



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.

ssmu.ca | (514) 398-6800 | 3600 rue McTavish, Suite 1200, Montréal, QC, H3A 0G3

SSMU BOARD OF DIRECTORS PUBLIC MINUTES

December 3, 2024

The Board of Directors meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be held by teleconference and in the SSMU Boardroom on Tuesday, December 3, 2024 at 18:00.

Present: Jonathan Dong (Chair, non-voting), Jessica Bakar (Parliamentarian, non-voting), Sierra Fallis (Deputy Speaker, non-voting), Abe Berglas (Officer, non-voting), Zeena Zahidah (Officer, non-voting), Hugo Solomon (Officer, non-voting), Meg Baltes (Officer, non-voting), Pauline Jolicoeur (Director), Dymetri Taylor (Director), Maya Marcus-Sells (General Manager, non-voting), Hamza Abu-Alkhair (Council Member), Honoah Xu (Director), Emma Chen (Council Member), Dylan Seiler (Director), Fawaz Halloum (Director), Sofia Garofalo (Director), Rishi Kalaga (Council Member)

Absent: Elina Qureshi (Director), Seraphina Crema Black (Council Member)

1. Call to Order: **18:02**

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 18:02.

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.

L'ÉUM reconnaît que l'Université McGill est située sur le territoire traditionnel et non cédé des nations Anishinaabeg et Haudenosaunee. L'ÉUM reconnaît et respecte ces nations comme les véritables et constants gardiens des terres et des eaux sur lesquelles nous nous rencontrons aujourd'hui. En outre, l'ÉUM s'engage à respecter les lois et coutumes traditionnelles de ces territoires.

3. Attendance

The Chair takes attendance.



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

The Agenda is distributed.

Seeing no changes or opposition, the Agenda is adopted.

5. Minutes for Approval

- a. [SSMU Board of Directors Public Minutes 2024-11-12](#) – **APPROVED**
- b. [SSMU Board of Directors Public Minutes 2024-11-26](#) – **APPROVED**

The Minutes are distributed.

Seeing no changes or opposition, the Minutes are approved.

6. [Elections SSMU End-of-Semester Presentation](#)

The Chief Electoral Officer presents the End-of-Semester Presentation. She states that the Fall Referendum had 17% voter turnout, which is lower than last semester by 2%. There were 9 questions, all of which were fee questions. One question was a fee creation question. The CKUT renewal, Ambassador Fee increase, Community Engagement Fee renewal, Equity Fee renewal, Legal Essentials Fee renewal, QPIRG fee increase, and Community Solidarity Fee increase were approved. The highest abstention rate was 21.2%, which is quite high but normal for SSMU. Email blasts help voter turnout, and they send multiple so that people do not forget to vote. The fall by-election did not meet quorum as there was only 11% turnout, 4% below quorum. The two questions concerned the election of a VP Student Life and VP Operations & Sustainability, both of which are invalid. The timelines for the fall referendum and by-elections were not held at the same time, which may have contributed to low turnout. They sent multiple email blasts, but they did not have the same effect as they did for the fall referendum. There are issues with voter apathy, SSMU image. Elections SSMU wants to share more information about the importance of elections for students. Potential solutions include promoting elections and referenda, and the Executives have been doing so; increasing in-person voting and campaigns, such as tabling events to inform students about elections; and amending the IRs of Elections & Referenda. They want to regulate social media campaigning, because it is harder to regulate and should be made fair for all candidates. Changes will be proposed in the winter semester. The CEO stands for questions.

Officer Berglas disagrees that elections have quorum, and states that the MOA specifies that first-year students cannot run for Executive positions.



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The CEO answers that the IRs are under revision, so the quorum issue should be discussed with those doing the review, including herself and the Policy & Advocacy Coordinator. They ask Officer Berglas to clarify the second part of their question.

Officer Berglas clarifies that there is a section in the MOA that states that Officers and Directors need to have been registered in 18 credits at the time of their election.

The CEO states that she will look into the issue of the first-year student running for Executive. They think that this clause ensures that students running for Executive positions are educated on the political situation at McGill. She states that Officer Berglas can email her so that they can talk more about this issue.

Director Garofalo asks if the 18 credits need to be done at McGill, because some of the candidates in the by-election are U1.

The CEO answers that the candidate needs to be registered in 18 credits at the time of their election, but notes that this regulation is unclear.

Officer Berglas states that the direct wording is in Section 11.4 of the MOA. They read out the section, and state that the wording is unclear.

The CEO states that they will take note of it and make the appropriate policy change when they propose the amendments to the IRs.

General Manager Marcus-Sells states that this term is placed onto SSMU by McGill, so they should interpret it in the most flexible manner possible.

Officer Solomon states that they should be cautious of making decisions that could put them in default of the MOA. It is a present as well as a future issue that may have dire consequences.

The Chair states that they will be discussing the election later.

7. Confidential Session: **18:16**
 - a. There is a Confidential Session this evening.
8. Announcements
 - a. Call for Committees (Speaker Dong)

The Chair states that he sent the Committee information to the new Board members.

Director Abu Alkhair motions to suspend the rules to add Motion 9b.



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Director Taylor seconds.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 9b is added to the agenda.

9. Motions for Approval

- a. Motion to appoint Director Garafalo to the Accountability Committee for a term effective immediately until 2025-11-14 (Director Garafalo) – **APPROVED**

Director Taylor motions to call the question.

Director Abu Alkhair seconds.

Seeing no opposition, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 9a is approved.

- b. Motion to appoint Director Abu-Alkhair to the Accountability Committee for a term effective immediately until 2025-11-14 (Director Abu Alkhair) – **APPROVED**

Director Taylor makes a wording amendment to Motion 9b.

Director Abu Alkhair states that this is a friendly amendment.

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 9b is approved.

10. For Discussion

- a. Meeting dates for Winter Semester (Speaker Dong)

The Chair states that the Board has met on Tuesdays this semester because many previous Board members were law students and could not meet on Thursdays. He asks if the Board wants to keep Tuesdays or move back to Thursdays.

Director Jolicoeur states that it is easier to plan a schedule for Board and Legislative Council meetings if they were on the same day of the week.

Director Garafalo states that she cannot do Thursdays.



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Director Kalaga states that there are usually many events occurring on Thursdays at the faculty-level, which makes it difficult. They already have Legislative Council meetings on Thursdays, and having Board on Thursdays would constrain them even more.

Officer Berglas asks to do a straw poll.

The Board overwhelmingly favours Tuesdays.

Director Jolicoeur asks if they could move the Legislative Council meetings to Tuesdays.

The Chair answers that a motion would need to be proposed at the Legislative Council.

- b. McGill's legal responsibility to accept SSMU's representatives (Officer Berglas)

Seeing no opposition, Discussion Item 10b is added to the agenda.

Officer Berglas states that McGill is refusing some of SSMU's representatives. So, they sent a demand letter, and McGill does not think they are breaking the law. Officer Berglas will submit a grievance to the Committee on Student Grievances.

11. Adjournment: **21:53**

The Chair declares the meeting adjourned at 21:53.