSMU's building stands out to Director Gurung, and she thinks they should be paying less of the budget as opposed to more.



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Director Masny states that Director Gurung and themselves are ready for voting, and that the rules were suspended for a short question period.

The Chair answers that this is technically true, but he suspended the motion before getting the chance to vote on the question. He would prefer if that motion was presented again.

Director Gurung motions to call the question. Director Masny seconds the motion to call the question.

Seeing no opposition, the Chair entertains a vote.

Director Wan is opposed to this motion.

The Chair entertains a vote by reaction.

Director Masny asks if it is practice to abstain from a motion they presented.

The Chair answers that he would abstain if he were in Director Masny's shoes.

The Chair entertains a vote.

With two votes in favour, one opposed and one abstention, the motion passes.

b. Motion to Approve Committee Nominations (Director Wright) – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

Director Wright states that the Director seats on some committees need to be filled, and they need to discuss how to facilitate engagement with the Board of Directors' committees. There has been a small delay in getting these committees off the ground. They usually try to start them in September. There have been some recruitment efforts. Perhaps some Directors could also volunteer themselves for some positions.

i. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is overseen by Officer Pizarro, and they are looking for two (2) Directors to sit on the committee.

Officer Pizarro states that the Finance Committee meets once a month to go over SSMU's finances, look over the investment portfolio and any relevant projects. They are looking for two Directors.



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The Chair states that Directors are required to sit on committees, and these will be sent out by email again due to today's low attendance.

- ii. Gendered and Sexual Violence Policy Committee
 1. Nominate Director Gurung

Director Wright states that the Gendered and Sexual Violence Policy (GSVP) Committee is under the purview of VP University Affairs. This committee is very important, and asks if there are Directors who would like to sit on the committee.

Director Gurung is happy to join, as she was a part of it last year.

Director Wan wants to put his name down for the Finance Committee.

Officer Koulibaly states that, for the GSVP Committee, only two Directors that are not Executives can sit on this committee.

The Chair states that they had this problem last year, so that is why they waited until they had hired more directors.

Director Gurung notes that she is happy to sit on the GSVP Committee, but her term ends in 6 weeks.

- iii. Governance Reform Committee

Director Wright states that this committee has some volunteers.

- iv. Health and Dental Review Committee
 1. Nominate Director Yang

Director Wright states that she co-chair this committee with Officer Pizarro, and they need two Directors to sit on this committee. She notes that Director Wan sits on this committee in another capacity.

The Chair notes that Director Yang has joined the meeting at 19:10.

Director Yang volunteers for the Health and Dental Review Committee.

- v. Human Resources (HR) Committee
 1. Nominate Director Wan



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Director Wright states that the Board of Directors will hear more about this committee from the HR Director, who is trying to get started with this committee. It is important for the SSMU work environment, and Director Wright highly encourages Directors to apply. The committee needs three Directors.

Director Wan states that he can volunteer, but his free time this semester will be very limited, so he retracts his Finance Committee volunteer. He volunteers for whichever committee needs him most urgently.

The Chair states that the HR Committee needs him the most.

Director Gurung states that she can do either committee as well, but she thinks that since Director Wan is sitting on the HR Committee she should stay on the GSVP Committee.

The Chair agrees.

- vi. Nominating Committee
 1. Nominate Director Wright and Director Masny

Director Wright states that they are limiting the scope of this committee, but it is still important. She is hoping for two (2) Directors to volunteer. She and Director Wan are already on this committee, but she asks the Parliamentarian if this was done for the interim nominating period.

The Parliamentarian answers that this was only for the interim recruiting period.

Director Wright asks if there are any volunteers. She volunteers for this committee.

Director Masny volunteers.

- vii. Students Society at McGill for Maintaining Operations and Strategic Advancement (SSAMMOSA) Committee

Director Wright states that this committee is responsible for the 5-year plan, and has representation from a wide variety of students and staff. She is asking for a Director to sit on the committee. There have been emails sent out, but it would be useful to determine who will volunteer now.

Director Masny asks if they need to vote on the nominations of the committees.

The Chair answers that they are selecting volunteers for now, but they still need to vote on it.



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Director Masny motions to mandate the volunteers to their respective committees. Director Wan seconds this motion.

The Chair entertains a vote.

The Parliamentarian asks for clarification. The Chair clarifies the misunderstanding.

viii. Accountability Committee

The Chair states that this Committee ensures that Directors and Council members are held accountable to their duties and presences. It requires two Directors who are not Council members.

Seeing no volunteers, the Chair entertains a vote on the committee nominations.

Seeing no opposition, the committee nominations are approved unanimously.

The Chair states that the Roberts Rules indicate that abstentions votes are refusals to vote, so they are not counted at all. This means that the result of the previous vote was $\frac{2}{3}$ in favour.

Director Yang asks if this affects quorum.

The Chair answers no, because quorum is required for holding a meeting.

10. For Discussion:

a. Board Q&A session (Director Wan)

Question:

Director Wan asks the Board how the Q & A session went, and if they want to repeat it in the future.

Answer:

Officer Pizarro answers that they had 2 people attend the session, so he does not think it was a success. The group had a discussion about stimulating student engagement.

Director Wright states that they had discussed doing a similar session online, to make it more accessible to students.



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11. Confidential Session: **19:23**

The Board of Directors enters into a Confidential Session at 19:23.

12. Adjournment: **20:05**

The Chair declares the meeting adjourned at 20:05.

Risann Wright, SSMU President

FOR APPROVAL