



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories

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SSMU GENERAL ASSEMBLY MINUTES (CONSULTATIVE FORUM FALL 2022)

September 29, 2022

1. Call to Order: **18:07**

The Speaker calls the meeting to order at 18:07. He reminds everyone that the meeting is live streamed and a recording of the session will be made available online. Seeing as there are less than 350 members present, the quorum cannot be met and the session will serve as a Consultative Forum. All motions will need to be sent back to the Legislative Council for approval. He asks any non-McGill members to leave the meeting.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The Speaker presents the Land Acknowledgement.

3. Adoption of Standing Rules – **APPROVED**

The Standing Rules have been distributed.

Seeing no additions or corrections, Daniel Adler motions to approve the Standing Rules.

Cat Williams seconds the motion to approve the Standing Rules.

The Speaker entertains a vote on the Standing Rules. He notes that members can ask parliamentary inquiries during the session, and that they are using the Roberts Rules of Order, which have been modified to fit the General Assembly by the Standing Rules.

With 16 votes in favour and no opposition, the Standing Rules are approved.

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

The Agenda has been distributed.



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Cat Williams asks that the Internal Affairs report go before other Executive Reports, because she needs to leave early.

Seeing no further modifications, Councillor Voutsinas motions to adopt the agenda.

Councillor Whitcomb seconds the motion.

The Chair entertains a vote on the motion to adopt the agenda.

With 14 votes in favour and no opposition, the agenda is approved. The Speaker notes that everyone is here as members rather than councillors or executives, so he will not refer to members as their titles. He asks that everyone change their name on Zoom to their full name rather than their title.

5. Minutes for Approval:

- a. SSMU General Assembly Winter 2022 Minutes 2022-02-21 – **APPROVED**
- b. SSMU Special General Assembly 2022 Minutes 2022-04-11 – **APPROVED**

The minutes are distributed. The Speaker clarifies that the minutes are written recordings of past General Assemblies.

Seeing no corrections, the minutes stand approved as distributed.

The Parliamentarian asks if the minutes were approved by bloc.

The Speaker answers yes.

6. Question Period (5)

The Speaker states that the Question Period is open for anyone's questions, which usually are addressed to the Executives. He notes that there will also be a question period after every report.

There are no questions.

7. Report of the Board of Directors

Risann Wright presents the report of the Board of Directors since the last General Assembly. She states that the Board of Directors is the highest governing body of the Society, and it consists of 4 Executives, 4 Councillors, and 4 Members at Large. Applications are currently open for Members at Large, since it is very important to have them on the Board. They would also have a General Manager as a non-voting



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member. To sit on the Board of Directors, individuals must be members of SSMU, be 18 years of age, be a citizen or permanent resident of Canada, must not be bankrupt or declared incapable by court, and must not have a criminal record. The powers of the Board include the finances, operations, human resources and legal aspects of the SSMU. The Board ratifies all resolutions passed by the Legislative Council and Judicial Board. The Board meets on Thursday evenings during the academic year. Some of the public decisions since the last General Assembly include the renewal of contracts and hirings of new staff, approved the Board of Directors Standing Rules and ratified a few motions, including the Motion Concerning Accessible Libraries, Amendments to the Internal Regulations of Finance, Adoption of the Media and Transparency Plan, Amendments to the Internal Regulations of Student Groups, and the 2022-2023 Operations Budget. Those motions can be accessed online. Another key decision includes the approval of \$65,000 to be spent on reusable menstrual products. Risann Wright stands for questions, via email or now.

The Speaker entertains a question period.

There are no questions.

8. Report of Executives:
 - a. Vice-President (Internal Affairs)

VP Internal Affairs Williams presents her report since June 1, 2022. She has been rebranding a lot of the SSMU social media, including External and University Affairs social media. She has been creating resources for new students to learn about SSMU, and has been creating merch to be given away at events. There have also been hirings in the Communications department, and creating the Commission Manager to help with Bill 96 translations. She has been working with other Executives, and she was involved in creating the SSMU Dry Frosh. Cat Williams has been tabling at the registration tent, to help educate new students about SSMU. She runs SSPN, and has been recruiting members. They have been planning their upcoming event, a Halloween Party on October 21, 2022. She has been recruiting for First-Year Council, and applications are open now. She has been sitting on the Alumni Affairs Council. Her projects during the summer included editing and hiring various positions, tabling at different events on campus. She planned and threw the SSMU Back to School Party. She sits on the CKUT Board of Directors, and has been helping to write some of their harassment policies and onboard new members. Williams has attended many training sessions, and sits on many committees. She stands for questions via email.

The Speaker entertains a question period.

There are no questions.



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b. President

President Wright presents her report. The President's portfolio oversees internal governance, representation, advocacy and staff. As it relates to the constitution, she is responsible for calling meetings, managing the relations with McGill Administration, and representing all the undergraduate students on the McGill Senate and Board of Governors. She attends the monthly Senate meetings, and sits on a few of the Senate committees (Committee of Physical Development, Committee of the Rights of Senate, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee, Committee on Student Services). On the Board of Governors side, she sits on the Nominating Governance and Ethics Committee, and on the Executive Committee. She engages with the McGill Administration on an ad-hoc basis, and she is now on the McGill Sustainability Advisory Committee and the Accessibility Advisory Working Group. For SSMU Committees, she chairs a few committees (Governance Reform Committee, Environment Committee, Health and Dental Review Committee, Human Resources Committee, Presidents' Round Table, Steering Committee, SSAMOSA). This year, they are trying to fill the seats for the committees. She reiterates that there are members for Members at Large to join these committees. Under the President's portfolio, there are a few staff members, the Sustainability Commissioners, for which they are completing the hiring process; the Campus Crops Coordinators, who operate relatively independently; and Secretary Generals who support the President's work. A few of the President's projects include the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group's Plan, and she has the terms of reference together for the group and has put the structure in place for the plan. They are currently looking for Members at Large for the EDI Working Group. They want to begin the plan and consultation very soon. For the Sustainable Development Goals Strategy, they want SSMU to be a part of engaging in sustainable development, and she has been working with the Governance Team to achieve this. She has also been working on the Pilot Groceries Program, which she is hoping to have running this semester, to provide groceries to students to address food insecurity on campus. Another key project is updating the 5-Year Plan, which is extended each year for one year. Her final project is the Inter-Faculty Relations Framework, which will be worked on with the President's Round Table and will hopefully be finished this year. President Wright stands for questions now and via email.

The Speaker entertains a question period.

c. Vice-President (External Affairs)

VP External Affairs Masny presents their report. Their mandate includes four components: External Representation, Community Relations, Political Campaigns and Advocacy & Solidarity. A complete picture of the mandates can be found on the mandate letter. They present their team, including many employees. They are missing a Political Campaigns Commissioner. They have established relationships with community leaders, and built an advocacy framework to ensure that sidewalks around McGill will be accessible during the winter. Representation is also provincial, so they meet with



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many student groups from around the province to discuss priorities and build advocacy. Val Masny is in the midst of organising a Fall Activist Boot Camp (November 4-6) with various student associations. They talk to the federal government, and SSMU is part of UCRU (Undergraduates of Canadian Research-Intensive Universities), and they advocate to the federal government, and will lobby later this year. They also take care of union affairs, on and off campus. They have been supporting PGSS in their hope to advocate for students regarding Bill 96, and other campaigns. They have met with other unions, for example the Climate Strike, and the closure of the music conservatory. Another component is Community Relations, and Val Masny works in Milton Parc, and they are currently reviewing the care agreement. A lot of their work revolves around hospitals around the area, notably the Royal Victoria Hospital, which is currently being considered by McGill for their New Vic project, and there are Indigenous demands that there be no excavations, because of possible unmarked graves. They also prevent privatisation of hospitals. The Community Affairs Commissioner also has a large role in Community Engagement, and SSMU is currently working on affordable housing for students, which will be available in 2026. They held a workshop on housing rights recently, and they support students who suffer from exploitative landlord situations. They also try to engage McGill students with their community, and have worked on Community Engagement with McGill. Political Campaigns are also part of the External Affairs portfolio. The campaign for climate justice is a big campaign, and there was a climate strike last week. They are also mobilising for a campaign for the withdrawal of police and decriminalisation, and support many organisations such as the Coalition to Defund the Police. They are also planning a vigil for Marsa Amuni with Iranian students. Many other political campaigns are under SSMU, notably the Divest for Human Rights campaign for Urghyr rights, and many others. Other campaigns include ones for accessible education, gender equity. Finally, they take care of Advocacy and Solidarity. They have been meeting with Indigenous leaders to show their solidarity with them and their interest in collaboration. They created a consultation guide with the VP Student Life. They have been recently mobilising for Truth and Reconciliation Day. Val Masny also works with Black Affairs, and there was a Black Marketplace this week, with the possibility of a Black Affairs Magazine. They also support Francophone Affairs, which has been working to include additional francophone activities in orientation and SSMU activities, notably at Activities Night. Val Masny helped them create an interactive guide, and directed her to partners. They also studied Bill 96, to inform students on this Bill and ensure that SSMU responds to the demands of the Bill. They also note upcoming motions, for which Notices of Motions have already been presented. These motions include Motion about the Adoption of a Master Plan to Address Racist Surveillance and Doxxing at SSMU and McGill, and a Motion about the Adoption of a Consultation Policy. They present mandates, and note that people can send them emails to create new mandates. Lastly, they launched the External Affairs social media during the summer, and they are almost ready to launch the website. They have started to review the Society's sponsorships, to ensure they are in line with the governance documents. They are looking at the possibility of changing banks, because of calls of Indigenous land defenders regarding their current bank. To learn more, members should follow External Affairs on Instagram, FaceBook, and Twitter. VP External Affairs Masny is open to questions via email.



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The Speaker entertains a question period.

There are no questions.

d. Vice-President (Finance)

VP Finance Pizarro presents his report. He is responsible for working with VP Student Life to run activities and services, and to support the 250+ clubs at McGill. He is responsible for overseeing the accounting process for the clubs. There are many individual requests. Each service (17) has different needs, and he supports them in their financial lives. As VP Finance, he works with the accounting team to oversee the annual budget, which will be presented at the end of the month. They also have an Investment Account, which the Finance Committee oversees. All payments made by SSMU are signed by Marco Pizarro, who oversees the auditing, which was done in the summer, and went well. He is responsible for the 8 different funds, which clubs can apply to. There are many services funds with surpluses due to COVID, which students and clubs can apply for funding for projects. The main part of SSMU is the insurance plans, notably the Health and Dental Plan, and the Dental Plan for international students. This year, they are working on the Legal Protection Plan, for all undergraduates. His main projects include working on the surpluses in the funds, and thinking about a fee consolidation for many services, which would be very beneficial. He also works on the University Centre, and 3501 Peel, and he is looking to change banks due to demands to divest from RBC. Getting involved can be done through the committees, notably the Finance Committee, which deals with the long-term financial business of the Society, or the Funding Committee, which meets once a week to review funding applications. He answers questions via email or through his daily office hours.

Question:

The Speaker entertains a question period.

He reads out a question received from the chat: *Has the budget for services rolled out for another year with COVID, or has it been clawed back?*

Answer:

VP Finance Pizarro answers that the money that has not been spent on services stays in the services budget, because student fees go directly to the fund. Some services spent all their money and some didn't, so the budget changes in a sense that services have more money but have the same fee.



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There are no further questions.

e. Vice-President (University Affairs)

VP University Affairs Yang introduces himself as the VP University Affairs. He presents his report, which is divided into the different sections that the VP University Affairs is responsible for. He runs the SSMU Senate and is responsible for Community Representation. He also takes care of the Know Your Rights Campaign, and does a lot of tabling and interacting with other people who are responsible for these campaigns. He ensures that the University is held accountable to various aspects, and judges new policies with students' opinion. In terms of Committees, he sits on the Senate Committee, the Senate Nominating Committee, Committee of Student Services, Academic Policy Committee, and does weekly meetings with students and administration. He also meets with the university's stakeholders to share students' opinions. He also works for academic rights, by supporting individuals who report academic violations and speaking with stakeholders when there are violations. He holds the McGill Academic Round Table, which is a meeting with all VP Academics. This year, there has been successful tabling for the Know Your Rights Campaign, and they have given out many flyers, and put up various posters and tabled at Activities Night. New pamphlets about the Legal Protection Plan are coming out. He is responsible for library development and the Library Improvement Fund, study spaces and academic accessibility, library regulations and menstrual product access in the library. He ensures that there are a lot of study spaces and that they are accessible to all students. He helps provide free resources to support studies and academia. They are maintaining their relationship with OER. The Library Improvement Fund Commissioner oversees the fund and the Open Educational Resources Commissioner oversees the free resources. In terms of advocacy, he is working on the Academic Wellness Plan, and working to start implementing these ideas. He has done many consultations and has started to implement the plan. He is also working on service animal policies, to get McGill to have these policies, which it does not have. Finding a system where students can get the support they need short-term, without a medical note. He is also working on expanding the note-sharing services, which he is trying to expand to all faculties. He works on Indigenous Affairs, and provides support to the Indigenous Affairs Commissioner when needed. He also strengthens SSMU's Indigenous solidarity mandate. He helps with the Gender and Sexual Violence Committee, and has worked on several equity complaints, as well as improving the Equity Policy. He is working to revise the IRP, and is planning on calling for a Governance Committee soon. Kerry Yang is working on the menstrual health project, with the new team hard at work, and they will be expanding their projects to new locations soon. They will be providing baskets to reach more people. They also added reusable and biodegradable menstrual products to the monthly pick-ups. They also provide products to residences. They want to renew the Menstrual Health Policy, and they want to get Sustainability Project Funding. For the SSMU Daycare, he oversees the daycare as its president and oversees the finances and does the union negotiations. He stands for questions.



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The Speaker entertains a question period.

f. Vice-President (Student Life)

VP Student Life Koulibaly introduces herself. She presents her report. She states that her portfolio includes the Clubs and Services, and manages the relationships between groups and SSMU staff, and resolves any conflicts. She also works with the Mental Health Commissioner for various initiatives. They had an anti-cafe today, and there will be more of these in the future. She is responsible for Family Care, but she does not sit on their Board. She sits on the McGill Family Care Subcommittee. She works as a liaison between the student services employees and SSMU, and she has done a lot with Student Life and Engagement. She planned the first in-person Activities Night in a while, which had to be moved from the Lower Field to the University Centre due to rain. There were around 8,000 attendees and 325 groups. They had a lot of major sponsors for the groups. For student groups, she is developing the Student Group Portal, and has a partnership with Incredible Features, which will help facilitate the relationship between SSMU and its student groups. The master list has been updated to ensure that they can communicate with club executives. She has a new idea for coffee hours with clubs, to make Executives more accessible to student groups. More social media support has been introduced. This year, groups can operate in person, and the Student Life department ensures that they are complying with regulations. She wants to hold cultural nights at Gerts, to provide religious and cultural clubs the opportunity to showcase their services. Club workshops happened the first two weekends of September, and make-up sessions are in progress. She has been dealing with club issues who were inactive due to COVID and who want to return. She also had communication issues with clubs, but they have now received full club status. She applied sanctions to clubs who did not submit their Winter 2022 audits and has updated those as needed. She brought back the Clubs Handbook, to provide all information in a concise booklet. It is available on paper or online, and has any relevant information in it. For services, she did space agreements with services who have offices in the University Centre. The Services Summit took place in the second weekend of September, and SSMU currently has an MoU with MSERT to offer free first aid training. She has been looking to break down credit barriers for services who want to bank with SSMU. For Family Care, she sits on the Family Care Subcommittee, who is having its first meeting next week. McGill has a student/parent support group that meets every other week. Regular activities for the daycare have been scheduled. For Mental Health, the anti-cafe was held today to get people talking about mental health. Mental Health awareness week starts on October 3, and there are many events taking place. The Mental Health Commissioner is also working on re-writing the Mental Health Plan and Policy to include academic accommodations. The Mental Health Advocacy Commissioner is working on the policy proposal with McGill administration and VP University Affairs. The mental health committees are being formed, and the Wellness Portal is being launched soon. It is a survey-based platform that can lead individuals to the right service. She is working with Campus Life and Engagement, holding workshops. She sits on the Scholarship Review



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Subcommittee with the Deputy Provost, and she has been working to integrate Student Support's platform. Hassanatou Koulibaly stands for questions, and states that she also holds office hours.

The Speaker entertains a question period.

Question:

Member Leon asks if there have been any developments to streamline the reimbursement process for volunteers. For example, if Walk Safe had to pay one of their volunteers for something, they would have to ask for a receipt, but sometimes they need to ask for a bank statement as well, which can be invasive.

Answer:

VP Student Life Koulibaly answers that this question should be directed to VP Finance, but she did look into it, and she is working on it.

VP Finance Pizarro states that there is a lot of work being done for the timing of reimbursements. For privacy, people can edit the bank statements to show only the payments concerned. He states that Leon can book an office hour to speak about this.

Question:

Member Leon states that bank statements should be discussed, because in previous years it was not required at all. He asks why it was implemented.

Answer:

VP Finance Pizarro answers that he did not know that it was not needed before, but the way accounting explained it to him was for audits that happen every summer, to cross-reference the reimbursements.

There are no further questions.

9. Adjournment: **19:25**

The Speaker adjourns the Consultative Forum at 19:25.



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Risann Wright, SSMU President

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