



## 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

March 25, 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, March 25, 2025, at 18:00.

Present: Jonathan Dong (Chair, non-voting), Jessica Bakar (Parliamentarian, non-voting), Sierra Fallis (Deputy Speaker, non-voting), Hugo Solomon (Officer, non-voting), Zeena Zahidah (Officer, non-voting), Abe Berglas (Officer, non-voting), Pauline Jolicoeur (Director), Dymetri Taylor (Director), Maya Marcus-Sells (General Manager, non-voting), Hamza Abu Alkhair (Council Member), Seraphina Crema Black (Council Member), Sophia Garofalo (Director), Rishi Kalaga (Council Member), Emma Chen (Council Member), Rajan Duncan (Director), Fawaz Halloum (Director), Honoah Xu (Director), Dylan Seiler (Director), Joshua Chin (Alumni Representative, non-voting), Alison Glaser (Internal Counsel/Corporate Secretary, non-voting)

Absent: Simone Brown (Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, non-voting),

### 1. Call to Order: **18:12**

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 18:12.

### 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



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The Chair takes attendance.

4. Announcements
  - a. Welcome to new IC/CS (IC/CS)

The Internal Counsel introduces herself. She started at SSMU two weeks ago, and used to work in corporate law and McGill's grants and agreements office. She then worked at another corporate firm, and now she is working at SSMU. When she was a student, she sat on the Senate and participated in student advocacy, so it is nice to be back in that sector.

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

The agenda is distributed.

Officer Solomon adds Discussion Item 9b.

Seeing no opposition, the agenda is adopted.

6. For Discussion
  - a. Hiring VP Finance (Director Taylor)

Director Taylor states that the elections closed on Friday, which means they now have to decide how to proceed with the hiring of the VP Finance. The motion did not specify how the hiring would be done, only specified that the Board would hire a VP Finance. The VP Finance could be done by the Nominating Committee, which is how Board of Directors and Judicial Board members are chosen, or if there should be another process by which the VP Finance is hired. They should hire someone by March 31.

Director Crema Black states that the Board should consider that the person who ran and was elected was elected with a large majority. She is unsure what the hiring process will resemble, but she knows that they have a short period of time to hire a person for the position. She does not know how many applications they will receive, but the Nominating Committee should consider that over 1,000 students voted for the candidate who was elected.

Officer Zahidah states that the purpose of the amendment to the constitution is to ensure that the VP Finance is the most qualified candidate in terms of accounting processes. The constitutional amendment should be the most important consideration, and the Nominating Committee and the Board will set up their own criteria. The person hired should be the most qualified person and should be an expert in finance. She suggests that the Board have a discussion on qualifications.



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Director Crema Black states that the amendment does matter, but highlights that the election matters too. If the candidate that was elected applies to the position, they should take that into consideration, because he was democratically elected.

Officer Solomon states that the candidate got around 50% of the vote, but the question about the amendment got the most support out of all the questions on the ballot. The candidate in question might be qualified for the role, and Officer Solomon encourages him to apply. He asks if Director Seiler is attending the meeting tonight.

Director Crema Black answers that they have a choir performance tonight. The constitutional amendment was approved, and this should be taken seriously. The fact that the candidate was elected should be considered a qualification for the role.

Director Crema Black leaves the meeting.

Officer Zahidah asks the IC/CS about the hierarchy of the SSMU and how the Board will make decisions around conflicts of interest, especially now that the VP Finance will be hired. She asks if the Dais takes care of these concerns.

The Chair answers that the Dais only considers conflicts of interest that are very surface-level, as they can only encourage voluntary recusal, not require it. The Conflict of Interest Policy allows third parties to declare conflicts of interest to the HR Manager. He notes that the IC/CS might be more knowledgeable about the Conflict of Interest Policy.

Officer Zahidah notes that they should formalize conflicts of interest at the Board level over the summer.

Director Taylor motions to suspend the rules to add Motion 9b.

Director Jolicoeur asks if they need to update the job description for the VP Finance, as the Executive job descriptions have not been updated in a while.

Officer Solomon notes that some of the job duties for Executives are outlined in the constitution.

The Chair suggests a wording change to Motion 9b.

Director Jolicoeur suggests determining a posting date for the position, or to post the job as soon as possible for 10 days.

Officer Solomon asks if the position is subject to the Collective Agreement.



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Director Jolicoeur answers that the position is not unionized, but they still have the same standards for non-unionized positions when it comes to job postings.

Officer Zahidah states that the jobs can be posted following the regulations for internal job postings, but can be posted externally as well.

Director Taylor answers that they need to follow the proper processes whether or not the position being hired is unionized or not. The position needs to be up for 10 days. If an internal candidate applies to VP Finance, they would get priority for the position because of the Collective Agreement.

Officer Zahidah states that the Collective Agreement applies, and asks if they need to prioritize internal candidates for student-oriented positions. She notes that HR has bypassed the regulation to post the job description internally for 10 days before, so they can post it internally and externally at the same time.

General Manager Marcus-Sells states that the SSMU has a good relationship with the Union, and notes that there is a meeting between the two this week. They should try to get the union to agree to this small change. The Collective Agreement might apply, but the union might not have an issue with the Executive bypassing it.

Officer Solomon agrees, and notes that he spoke with the union president, who was quite happy that the VP Finance will be hired. They should be as proactive as possible, because they could be critiqued that the position is not hired fast enough. He suggests asking for permission to distribute the job description externally without posting the job for 10 days internally beforehand, after it has been reviewed.

Director Jolicoeur asks if she would be working with HR to update the job description, and then if HR would send out the job posting.

Officer Solomon answers yes.

The Chair suggests making wording changes to Motion 9b. He notes that some of the work on this can be done by the Executive Committee.

General Manager Marcus-Sells states that at the weekly union check-in on Thursday, they should ask the union for permission to bypass the internal posting regulation, and to post the VP Finance job externally instead so that the most qualified candidates apply. She thinks the union will be amenable to this.

Director Taylor makes an amendment to Motion 9b.



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Director Garofalo seconds Motion 9b.

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

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote on Motion 9b.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 9b is approved.

### 7. [Executive Committee Public Report 2025-03-05 to 2025-03-25](#) – **RATIFIED**

Director Taylor presents the report of the Executive Committee. On March 10, there was not much business, but Director Taylor notes that the Chief Electoral Officer's hours were extended, a new Campus Crops Coordinator was hired, and the VP Internal was assigned to the HR Committee. On March 17, there were a few hiring motions and a benefits email was sent out. There were also increases in services' budget from \$500-1,000. On March 25, there were more budget increases.

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

### 8. Minutes for Approval

#### a. [SSMU Board of Directors Public Minutes 2025-03-11](#) – **APPROVED**

The minutes are distributed.

Seeing no corrections or opposition, the minutes are approved.

### 9. Motions for Approval

#### a. [Motion Regarding Building Renovations for Room B-24](#) (Director Abu Alkhair) – **POSTPONED**

Director Abu Alkhair states that after discussions with the Building Director, it was determined that Room B-24 (in the basement beside the MSA prayer space), is not being used. It needs a lot of work, including electrical work, painting, wall replacement, and removal of heavy equipment. The Building Director asked Director Abu Alkhair to look into allocating some of the University Centre Building Reserve Fund to go towards this project, which he wants done in June. Director Abu Alkhair makes an amendment to Motion 9a.

Director Taylor states that some of the updates will be feasible to do on their own, but some will require approval by McGill. He asks if McGill approved this project. If they have not, the project will not be able to go forth.



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Director Abu Alkhair answers that he is unsure. He motions to postpone Motion 9a for further consultation with the Building Director.

Director Xu seconds.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 9a is postponed.

- b. Motion to assign the Nominating Committee to review VP Finance applications and have a decision meeting made by the 2025-04-22 Board meeting (Director Taylor) – **APPROVED**
- c. Motion to sign up for the free level of Bounce, use the platform, and report the results to the Board in Fall 2025 (Director Abu Alkhair) – **APPROVED**

### 10. For Discussion

- a. Bounce (Director Abu Alkhair)

Director Abu Alkhair states that he spoke with Bishop's and UBC, because he wanted to get their opinion on Bounce. They said it was a great app, but Director Abu Alkhair wanted to hear the not-so-good stuff as well. Bishop's told him that they launched Bounce during their Winterfest; tickets were sold exclusively on Bounce. They used the free version of Bounce at first and integrated their clubs into the app. Bishop's and UBC both gave good recommendations, so Director Abu Alkhair thinks that they should try the app for free and use it internally first. Before they pay for anything, they should see how the free version works. Director Abu Alkhair notes that he can provide more information if needed.

Officer Zahidah states that it is important to consider how much workload their staff can handle at once. Any implementation of Bounce would likely fall on the communications department. She doubts that there is enough student engagement for them to download Bounce, as the election took almost 3 weeks to reach quorum. She is in favour of using the free version, if the communications department or another department is able to undertake its implementation. The communications department is dealing with a lot of work right now.

Director Xu agrees with Officer Zahidah. Students who are engaged in clubs will likely find Bounce useful and use it, even if this is not the whole student body. He thinks that it would be good to try it out. He asks Director Abu Alkhair to share his notes from his meetings.

Director Abu Alkhair answers that he can share them.

The Chair suggests sending them to the Board google chat.



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General Manager Marcus-Sells agrees with Officer Zahidah that it is important to balance the staff's workload. She was already planning a project with other employees for a new club portal and website, and Bounce is an alternative that the communications department likes. They can integrate her work on the portal into the implementation of Bounce, as long as they are careful about it.

Officer Solomon asks if Bounce would be more work for the communications department than the club portal. Using an app that is already set up might be less work than maintaining a whole new portal. If they choose to do a trial run of Bounce, they should be aware of who this responsibility falls on, because the workload might not be distributed evenly across the communications team.

Director Taylor states that Bounce noted that they would be the ones incentivizing people to sign up. The schools Director Abu Alkhair contacted probably have more information, but he thinks that Bounce will do a lot of work themselves. He and Director Jolicoeur met with Bounce earlier to see if they could use a free version. Bounce already created a whole SSMU portal, and they are trying to convince SSMU to encourage students to download the app through a tutorial session with food, gift card, and Bounce merchandise giveaways. They also suggested that student bars could sell drink tickets through Bounce, which could increase student participation.

Director Abu Alkhair states that Bounce sends its own agents to campuses. Any events on the Bounce page must be approved by an administrator for the event to be visible on the app, and there are tiers of tickets so that different prices can be assigned to different people. The schools he talked to encouraged him to try Bounce for free, because they tried it for a month and had high engagement. Those schools are now paying for it, because they tried it and liked it.

Director Garofalo states that students engage with clubs and services, even if they do not engage with SSMU, which could justify using Bounce. She is in favour of starting with the free version, because it is hard for students to find club events.

Officer Solomon asks if a Director could motion to reach out to Bounce to request to try a free trial.

Director Abu Alkhair asks if they should talk to Bounce about trying the free version before approving a motion.

Officer Solomon states that the conversation about Bounce already took place.

Director Taylor states that the motion would mandate that the Board go ahead with the free version of Bounce.

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



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Director Chen seconds.

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

Officer Zahidah makes an addendum to Motion 9c.

Director Abu Alkhair states that this is a friendly amendment.

Director Xu asks if it would be better to have a month-long trial in September, as it is almost the end of the school year and clubs are less engaged.

Director Abu Alkhair amends Motion 9c to start the free trial in September.

Director Taylor states that Bounce will only be set up in September if they delay it, so it might be better to have a free trial from now until September 31.

Director Abu Alkhair notes that this is a friendly amendment.

Officer Solomon clarifies that this is not a free trial, there is a level of Bounce that is free in addition to paid tiers with more advantages. There is no limit on free usage; SSMU would be signing up for the basic level of Bounce.

Director Abu Alkhair makes an amendment to Motion 9c.

Director Jolicoeur states that they should motion to sign up for the free version now, and then re-evaluate in a month.

Director Abu Alkhair clarifies the wording of Motion 9c. At the end of the trial period in September, he will present a report on Bounce usage on campus.

The Chair makes a wording suggestion to Motion 9c.

Officer Zahidah asks if Bounce clarified how they use the data they collect from students.

Director Taylor answers that Bounce does not keep any data and does not have access to it. Bounce goes through a third party to access it. They also do not sell it. The Board did not ask this question specifically, but this would likely come up should they sign an agreement with Bounce.

The Chair suggests that Director Abu Alkhair amend Motion 9c.





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Director Abu Alkhair is amenable to the changes suggested by the Chair.

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 9c is approved.

Director Xu notes that there are 30 days in September, not 31.

Director Abu Alkhair motions to recess until Officer Solomon returns.

The Chair states that he will introduce the discussion point first.

### b. SGA attendance (Officer Solomon)

The Chair states that the Steering Committee has reviewed the motion to strike with the IC/CS and the movers. A Special General Assembly has been called for Thursday, and will be logistically-intensive. Officer Solomon has figured out a way to process both online and in-person votes.

Officer Solomon states that the SGA is going to be hybrid because they cannot fit 500 people in the cafeteria, if they did, it would be a fire hazard. They have received a list of students to reference from McGill from this semester. In-person attendance is easier to check; volunteers will cross-reference attendees' McGill IDs and emails with the list. The volunteers will check a box to note that the person is attending in-person, so that if they vote online their vote is not counted twice. It is harder to count votes online. The communications department sent an email today to students requiring students to sign up in advance to receive the link on the day of the meeting, and they have to submit their name, McGill email and ID, and their favourite colour. They will use their McGill emails to log into the meeting, so that it is certain that they have registered and that they are SSMU members. When the voting period starts, a voting form will be sent in the chat of the Zoom meeting for people online to vote. People online will have to use their McGill email, ID, and favourite colour to vote. They have a list of people who filled out the voting form and a list of people who registered to attend. These lists will be cross-referenced with the list of people who voted in person using Chat GPT 4.5 to ensure that no vote is counted twice. Hopefully, this calculation will take around 10 minutes. It would make it tricky to confirm the result of the vote, but that makes sense given the number of people voting.

Director Abu Alkhair asks why students need to submit their favourite colour when they sign up to attend the SGA.

Officer Solomon that the Chair set this up to ensure that people who attend are the same as the people who registered. The registration process is so elaborate because at the last General Assembly at Concordia, the University tried to claim that the result was not valid because the identity verification



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was not extensive enough. This way, SSMU can verify student information adequately. The verification process could be simpler.

Officer Zahidah asks how many people have filled out the form to attend online.

The Speaker answers that 35 people have filled it out so far.

Officer Zahidah asks what the capacity of the second floor is.

Director Abu Alkhair answers that the cafeteria and rooms 201 and 202 can fit 350 people. The group who booked room 203 did not respond to his email asking them if they would be willing to reschedule their reservation.

Officer Zahidah sees the reasoning for the measures, but knowing those who will show up, she does not think enough people will register in advance for SSMU to be able to enforce the 350-person limit.

Officer Solomon states that the movers seemed to be on board with this, as he met with them this morning. It is important to note the capacity limits, because the movers are not sharing them in their advertisements, although SSMU's communications do. They should encourage people to register in advance, because this will eliminate potential fire safety issues and count votes. He thinks it would be easier if the meeting was 100% online.

Officer Zahidah agrees that it would be easier to organize this online. She asks if they have checked the accuracy of Chat GPT 4.5 to do the cross-reference without any discrepancies.

Officer Solomon answers that no AI model is perfect, but Chat GPT 4.5 is usually flawless for something like this.

Director Abu Alkhair states that he can check the AI himself. He asks when the registration form closes, and if students who try to attend the meeting in-person but are turned away because of capacity limits could register to attend online instead.

The Chair answers that there is a sign-up deadline. If they reach quorum online and the rooms are full, the form will be closed to ensure they can verify the votes in a timely manner. Otherwise, it will remain open.

Officer Solomon states that he is concerned about people who are checked in in person at the front doors, but then reach the second floor and realize the room is full. He asks how these people would vote.



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The Chair notes that check-in will be done on the second floor.

General Manager Marcus-Sells states that check-in will be done at the entrance to the cafeteria. Once people are checked in, they will receive their ballots. If people leave the room, even temporarily, they cannot leave with their ballots. That way, they always know how many people are in the room.

Director Taylor asks how long the voting ballot will be open for.

Officer Solomon states that it should be open when the vote takes place in-person. Because it would take so long to check the ballots in-person, hopefully everyone would have time to vote online.

Director Taylor asks when the voting ballot would close.

Officer Solomon answers that this is not a big issue because the only votes counted would be from those who registered and voted at the right time. He suggests closing the voting form after 15 minutes, because it is not a good idea to leave the voting form open all night.

Officer Zahidah notes that people attending online might not be very attentive to the meeting. She suggests leaving the form open for 20 minutes, and that the person screen sharing shows a slide to notify those online that they are voting.

The Chair states that he will make a slideshow for the GA.

Officer Solomon asks the Chair to send him the registration information of those who have registered, to test out the AI model he wants to use at the SGA.

The Chair answers yes.

11. Confidential Session:
  - a. There is a Confidential Session this evening.
12. Adjournment: **20:37**

The Chair declares the meeting adjourned at 20:37.