



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 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PUBLIC MINUTES

January 19, 2023

The regular monthly Legislative Council Meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be held by teleconference, on Thursday, January 19, 2023 at 18:00.

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

The Speaker calls the meeting to order at 18:08. He reminds everyone that the meeting is recorded.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The Speaker presents the Land Acknowledgement.

3. Attendance

The Speaker takes attendance.

Present are: Councillors O'Boyle, Voustinas, Sakajiri, Djoussou, Tai, Dakdouki, Reed, Thom, Wan, Dadulla, D'Amore, Adler, Whitcomb, Parish, Wang, President Wright, VPs Koulibaly, Pizarro, Masny, Yang.

Absent are: Councillors Mickelson, Gurung, Syed, Nam, Pollard, Thomas, Seth, Griffiths, VP Internal Affairs Williams.

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

The agenda is distributed.

VP External Affairs Masny adds a motion: Events at the Centre for Legal Rights and Pluralism.

Question:

The Speaker asks who the seconder of the motion is.

Answer:

VP External Affairs Masny answers that it is Councillor Thom.



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The Speaker states that he will take the Steering Committee into a separate room to discuss the motion. He begins a 2-minute recess.

The meeting resumes at 18:25.

The Speaker states that the Motion added by VP External Affairs Masny and the Notice of a Motion added by President Right have been approved. It requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote to add these to the agenda, since they were added late. He entertains a vote.

Question:

VP External Affairs Masny asks if they will treat these motions separately.

Answer:

The Speaker answers that they will treat them separately. They are only voting on the Motion presented by VP External Affairs Masny: Motion Regarding a Policy to Support Trans Students on Campus.

The Speaker entertains a vote on the Motion.

On Zoom, there are 9 votes in favour. In-room, the motion passes. It is added to the agenda.

Councillor Wan motions to adopt the agenda as modified.

Seeing no opposition, the agenda is adopted.

5. Adoption of the Minutes:

- a. SSMU Legislative Council Public Minutes 2022-12-01 – **APPROVED**

The minutes are distributed.

Councillor Dakdouki notes that she was present at the meeting, although she was noted as absent in the minutes.

Seeing no further changes or corrections, the minutes stand approved.

6. Report of the Steering Committee



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The Speaker states that the Steering Committee met on Friday, and the only point discussed were the documents for the General Assembly. Particularly, they discussed the Motion Regarding Uyghur Rights, which will be further discussed tonight, as the General Assembly did not meet quorum. The Committee reminds everyone to read all documents before the Council meeting, and to send all Motions and reports on time. He notes that the suggested time is presented beside the point on the agenda, but it can be modified as needed.

7. Reports by Committees:

a. Executive Committee

The Parliamentarian notes that there was no report sent in.

President Wright sends the document.

The Speaker calls a 5-minute recess due to technical issues.

The meeting resumes at 18:42.

President Wright presents the report of the Executive Committee. There have been two meetings in the new year. There have been hirings at Gerts Cafe and Bar, and some other hirings for support staff, and SACCOMS hirings. The Committee approved an updated job description for the Accessibility Commissioner and the Popular Education Events Coordinator, and there were some letters and statements approved that will be sent out. President Wright stands for questions.

b. Divest for Human Rights Policy Report

VP External Affairs Masny presents the Divest for Human Rights Policy Report. Per this Policy, they are mandated to report on Divest's actions twice a year. They reached out to students who were previously involved in the campaign, none of which cannot take on this duty or have graduated. They chose to organise around the four pillars of the campaign, notably the Indigenous lands aspect of the Policy. The other three pillars are Uyghur forced labour, the military industrial complex, and Palestinian violence by Israeli soldiers. So far, the Office has supported this group in mobilising against the pipeline and for McGill's divestment of TC Energy. They are doing research into SSMU changing banks, since RBC (SSMU's current bank, is one of the biggest investors in the previously mentioned pipeline. They helped mobilise against Uyghur genocide, and pressured the University to divest from its complicit investments. This policy will be voted on later today. They have begun research into McGill's involvement in the military industrial complex, and there will be a workshop about student mobilisation on January 31. Their next step is to tackle the issue of Israeli settlement in Palestine, and McGill's involvement. They will launch social media posts about this. The VP University Affairs has



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informed the Senate Caucus about the Policy, and they are discussing possibilities. The President held meetings with members of the Board of Governors regarding this Policy. What's left to be done is promoting the campaign by holding protests, and work on a report that would pressure the Board of Governors to divest from certain companies. Some advocacy remains to be done on the McGill side, to ensure that the University abides by the policy. VP External Affairs Masny stands for questions.

c. Gender and Sexuality Advocacy Committee – **POSTPONED**

The Gender and Sexuality Advocacy Committee report is postponed.

d. Service Review Committee – **APPROVED**

VP Student Life Koulibaly presents the Service Review Committee report. They meet once a month, and so far they have reviewed the methodology under which services will be reviewed. The self-report of services has started and they are getting survey responses. The point of the review is to ensure that services are fulfilling their mandate and are sustainable in the long run. There is one constitutional approval in the report, for Queer McGill's constitution. The committee approves it and the Legislative Council ratifies the amendment.

The Speaker entertains questions on the Service Review Committee Report.

There are no questions; the Speaker entertains a vote on the Report.

VP External Affairs Masny states that they do not have access to the Queer McGill constitution.

VP Student Life Koulibaly shares the link.

Question:

Councillor Wan asks, if they do not approve this report, if this affects the Queer McGill constitution.

Answer:

The Speaker answers yes. By approving the report, the Council gives its consent to the constitution.

Question:

VP Mansy asks if the new constitution is from November 26, 2022. It is on their website.



Answer:

VP Student Life Koulibaly answers yes.

The Speaker entertains a vote on the Service Review Committee Report.

The Report is unanimously ratified.

8. Reports by Faculty:

a. FYC – **POSTPONED**

This report is postponed.

b. Outaouais

Councillor Tai presents the Campus Outaouais report. There was a clothing sale, and intramural volleyball and hikes are ongoing. Frosh occurred in August, and paintball in September. There was also a Halloween party with uOttawa Medical School in October. There was a gala in November, and they had two council meetings since September. There was a fall General Assembly in November, and recently there was a rock climbing event, as well as a board game night. Med 1s had a pizza lunch, and Med 2s had a Christmas gift exchange. Upcoming events include a council meeting on January 23, internals, and Med Games in May. There are elections coming up in March, and the VP Finance is finding new sponsors and renewing contracts. There is continued representation at several levels, including for new sports installation.

c. Arts

SNAX will be opening soon in Leacock. The Grad Fair was hosted last semester with the Faculty of Science, and it went very well. BDA is happening right now, and it starts every Thursday at 5:30. They have begun hiring some positions for Winter 2023 hiring periods, the AUS store is stocked with tote bags and mugs. They are working on creating an Arts-wide journal called the Arts Review of Theory and Society, which will be accepting submissions soon. Last semester, there were some constitutional and standing rule amendments for the Accountability Committee, including for removal of Executives, sanctions for missing reports and they mandated that some Executives be in Montreal during the summer.

Councillor O'Boyle adds that the Library Committee is a *hot topic* right now because of the upcoming renovations. There have been many discussions about where the books are going. They will still be



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accessible, and the process will be outlined on the website soon. There have been concerns about study spaces, and a contract has been secured for new study spaces. A program has been launched to revamp the student employment at the library. The Tech fund has some extra money, and the Arts building will be revamped. The Student Affairs Committee has been doing consultations about remote teaching and e-flagging.

The Speaker entertains a question period.

Question:

Councillor Wan asks if the Arts Councillors could share updates regarding the fee upticks project.

Answer:

Councillor O'Boyle does not have any information about this project.

Question:

Councillor Dakdouki asks if they could clarify the situation with the VP Finance, because they have had some concerns about getting funding processed.

Answer:

Councillor Voustinas answers that they are currently in the process of finding a new VP Finance, since the current one is stepping down at the end of the month. Their President is currently taking care of some of the finances. Councillor Voustinas can help as well.

VP University Affairs Yang asks what the results of the consultations were regarding e-flagging and exceeding credit policies.

Councillor Voustinas answers that they have not met in a few months, but they are starting consultations again. She would be more than happy to keep VP University Affairs Yang in the loop about this.

- d. Engineering – **POSTPONED**

This report is postponed.

- e. Science



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Councillor Parish presents this report. The SUS Gala is coming up in February, and out of faculty tickets are available. They are working with the psychology department to develop a Health and Wellness course to be available to all students. Initial steps have been taken towards next year's elections. They are working on a career networking event with the Faculty of Arts and Science. Academia Week is coming up, February 6-10. There is a lunch event with professors and a research event with MSERT coming up. They are about to start winter hiring, and last week was Science Games, which was a big success. They are recruiting more food and monetary sponsors for events, and the Finance Department is working on audits. Next year, they want to merge all the department bank accounts to make auditing easier. SUS Charity Week was successful and all the money was donated. There is a general council meeting next week.

The Speaker entertains a question period.

Councillor Wan asks if the Health and Wellness course is going to be a for-credit course, or if it will be unofficial.

Councillor Parish answers that it will eventually be for-credit.

9. Executive Reports:

a. President

President Wright presents her report. She prepped for the General Assembly with the Governance and Communications teams, and some work was done on motions that will be presented this semester at the Legislative Council. She also prepped for this semester's Board of Directors meetings. There were a few important meetings that took place. She was able to attend Lobby Week in Ottawa last semester with the VP External, where they were able to lobby for a variety of issues. She attended the McGill Senate and the Accessibility Strategy Working Group, and prepared for Board of Governors meetings. She has been supporting the HR Department and managing confidential legal files. She has been supporting the Buildings Department with the VP Student Life. President Wright launched the Pilot Grocery Program, and she has been working on the fee motion and policy to make this program permanent. She has been working on the EDI Plan with the EDI Working Group, and working on the Inter-Faculty Relations Policy with various associations through the Presidents' Roundtable. She has met with the Environment Committee, the Presidents' Roundtable, and upcoming meetings include SSAMOSA, and the Governance Reform Committee. There have been Board meetings already this semester. President Wright states that a survey was offered after the Pilot Grocery Program, and she presents some of the results. The majority of students who participated were domestic students. 77% thought that the program was good. Many students wanted more accessible locations, because some options were hard to access without a car. A delivery option was available. Further, there was demand



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for affordable groceries, and for more specials and variety. 62% found that funding was sufficient, because the money was spent quickly. Students preferred vouchers to physical baskets. Most students wanted to receive their vouchers electronically. All students who participated said that they would sign up for the program again. Many students liked that the program occurred during the semester, because other funding is running low. Staff were punctual and understanding, and the marketing was done. Tote bags seemed unnecessary, but the committee thought it would promote sustainability. A question about dependents should be added in the sign-up form. Everything went smoothly, and some great feedback was received.

The Speaker entertains questions on this report.

Question:

Councillor Wan asks what percentage of grocery users filled out the survey.

Answer:

President Wright answers that 50% of users responded.

Councillor Dakdouki asks, since the program is shifting to service students in financial need, if the President knows how many students who participated in the original program were in financial need.

President Wright answers that students could self-identify if they were in financial need. For the permanent program, there will be streamlined eligibility requirements, because it will come with a student fee. There is an accessibility clause if people need exceptions to the financial need requirement.

b. VP Finance

VP Finance Pizarro presents his report. He is preparing the budget for next year, by sending each manager and executive their own budget. The budget revision was approved by the Board. They want to work on making the financial process simpler for student groups. The club workshops are this weekend, and presentations are being prepared. They will make all club finances easier, because everything is still very new. There are a lot of funding applications, but there is still a surplus from the pandemic years. He is working with the VP External to change banks, and he has a meeting with Scotiabank next week. RBC wants to meet as well, and he is also working on the new health insurance premiums. He met with the Funding, Clubs and Services Review Committees.

The Speaker entertains questions on the report.



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There are no questions.

c. VP Student Life

VP Student Life Koulibaly presents her report. She is working on updating the constitutional framework for clubs. The Services Review Committee (SRC) met, and the evaluation methods for this year will be the same as the ones included in the IRs. Activities Night happened, and coffee hours are returning this semester. Student group workshops are upcoming, and graphic design and sponsorship workshops will be offered. The Mental Health Roundtable happened, and 24 people showed up, which is a large increase. She has been working on the mental health portfolio. MyWellness is being promoted, and there is a launch party on Friday. Well Week is next week, and there are many events going on. There is a new Mental Health Outreach and Advocacy Coordinator, and work is being done on the policy. There is a brand new service. Black History Month is coming up, and there is an event on February 1, 2023 in the Music Building. There will also be a social event in the SSMU Ballroom. Cultural Days are happening in March, and the project is launching on January 30, 2023. Gerts Cultural Nights are back, the first one is next week for Baltic and Ukrainian students. Future dates will be posted on social media. VP Student Life Koulibaly collaborated with Campus Life and Engagement to do a first-week-back orientation, on social media. She is also working with the International Student Services on the Cultural Day.

The Speaker entertains a question period.

There are no questions.

d. VP University Affairs

VP University Affairs Yang presents his report. The dashboard for academic wellness is being worked on, and there is an upcoming meeting to move things forward. He is advocating for a for-credit health and wellness course, and working on short-term accommodation frameworks. He has been expanding the menstrual health program, and he is working with SPF to expand. Menstrual disks are now available, and period underwear is becoming more popular, so the project will provide more. The next pickup is on January 24. He is also working on equity complaints and the Equity Policy. VP University Affairs Yang has been meeting with the administration, the Dean of Students, the Deputy Provost, and various other stakeholders. The Senate Caucus has been meeting regularly, and ESAC has been working on accommodations for Ramadan during final exams. He also met with the Senate Steering Committee. He met with the HR Committee and the daycare, for which negotiations are almost complete. He is working on expanding open educational resources, he is doing consultations on campus safety and gathering data on Indigenous education initiatives.

The Speaker entertains a question period.



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Question:

Councillor Dakdouki states that McGill is changing principals at the end of the school year. They ask if this will have any effect on SSMU.

Answer:

VP University Affairs Yang answers that he was on the selection committee for the new principal. The new McGill principal will begin his term on April 1, 2023, and there should be no effect on SSMU. The principal will take the first 100 days slowly.

There are no further questions.

e. VP External Affairs

VP External Affairs Masny presents their report. They went to Ottawa for Lobby Week, and they are working to share all information from the activist bootcamp and share it with the population. They are monitoring sidewalks near McGill, and emails can be sent to VP External Affairs Masny for the reporting procedure. They are preparing to attend a formation congress with the new students' association in February. They are attending the McGill community council and working on Bill 96 impacts, and working on COVID safety measures. They are collaborating with other students' associations on whistleblowing procedures for workers and students. VP External Affairs Masny is working on building affordable student housing, and they are doing research about housing issues on campus. They support the Indigenous communities in the area, and they are working to help unhoused Indigenous populations in Milton Parc. They support a new initiative called Commun. They support Divest McGill, mobilisation against COP-15, Uyghur rights defence, defund the police and the Black Students' Network, whom they helped advocate against the SPVM budget increase. They support different groups that helped support detained migrants and prisoners during the holidays. The military industrial complex workshop and food security campaign are coming up. VP External Affairs Masny is working with the Francophone Affairs Commissioner on francophone issues on campus, especially with Bill 96; they are helping the Indigenous Affairs Commissioner with their work and doing research on an Indigenous Studies program outside of McGill, to see how McGill's program compares. They support the Black Affairs Commissioner with the Black Affairs Magazine, which is still accepting submissions. Black History Month is coming up, and events will be planned. Next week is Accessibility Week, and there will be many events. There is a position open for a Community Engagement Commissioner.

The Speaker entertains a question period.



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Question:

Member Nicholas Hayea asks what the activism against the budget increase of the SPVM entails.

Answer:

VP External Affairs Masny answers that this happened in December, and unfortunately the City of Montreal voted in favour of the budget increase, which is the largest budget in the SPVM history. Various groups on campus meet to protest against this, and VP External supports them materially and non-materially.

There are no further questions.

f. VP Internal Affairs

VP Finance Pizarro presents VP Internal Affairs Williams' report on their behalf. They are finalising the hiring of a PR Coordinator, and developing winter SSMU merch. There will be blue and yellow beanies given away, and they are revamping the SSMU website. SSPN has its FAC-O Hype Night next week at Cafe Campus, and they are organising the FAC-O teams. Budget reviewing will be done. Grad Frosh is being planned for May. VP Internal Affairs Williams is meeting with the First-Year Council on a weekly basis, and they are working to have menstrual health products in residences as well as a ski trip for first-years with the SSMU Ski and Snowboard club. There is a job fair and networking event coming up in February, for graduating and graduated students. They are working on an MoA with CKUT, and they joined Sustainability Policy Working Group. VP Internal Affairs Williams is also helping to plan the Environment Committee's first event, which is next week, and reviewing plans with Campus Life and Engagement for 2023 orientation. They have been working on their committees (SSPN, FYC, Board, etc.).

The Speaker entertains a question period.

There are no questions.

10. Recess, Consent Items

The Speaker entertains a 5-minute recess.

Question:



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Director Wan asks if the consent items are up to date with the motions.

Answer:

The Speaker states that he just updated it. He reminds everyone that if everyone approves the motions on the list, they will not be debated; if one person votes to debate the motion in question will be debated.

Question:

VP External Affairs Masny asks if they are voting on New Business items a. and c.

Answer:

The Speaker answers yes. New Business item b. is a notice.

Question:

VP Finance Pizarro asks where the Consent Items form is.

Answer:

The Speaker answers that it is in the Google Drive Folder for this meeting. He sends the link to the consent items in the chat.

The meeting resumes at 19:51. Both motions will be debated.

11. Announcements

- a. [St. Mary's Hospital Volunteering Opportunity](#) (Councillor Wan)

Councillor Wan states that he was contacted by someone from St. Mary's Hospital to share a volunteer opportunity. He recommends that students who are interested in healthcare get some exposure. Those interested can click the link in the agenda (above) or send him an email.

The Speaker entertains questions on the announcement. The link has been added to the agenda.

- b. Announcements by Elections SSMU

President Wright states that she is giving this announcement on behalf of Elections SSMU. The nomination period for the referendum starts on January 23, and the nomination period for Executive elections starts on January 30. Both periods end on February 20, 2023.



c. Student Support Fee (VP Student Life Koulibaly)

VP Student Life Koulibaly states that this fee expires this winter, and people still have access to the service until August. If anyone is interested in contacting Student Support to put together a motion for renewal, they can let her know.

12. Question Period:

Question:

Councillor Reed asks VP External Affairs Masny what research is being done for the Divest for Human Rights project. They ask how the policy will be expanded, and how the next topic to be tackled is.

Answer:

VP External Affairs Masny answers that much research has been done by Demilitarise McGill, which is no longer active. Students for Peace and Disarmament is trying to institutionalise the research, and see what is lacking. Information requests, talking to professors about their research in engineering and physics is being done to be able to better act on the issue. The issue today was brought forward by students who are affected by the issue; the policy in its first iteration was targeting two specific sets of companies that invested in the Uyghur genocide. They found many companies, so they will be added to the policy. VP External Affairs Masny did not decide the next steps, the students did.

Question:

Councillor Wan asks the Executives and the Dais, given the recent event that occurred at the GA, if there are any plans for SSMU to make their events platform safer.

Answer:

President Wright answers that, following the incident at the GA, the Executives thought about ways to address it, which they will speak to further. For future meetings and events, there have been discussions with the Governance Manager. There will be a debrief with the Governance team on addressing these issues in the future.

Question:

Councillor Wan asks if they have considered using the Zoom Webinar function.



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Answer:

President Wright answers that they have considered it in the past, and they will consider it again.

Question:

A member asks what happened at the GA.

Content Warning: *mention of explicit sexual activity*

Answer:

The Speaker states that they were disrupted by a Zoom account at the most recent GA, where 2 or 3 accounts shared graphic and loud noises during the meetings. Generally, SSMU keeps everyone muted, but the assailants waited until they were called upon, and then the three accounts blared the noises.

13. New Business:

a. Motion Regarding Uyghur Rights – **APPROVED**

The Speaker states that this motion was passed at the General Assembly and now needs to be ratified by the Legislative Council.

VP External Affairs Masny states that this motion was presented at the GA to amend the Divest for Human Rights Policy to include the companies who were found to be complicit in the Uyghur genocide in which McGill invests. These investments total \$115,000,000. In the appendix, there are qualifications for complicity. Any company who produces in East Turkistan, any company operating facilities in East Turkistan, any company which contracts with the We-Jang production corps, any company that proceeds in the transfer of Uyghur forced labour, any biotech company operating in the PRC, any company that provides surveillance to the PRC and any company who uses the PRC.

The Speaker entertains a question period on this motion.

Question:



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Councillor Sakajiri asks if the SSMU did any research to corroborate the research done in the motion.

Answer:

VP External Affairs Masny answers that this motion is being presented by students, but Councillors can look into it if they want to. A lot of the research has been corroborated by student media before publication last year. There is a report of sources in the motion.

Question:

Councillor Reed asks VP External to summarise why certain specific industries were named in the report.

Answer:

VP External Affairs Masny answers that the Uyghur genocide is internationally recognised by states and boards, and it operates through mass surveillance of the Uyghur population in China and abroad. Those companies have been found to engage in that surveillance. The biotech companies have been denounced by other groups and institutions as playing a role in the genocide. The United States has acted on this information, and the Government of Canada is considering acting upon it as well.

Question:

Councillor Sakajiri asks if pushback from the [McGill] administration is expected, if this motion should pass.

VP External Affairs Masny asks if Councillor Sakajiri means in the adoption of the motion or in asking the administration for divestment.

Councillor Sakajiri answers both.

Answer:

VP External Affairs Masny answers that pushback should not matter for the adoption of the motion. Whether or not they will divest, the issue has more chances of garnering support for divestment than other issues that have yet to be recognised by international organisations.

Question:

Councillor Reed asks how External Affairs plan to expand the motion and add ideas without thinning out efforts.



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Answer:

VP External Affairs Masny answers, the way the motion is currently constructed, the policy operates with student support through a campaign. It would be misinformed to think that they would be doing most of the work; students are doing the work. They facilitate students' advocacy, along with the President and VP University Affairs. This is the first time the policy has been expanded, only to include more companies. As the context around the genocide become clearer, the policy may be more expanded, and they will continue to support students.

Seeing no further questions, the Speaker entertains a debate period. He will accept 6 speakers before asking for motions.

Councillor Wan states that motions with a political nature need to be voted on by the MSS population, either through a GA or referendum. However, the MSS did not have enough time to vote on it, since the GA was on Monday. Because of this, Councillor Wan will have to vote no until he will be able to consult the study body on their thoughts about this motion.

Question:

Councillor Reed states that there was a similar motion passed at the General Assembly; they ask what its nature is.

Answer:

VP External Affairs Masny answers that it is the same motion. Because the General Assembly did not meet quorum, its vote does not have authority to pass the motion. Thus, the motion was brought back to the Legislative Council to be voted on. Around 40 students voted in favour of this motion at the GA.

The Speaker adds that the General Assembly has a quorum of 350; if quorum is not met the GA does not have authority to pass anything. It becomes a consultative forum, and anything passed there needs to be voted on at the Legislative Council. That is why the mover and seconder of the motion are students rather than Councillors.

Question:

Councillor Sakajiri asks what Councillor Wan meant.



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Answer:

Councillor Wan reiterates that the MSS [Medicine Students' Society] adopted a policy that stated that certain council positions must be approved by the student body. Some issues that are more relevant to medical students do not need approval, but social justice and political issues need consultation. The policy was implemented for a year-long trial run, and this year it was readopted more formally. During the trial run, there were some issues where councillors couldn't consult students because of a short turnaround time, which forced them to vote no on some motions.

President Wright asks the Parliamentarian to display the Appendix.

Councillor Dakdouki motions to call the question. Councillor Sakajiri seconds the motion to call the question.

Seeing no opposition, the Speaker entertains a vote on Motion 13.a.

With 17 votes in favour and 1 vote in opposition, Motion 13.a. passes.

b. Notice of Motion for the SSMU Grocery Program Policy

President Wright presents the Notice of Motion. Based on the feedback from the Pilot Grocery Program, she drafted a policy. She can be contacted for questions and concerns before the policy is presented at the Legislative Council. It will also be presented with a referendum question for a fee to go alongside the policy. The policy states that SSMU will carry out a once-per-semester grocery pickup program, funded by the Grocery Program Fee should it be adopted.

c. Motion Regarding a Policy to Support Trans Students On Campus – **FOR APPROVAL**

VP External Affairs Masny presents this motion. After what happened at the Human Rights and Legal Pluralism Centre, students have come to them to ask for SSMU to take concrete steps to support transgender students on campus. The Human Rights and Legal Pluralism Centre invited a speaker who is known for his transphobic views, notably because he is a member of the LGB Alliance, which specifically divides the LGB from the T (transgender). They are bringing up this motion urgently to have a clear mandate to start advocating for the transgender community in a precise way, when it comes to hate speech and building an action plan. SSMU will devise an action plan to provide trans students with services and to end transphobia on campus. This was co-drafted by Queer McGill, the Union for Gender Empowerment, RadLaw, and the Trans Patient Union. They propose a recess to allow everyone to read this motion in its entirety.



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VP External Affairs Masny motions for a 5-minute recess.

Councillor Sakajiri seconds the motion for a recess.

Seeing no opposition, the Speaker entertains a 5-minute recess to read Motion 13.c.

The meeting resumes at 20:37.

The Speaker entertains a question period.

Question:

Councillor Reed asks VP External Affairs Masny what the precedent is to set a mandate, other than the event mentioned. The Councillor is curious if there have been previous motions that have attempted to tackle this issue, or whether this motion is the first of its kind.

Answer:

VP External Affairs Masny answers that the closest thing to this motion is the Gender Equity Motion, which is now a position at SSMU. There are no concrete steps put in place for the transgender community, and clearly this event showed that a mandate is needed in order to respond and ask better from the University.

Question:

Councillor Wan asks if VP External Affairs Masny believes that these goals can be achieved without an additional policy, or within the current Internal Regulations.

Answer:

VP External Affairs Masny answers that it depends, they have positions that give SSMU guidelines on how to act. Without guidelines, acting is left up to Executives, which VP External Affairs Masny does not think is sufficient. Consultations should be done, and concrete mandates require Executives to act. If they want to ensure this is a priority, mandates need to be set.

Question:



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A member of the gallery states that SSMU has a firm position against hate speech. They ask if the talk in question would have conflicted with either the academic freedom policy or the hate speech policy.

Answer:

VP External Affairs Masny answers that this position does not explicitly say that, but it will be defined in a future policy. There have been people in the student body who have named what has happened as hate speech, but it has not been defined as such by SSMU. The position against hate speech is a prolongation of SSMU's position against discrimination.

Question:

Councillor Thom asks if she can also answer the question.

The Speaker asks Councillor Thom if she is the seconder of the motion.

Answer:

Councillor Thom answers yes. She adds that the purpose of the motion is not to harp on this event. There must be some positive outcome of this event, which they hope to achieve with this motion. They need to take a deep dive into defining hate and free speech, and how they interact.

Question:

Councillor Wan asks if there have been any consultations done with CHRLP or the Faculty of Law around the original rationale of the event.

Answer:

Councillor Thom answers that the CHRLP operates within the Faculty of Law, and the Centre's mission is to spark debate around legal issues, such as human rights. The Centre does speaking events often, with different perspectives.

Question:

Councillor Wan asks if this means that the event was officially endorsed by the Faculty of Law.

Answer:

Councillor Thom answers no, since the bodies are separate. The Dean of the Faculty of Law does not have oversight over what the Centre does, so the Faculty of Law did not endorse the speaker's views. The Faculty does not have any say into who the Centre chooses to speak.



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Question:

A member of the Gallery asks if Councillor Thom knows what part of the Faculty of Law organises these events.

Answer:

Councillor Thom answers that it was the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism.

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

Councillor Dakdouki motions to amend Motion 13.c. to include the Open Letter as a PDF.

The Speaker asks the Parliamentarian to do this. It would be good to save the policy as is, and this would not require a motion. The Speaker downloads the letter as a PDF and puts it in the folder with the Motion. When the motion is updated on the website, the link will need to be modified to include the PDF.

Councillor Reed speaks in favour of the motion. The LGB Alliance continually advocates to exclude trans people from participation in society, which is an accelerating feature of modern life. Legal scholars are effective at advocating against transgender people's access to a medical system. Nobody assists in these efforts more than liberal institutions like McGill, which tend to treat these ideologies as subjects of political debate. Views like this are bigoted, and they should not be tolerated.

Councillor Wan motions to call the question. Councillor Dakdouki seconds the motion to call the question.

Seeing no opposition, the Speaker entertains a vote on Motion 13.c.

With 18 votes in favour and 1 abstention, Motion 13.c. passes. The Speaker reminds everyone that Councillors are required to vote, since there are more votes for this motion than the previous one, even though attendance has not changed.

14. Adjournment: **20:58**

The Speaker declares the meeting adjourned at 20:58.

Risann Wright, SSMU President