



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 BOARD OF DIRECTORS PUBLIC MINUTES

July 20, 2023

The Board of Directors meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be held by teleconference and in the SSMU Boardroom on Thursday, July 20, 2023 at 18:00.

Present: Alexandre Ashkir (Officer), Nadia Dakdouki (Officer), Alice Fang (Officer), Lalia Katchelewa (Officer), Peter Tai (Council Member), Liam Gaither (Officer, non-voting), Hassanatou Koulibaly (Officer, non-voting, Acting Chair)

Absent: Jonathan Dong (Chair, non-voting), Julia Nam (Council Member), Coco Jie Wang (Council Member), Jon Barlas (Officer, non-voting)

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

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 18:08. The Acting Chair for this meeting is Hassanatou Koulibaly. She reminds everyone that the meeting is recorded.

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**

The Agenda is distributed.

Director Ashkir motions to adopt the agenda.



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Director Fang amends the agenda to add Motion 6.c.

Director Dakdouki asks if this motion should be added into Public or Confidential session.

The Chair states that this can be discussed in the Public session because it concerns a motion from the Legislative Council.

Director Dakdouki seconds Director Ashkir's motion to adopt the agenda.

Seeing no opposition, the agenda is adopted.

5. Executive Committee Public Reports of 2023-06-22 and 2023-07-20 – **TABLED**

Director Ashkir states that he forgot to remove this point, and motions to do so as there is no public report, since the Governance Manager is on vacation and usually assembles it. All activities will be reported at the next Board meeting.

This point is tabled.

6. Motions for Approval:

- a. Motion to formally nominate Jonathan Dong as the Speaker of Council and General Assemblies, and the Chair of the Board of Directors for 2023-2024 year (Director Dakdouki) – **APPROVED**

Director Dakdouki presents Motion 6.a. Jonathan was interviewed for the Speaker position, and was chosen by the Governance Manager and has since been trained. He is ready to Chair the Legislative Council, General Assembly, and Board of Directors.

Director Ashkir recuses himself from discussion due to a conflict of interest.

Director Dakdouki motions to call the question.

Director Katchelewa seconds this motion.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 6.a is approved.

- b. Motion to approve an Interim Provision to the Internal Regulations of Finances, Section 06 Fees Part III: Course Fees 7.1 reading: "The President shall be [...] the representative, in the place of the Vice-President (Finance) for 2023-2024 until July 20,



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2024” to allow the President to sit on the fee advisory committee instead of the VP Finance – **APPROVED**

Director Fang presents Motion 6.b. The reason for this motion is because the Fee Advisory Committee usually meets on Fridays from 3:00-4:00 PM, and she will not be available during that time. The President could be the representative in her place.

Question:

Director Katchelewa asks what meetings these are.

Answer:

Director Fang answers that the VP Finance should be the sole SSMU representative on the Fee Advisory Committee.

Director Dakdouki asks to check the Internal Regulations, because article 7.1 is not specific enough.

Director Fang consults the Internal Regulations of Finance.

The Chair checks the Internal Regulations.

Question:

Director Katchelewa asks for the committee to be specified in the motion.

Answer:

Director Fang reads out article 7.1 of the Internal Regulations of Finance; the President will take the VP Finance's place because of scheduling conflicts.

The Chair states that Director Dakdouki is looking at Part 3 of 7.1, which concerns course fees.

Director Fang asks Director Dakdouki which part she is looking at.

Director Dakdouki answers that the motion is not specific to which part of the article it is referring to.

Director Ashkir proposes an amendment.



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Director Dakdouki proposes an amendment to the amendment.

Director Dakdouki seconds the amendment.

Seeing no opposition, the amendment is made.

Director Dakdouki makes a wording change.

Director Dakdouki motions to call the question. Director Fang seconds this motion.

Director Ashkir abstains from voting on this motion.

Director Fang asks if she should abstain as well.

The Chair states that she can abstain if she feels that there is a conflict of interest.

Director Ashkir states that he abstained to ensure that no one thinks he is taking the VP Finance's spot on the committee.

Seeing no further abstentions, Motion 6.b is approved.

- c. Motion to postpone action on Gender Affirming Care until it goes through referendum (Director Fang) - **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

Director Fang presents Motion 6.c. There are new services to be added to the StudentCare package, and they must go through referendum before the services can be implemented. The gender-affirming care package has not gone through this process. It went through the Legislative Council and was then approved at the Board. They need to ask their students if they want to implement gender-affirming care, because it affects their finances.

Question:

Director Dakdouki asks Director Fang which steps were taken, and asks her to outline what should have been done.

Answer:

Director Fang states that it should be presented at the Legislative Council, put forward at referendum, and then if the question is approved at referendum it is ratified by the Board, who then moves into its implementation. However, gender-affirming care was only presented at the



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Legislative Council and approved by the Board. The Governance Manager has tried to highlight that this was not the proper procedure. The legal essentials package was done in the same way, without going through a referendum, and as a result, they have to absorb the \$475,000 cost of the fee into their operating budget.

Question:

Officer Koulibaly asks how the gender-affirming care fee differs from the legal protection fee; if SSMU must pay it off if there is not enough money in the reserve fund.

Answer:

Director Fang states that the bigger question is whether or not they want to re-do the process and have students vote on gender-affirming care, or move forward without going to referendum. If they continue with the plan as it is, it will cost them \$3 more than what they are currently collecting from students. Because they have a Health and Dental Fund, they are absorbing the extra \$3. Eventually, they will need to put forward a fee to maintain the reserve fund.

Director Katchelewa asks if reversing the entire motion is the only option; she suggests continuing the process rather than starting over. If they continue with the plan and absorb the extra \$3, she asks if they can share the fee increase with students.

Director Fang inquires if they can present a fee and implementation question at the same time.

Director Katchelewa states that this would be better than reversing the previous Executives' decision. The students will give a clear answer in the referendum towards this plan.

Director Dakdouki states that the motion was tabled indefinitely at the May 18 Board meeting, but there is an Action Item that was approved. She asks what happened.

Officer Koulibaly states that it had been tabled previously.

Director Fang states that the motion was tabled and an email motion was approved instead. For such a big package, it should be brought to the Board for discussion. One of the biggest concerns was that gender-affirming care was put under the Dental program, since it covers international students. When they looked at the number, it would be a lot more profitable for StudentCare to put the new service under the Dental plan rather than the Health plan. If it is added to the Health plan, it saves them money.



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Officer Koulibaly states that it was presented as an email motion.

Director Ashkir states that due diligence was not done, and by repealing the decision they would be able to find a better way to support gender affirmation at SSMU, as this plan is quite important. By adding the service to the Dental plan, it disadvantages some students. A re-evaluation of the plan is a good idea.

Director Fang adds that Queer McGill and UGE were not consulted, who advocate for queer students. She proposes to reverse the previous decision, and create a new motion that goes through the proper consultation process and present it again at the Legislative Council before voting on it at referendum.

Director Dakdouki is concerned about reversing previous decisions. She notes that the email motion does not link the full motion. There is no timeline presented, so she suggests going through the usual channels and amend the motion once changes to be made are determined. If they put forward a precedent of overturning motions, this can be very nitpicky.

Director Katchelewa is concerned about the time component. Going back to consultations and the Legislative Council might take the full school year. Students in need have been waiting, and due diligence should be done as long as it doesn't take too long.

Officer Koulibaly agrees with Director Dakdouki; there are no perfect decisions at the Board. The motion was passed at that time because of its deadline. There are many students who have expressed gratitude towards this plan. Consultations were done with many people, and the plan went through the Legislative Council, the Health and Dental Review Committee, and the Gender and Sexuality Commissioner. There are always more consultations to be made, and they should fix previous mistakes rather than start over.

Director Dakdouki is concerned that this plan will impact their finances, like the Legal Protection Plan did. Given the current financial situation, they cannot risk this happening again. She would favour a motion that would propose more implementation steps, to ensure that it does not affect the finances.

Director Fang motions to amend Motion 6.c to table the vote on gender-affirming care until it goes to referendum.

Director Katchelewa seconds this motion.

Question:



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Director Dakdouki asks if this motion would delay anything.

Director Koulibaly suggests that the amendment postpone action until the decision goes through referendum.

Question:

Director Fang asks if they will present the motion as it is at referendum, or if they will do more consultations and present it again at the first Legislative Council meeting.

Answer:

Officer Koulibaly states that she can create an Action Item. Postponing it until referendum would require the new motion's presentation at the Legislative Council, as all referendum questions are.

Director Fang is amenable to postponing action on gender-affirming care until it goes through referendum.

Director Ashkir seconds this amendment.

Director Katchelewa asks if an Action Item will be added.

The Chair answers that they are simply amending the Motion right now, and Action Items can be added later.

Seeing no opposition, the amendment is made.

Director Dakdouki thinks postponing action is a better way to figure this motion out, but she is worried because they are postponing a decision made by the previous Board. She motions to call the question and vote by unanimous consent.

Director Fang seconds this motion.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 6.c is approved.

7. Confidential Session

8. Adjournment: **20:26**



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The Chair adjourns the meeting at 20:26.

Alexandre Ashkir, SSMU President 2023-2024

APPROVED