



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

January 21, 2025

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, January 21, 2025 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), Pauline Jolicoeur (Director), Dymetri Taylor (Director), Maya Marcus-Sells (General Manager, non-voting), Hamza Abu-Alkhair (Council Member), Honoah Xu (Director), Dylan Seiler (Director), Fawaz Halloum (Director), Seraphina Crema Black (Council Member), Sophia Garofalo (Director), Rishi Kalaga (Council Member), Emma Chen (Council Member)

Absent:

1. Call to Order: **18:06**

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 18:06.

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. [Executive Committee Public Report 2025-01-21](#) – **RATIFIED**

Director Taylor presents the Executive Committee Public Report. On January 13, they approved the hirings for Gerts baristas, catering attendants, and supervisors, and updated the Policy Mobilization Researcher's job description. The CEO's hours were increased from 200 to 300 since they had run out of contract hours due to the number of by-elections last semester. A recruitment budget of \$750 was approved for the position of Internal Counsel & Corporate Secretary, which will allow the SSMU to save money by consulting an internal legal counsel and act as a governance specialist. The Executive Committee approved the LICM's decision to install blinds in their office, a draft of a standard employment contract, delegated duties from the VP Operations to the President portfolio, and donated to a Montreal en français pilot project. On January 20, they hired a Gerts coat check attendant on Thursdays and Fridays as there was demand for this position.

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.

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

6. Minutes for Approval

a. [SSMU Board of Directors Public Minutes 2025-01-07](#) – **APPROVED**

The Minutes are distributed.

Seeing no changes or opposition, the Minutes are approved.

7. Announcements

a. Director Qureshi Resignation (Speaker Dong)

The Chair states that Director Qureshi has resigned from the Board due to conflicting academic responsibilities.

b. Call for Director on Nominating Committee (Parliamentarian Bakar)

Parliamentarian Bakar states that the Nominating Committee needs one more Director to sit on the Committee, given Director Qureshi's resignation.



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Director Halloum nominates himself, and motions to suspend the rules to add Motion 9e.

Director Abu-Alkhair seconds this motion.

Director Taylor states that Director Halloum would only be appointed to the Nominating Committee until May 31.

Director Abu-Alkhair states that he used to be on the Accountability Committee, but can no longer be since he is now the Director of Clubs & Services. He asks if he must join another committee.

The Chair answers that Director Abu-Alkhair could join another committee, but with his new workload he might not want to.

Director Halloum asks why the term ends on May 31, as last year's members at large on the Nominating Committees had terms that ended in November.

The Chair answers that Director Qureshi was appointed to a short-term position on the Board, because there was a shortage of Executives filling their Board seats. Director Halloum was appointed to one of these positions as well. The Executive term ends on May 31.

Director Halloum states that he was not on the Nominating Committee last year, but notes that the members at large on the Committee were members until November.

The Chair answers that the term on the Nominating Committee depends on the Director's term on the Board.

Director Halloum states that Executive terms end on May 31, but Directors are nominated in November.

The Chair states that the Minutes from the meeting where term renewal was discussed states that the term end date is November.

Parliamentarian Bakar states that it was communicated by email that Director Halloum's term would end in May.

Director Taylor suggests setting a term end date later after the Dais reviews the documentation.

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

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.



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Seeing no opposition, Motion 9e is approved.

c. Welcome to the Policy & Advocacy Coordinator!

The Policy & Advocacy Coordinator introduces herself to the Board. She states that she will be attending future Board meetings, and notes that Board members should have received an email from her with important changes. The motion and consultation processes have changed, and Directors should make note of this as she will be stricter with enforcement in the future.

a. Call for Indigenous art groups (Officer Solomon)

Officer Solomon announces that he will be doing a marketplace celebration of Indigenous identity and art in February, and they are looking for Indigenous groups to table. If anyone knows any groups, they should contact him.

8. Motions for Ratification from 2025-01-16 Legislative Council

a. [Motion Regarding IRs of Representation & Advocacy](#) (Officer Berglas) – **RATIFIED**

Officer Berglas states that Motion 8a amends the IRs of Representation & Advocacy to give faculties more control over the Senators they nominate, and to reduce the number of rules that are not paid attention to.

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 8a is ratified.

b. [Motion Regarding Interim Club Status for the Green Olive Chinese Christian Club \(GOCCC\)](#) (Director Taylor) – **RATIFIED**

Director Taylor states that the information about the club applying for club status is included in the attached document. He stands for questions, and notes that the motion grants the GOCCC club status.

Director Halloum if the club's mandate is unique enough to warrant club status.

Director Taylor answers that it was up to the Legislative Council to decide the uniqueness of the club, and they decided that it was, so the motion was passed. The application was well put together, and the club received a lot of donations from professors and societies at and outside McGill.

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.



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Seeing no opposition, Motion 8b is ratified.

- c. [Motion Regarding Constitution Changes for the McGill Students Chinese Society](#)
(Director Taylor) – **RATIFIED**

Director Taylor states that the club in question requested a name change to Orchestra from Music Society. The club has encountered issues with bookings and recognition because of their name.

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 8c is ratified.

The Chair clarifies that these motions would usually come to the Board as a Clubs Committee Report to be ratified, but since the Committee just restarted activity, the report cannot be prepared.

- d. [Motion Regarding Interim Provision of IR Elections and Referenda](#) (Director Taylor) – **RATIFIED**

Director Taylor states Motion 8d amends the IRs of Elections & Referenda. The IRs are still being reviewed, but amendments were proposed because there are certain areas that required urgent attention given the upcoming elections. For example, the regulations surrounding the candidates' debate were modified. He stands for questions.

Officer Solomon states that people have approached him about the section about the change in requirements for student-initiated referendum questions. He asks for the reason behind the increase in the number of required signatures from 100 to 250, and the requirement for the Legislative Council and the Board to review the question at least two weeks in advance.

Director Taylor answers that the increase in required signatures is due to the potential impact of student-initiated referendum questions, as experienced with the Student Support question. This question was brought to referendum by students and forced SSMU to sign a peculiar contract with them. Having less than 1% of students approve a question did not make sense, so increasing the number of required signatures to 250 increases the percentage of students approving a question on the ballot. All student-initiated questions are sent to the Legislative Council within 24 hours of being approved by the CEO, so this change is to better clarify the process. The Legislative Council would review the question and ensure it is appropriate. The Board will then ratify the questions, as there may be legal and financial concerns with referendum questions, specifically if they are related to fees. He is not necessarily in favour of this amendment, but it can be reviewed when the Governance Reform Committee meets again next week.



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Officer Solomon states that students were concerned with the modifications because participating in SSMU is already difficult, and the increase in required signatures and elongated timeline makes it even more difficult. There was also an amendment to the composition of the required signatures. He thinks that they should institute a better way to screen questions, because students are perceiving this change as reducing their ability to participate in democracy by making it harder to send in referendum questions. He thinks that it makes sense to have the Board review questions earlier, because they will be able to catch potentially illegal questions before they are voted on by students. He wonders if there are ways to potentially postpone these changes, because they might face backlash from students. He is open to hearing others' suggestions and ideas.

Director Taylor states that the two-week period to submit questions is not new. The modification to the collection of signatures was to account for SSMU's inability to access student ID numbers, so they will require student emails instead, as McGill does not allow SSMU to access student ID numbers. Emails are easier to forge, but with the other information they collect during elections, it should not occur. Having the Board review questions before the Legislative Council makes sense, but they do not have time to make such a large amendment right now. Director Taylor states that he would be amenable to changing the number of required signatures back to 100 and sending the questions to the Board 24 hours after they are approved by the CEO.

Director Halloum agrees with Officer Solomon; they should not complicate SSMU's democratic functions. The new requirements will make it harder for students to participate. They should specify that the Board must review questions for legal and financial reasons only.

Officer Solomon welcomes the suggested amendments. He states that the IRs stipulate that student-initiated questions must be contained to certain topics, and they must be approved by the Board. He suggests that the Board be added as a consultation for referendum questions, to make potentially problematic questions legal. He adds that there was an issue this year for non-binary, transgender, and international students with chosen names not receiving voting materials this year, and he asks if this was addressed and factored into amendments.

Director Taylor answers that the issue with the ballots was a logistical issue, because there was a new CEO who was unaware of the issue until after the election. They should ensure that there are adequate exit reports in the future. The issue was caused by the discrepancy in names in Minerva between McGill usernames and McGill emails. He notes that he changed the section to require 100 signatures for a student-initiated referendum question, and to require the questions to be sent to the Board after 24 hours to provide feedback, after they are approved by the CEO.

The Policy & Advocacy Coordinator states that the section that has been struck clarified why the Legislative Council was involved in the referendum questions, and clarifies what their role is in the referendum process. She adds that, by taking the questions to the Board instead, they are removing



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the Legislative Council from the referendum process. The paragraph in question explains that the Board ratifies decisions made by the Legislative Council. She is amenable to changing the number of required signatures, but notes that they should look at the proposed changes again because she thinks they are important. She is open to hearing more feedback from students.

Director Taylor suggests making a note of the proposed changes for the next Governance Reform Committee meeting. If there are issues with this interim provision, they can be reviewed in the future.

The Chair asks if Director Taylor wishes to amend the motion.

Director Taylor answers yes.

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 8f is ratified.

- e. [Motion Regarding Amendment to the Internal Regulations of Student Groups](#) (Director Taylor) – **RATIFIED**

Director Taylor states that Clubs were previously required to attend both sessions of club workshops per year, which is difficult logistically because there are over 200 clubs. Instead, they have required clubs to attend only one workshop per year.

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 8e is ratified.

9. Motions for Approval

- a. Motion to appoint Director Seiler to the Strategic Planning Committee, beginning immediately until November 14th, 2025 (Director Seiler) – **APPROVED**

Director Taylor motions to call the question.

Director Kalaga seconds.

Seeing no opposition, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 9a is approved.



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- b. Motion to appoint Director Seiler to the Funding Committee, beginning immediately until November 14th, 2025, pending an amendment to the Committee Terms of Reference (Director Seiler) – **RESCINDED**

Director Jolicoeur states that the Funding Committee is a committee of the Legislative Council, so the Terms of Reference would need to be amended to allow Director Seiler to sit on it. It would make sense to have a Director sit on the committee, especially because it deals with the disbursement of funds, and because there are not many members on it right now. She suggests amending the motion to approve it pending a change to the committee's Terms of Reference. She will try to send an email motion out with an amendment to the Terms of Reference.

The Chair states that he was unaware that there were no Board seats on the Funding Committee. He states that members can apply to committees through the Secretary General.

Director Taylor states that Directors may not be able to apply to member at large positions.

The Chair asks Director Seiler if Director Jolicoeur's amendment is a friendly amendment.

Director Seiler states that he can apply as a member at large instead. He rescinds this motion.

- c. Motion to approve the new Winter Referendum and Election Dates:
 - Nomination period from the 27th of January to the 7th of February.
 - Week to review between the 8th and the 16th of February.
 - Campaign period from the 17th to the 20th of February.
 - Voting and campaign period from the 21st of February to the 7th of March.(Director Taylor) – **APPROVED**

Director Taylor states that they previously approved Winter Referendum & Election dates, but because of the interim provision to the IRs of Elections & Referenda, they need to be modified to account for the change in the campaign period, which was modified to begin earlier than the polling period rather than occur at the same time. The Nomination period from the 27th of January to the 7th of February, there will be a week to review nominations between the 8th and the 16th of February. During this time, the CEO and the Dais will review nominations to ensure that the Legislative Council can take place to review questions. The campaign period from the 17th to the 20th of February, and the voting and campaign period from the 21st of February to the 7th of March.

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 9c is approved.



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- d. [Motion to approve amendments to HR Committee Terms of Reference](#) (Director Taylor)
– **APPROVED**

Director Taylor states that the new HR Manager reviewed the Terms of Reference. The new HR Committee Terms of Reference make more sense for the committee. Membership includes a Director, an Officer, the General Manager, a manager from the Student Life Operations team, one additional manager, and one Executive. There are some committee-specific rules around conflict of interest, consultation, and recruitment. The HR Committee can receive complaints about Officers, in which case the Officer on the Committee would recuse themselves from the discussion. The same would apply to staff members who are involved in the Committee when complaints are received.

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 9d is approved.

The Chair entertains a recess.

- e. Motion to appoint Director Halloum to the Nominating Committee, beginning immediately until the end of Director Halloum's term (Director Halloum) – **APPROVED**
10. For Discussion
11. Confidential Session:
- a. There is a Confidential Session this evening.
12. Adjournment: **21:20**

The Chair declares the meeting adjourned at 21:20.