Conseil d'administration
Board of Directors

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.
Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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AÉUM SSMU

SSMU BOARD OF DIRECTORS PUBLIC MINUTES

August 18, 2026

APPROVED

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

Present: Hamza Abu Alkhair (Director), Keith Babayon (Director), Simon Ngassam (Director), Meghan Lai (Director), Harry Wang (Director,) Jason Wang (Director), Acadia Knickerbocker (Officer, non-voting), Maggie Tang (Officer, non-voting), Joshua Chin (Alumni Representative, non-voting), Olivia Ginnetti (Governance Affairs Coordinator, non-voting), Melissa Proietti (General Manager, non-voting), James Reid (Speaker, non-voting), Yasmin Beeai (Deputy Speaker, non-voting), Brigitta Chan (Parliamentarian, non-voting), Alissa Gharzouzi (Recording Secretary, non-voting).

Absent: Seraphina Crema Black (Director), Lucy Crowther (International Student Representative, non-voting)
Late: Rajan Duncan (Director)

1. Call to Order: 18:07

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 18:07pm.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The Chair gives the land acknowledgment.

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'AÉUM reconnaît que l'Université McGill est située sur le territoire traditionnel et non cédé des nations Anishinaabeg et Haudenosaunee. L'AÉUM 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'AÉUM s'engage à respecter les lois et coutumes traditionnelles de ces territoires.

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

The agenda is distributed

The Chair asks if there are any changes or additions to the agenda.

Seeing none, the agenda has been adopted.

4. Minutes for Approval
    a. Board of Directors Public Minutes 2026-05-19 - **APPROVED**

The minutes are distributed.

Director Lai notes that her name is spelled incorrectly on pages 4 and 15.

The Secretariat corrects the errors.

The Chair asks whether there are any further amendments to the minutes.

Seeing none, the Chair asks whether there is any opposition to their approval.

Seeing none, the minutes are approved.

5. Executive Committee Public Report 2026-07-21 - **RATIFIED**

The Chair asks if there are any questions,

Seeing none, the Chair asks if any are opposed to the report being ratified.

Report ratified.

6. Executive Committee Public Report 2026-08-18 – **POSTPONED**
7. Announcements
8. Motions for Approval
    a. Motion to approve the VP Finance, Jason Wang, and the Comptroller, Desmond Rodrigues, as the signing officers for the SSMU's investment portfolio at Lester Asset Management (Director J. Wang, seconded Director Abu Alkhair) **- APPROVED**

Director Jason Wang presents Motion 8a. He explains that the SSMU maintains its investment portfolio and savings with Lester's and that designated signing officers must authorize any changes to the account. The current signing officers are Jean-Sébastien Léger and Desmond Rodrigues; however, Jean-Sébastien is no longer with the SSMU. The motion therefore proposes designating the

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Vice-President Finance and the Controller as signing officers authorized to implement changes approved by the Board.

The Chair opens the floor to questions.

Seeing none, the Chair opens the floor to discussion.

Seeing no discussion, the Chair asks whether there is any opposition to approving Motion 8a by unanimous consent.

Seeing none, Motion 8a is approved unanimously.

b. Motion to amend the Board of Directors Standing Rules (Director Abu Alkhair, seconded Director J. Wang) - **APPROVED**

President Abu Alkhair yields his speaking time to the Chair.

The Chair presents Motion 8b. The proposed Standing Rules remain substantially unchanged from the version presented at the previous meeting, as most of the Board's requested amendments are incorporated. The principal addition is Section 31, which permits a Director to move to approve multiple sets of meeting minutes as a block. The Board will ordinarily continue to consider each set of minutes individually. However, if no amendments are required, a Director may move to approve all or some of the minutes as a block. If there is no opposition, the identified minutes will be approved together. All other motions will continue to follow the standard procedure. If Motion 8b is approved, the amended Standing Rules will govern the Board during the 2026-2027 year.

The Chair opens the floor to questions.

Director Ngassam recalls that the Board may previously have considered matters other than minutes as a block. He asks why Section 31 applies exclusively to meeting minutes and whether other categories of motions should also be included.

Officer Knickerbocker explains that the Board previously voted on meeting minutes and human resources motions as a block, although the Standing Rules do not authorize either practice. She understands the amendment to formalize only the practice of approving meeting minutes as a block. She suggests that the Secretariat may have considered the appropriateness of allowing different categories of motions to be considered together.

The Chair explains that the provision is limited to meeting minutes because Directors should still review the details of individual human resources motions, including the identity of the individual being hired, the position, and the compensation. Although considering these motions individually may be time-consuming, the information remains important. By contrast, Directors are expected to

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review meeting minutes in advance, making it as a block approval appropriate when no amendments are required.

The Chair asks whether there are any further questions.

Seeing none, the Chair opens the floor to discussion.

Seeing no discussion, the Chair asks whether there is any opposition to approving Motion 8b by unanimous consent.

Seeing none, Motion 8b is approved unanimously.

c. Motion to appoint Directors Ngassam and Duncan to the IRP Faculty Committee (Director H. Wang, seconded Director Lai) - **APPROVED**

Following discussion point 9c, the Chair asks whether there is any opposition to approving Motion 8c.

Seeing none, Motion 8c is approved.

9. For Discussion
    a. Changes to the IRs of Finance and IRs of SG (Director J. Wang)

Director Jason Wang presents Discussion Point 9a. He explains that he is conducting a comprehensive review of the Internal Regulations of Finance and proposes transferring provisions concerning clubs, services, and other student groups to the Internal Regulations of Student Groups. The purpose of the discussion is to provide a general overview of the proposed approach rather than to adopt a motion. He intends to provide notice of motion at the first Legislative Council meeting, allowing Councillors to review the proposed changes, ask questions, and recommend revisions. The final motion is then expected to be presented for approval at the second Legislative Council meeting. He presents a diagram illustrating the proposed structure. The Internal Regulations of Finance appear on the left, the Internal Regulations of Student Groups appear on the right, and the proposed protocols appear between them. Green indicates provisions that are substantially complete following consultation, subject to minor revisions; yellow indicates work in progress; red indicates provisions being removed from one governance document and transferred elsewhere; and unhighlighted provisions remain unchanged. He explains that the Internal Regulations of Finance previously served as a repository for all provisions relating to money, contracts, or similar matters, resulting in a document of approximately 70 pages. Under the proposed approach, the Internal Regulations of Student Groups will contain all provisions directly affecting clubs, services, and athletic teams. The document is intended to serve as a single, comprehensive source through which student groups can understand the rules relevant to their operations. Certain provisions concerning student groups will remain in the Internal Regulations of Finance where they relate to the SSMU's internal authority rather than the

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responsibilities of student groups. The revised Internal Regulations of Finance will focus on authority, organizational structure, chains of command, and other foundational matters that should remain stable over time.

Operational processes that may require more frequent revision will be transferred to separate protocols. The proposed Budget Protocol will establish the applicable steps, timelines, and responsibilities in the budget process. The Fees Protocol will set out the process through which members may establish new fees. Fee-specific rules currently found in the Internal Regulations of Finance will be transferred without substantive amendment because he considers that changes to individual fees should be approved separately through motions specific to each fee. The proposed Funding Protocol will govern the SSMU's internal process for distributing funds. This protocol requires further work and remains under development.

He also discusses the SSMU Credit Card Policy, explaining that the 2023 policy is not consistently followed and is no longer adequate. He is therefore developing a new Credit Card Protocol following consultations with several individuals. Although the protocol will primarily govern the SSMU's internal operations, provisions specifically affecting clubs and services will be incorporated into the Internal Regulations of Student Groups so that student groups need to consult only that document.

The Internal Regulations of Student Groups must be updated to recognize athletic teams as a new category of student group following the SSMU's assumption of responsibility for teams discontinued by McGill. Officer Knickerbocker continues to develop the relevant provisions. He notes that the Internal Regulations of Student Groups will also address club credit cards and the sanctioning of clubs and services. While Officer Knickerbocker is primarily responsible for the sanctioning provisions, he provides input regarding their financial elements, as sanctions frequently arise from financial matters.

Finally, he explains that provisions concerning student groups currently located in the Internal Regulations of Finance will be transferred to the Internal Regulations of Student Groups. These include provisions concerning the financial responsibilities of the SSMU, officers responsible for clubs and services, the preparation of service budgets, and other related matters. He expects to conduct extensive consultations over the following two weeks and provides this overview to ensure that directors understand the broader rationale and context underlying the individual amendments.

The Chair opens the floor to discussion.

General Manager Proietti notes that the diagram does not show the reserve funds provisions being transferred to a separate protocol.

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Director Jason Wang explains that the absence of an arrow indicates that the provisions will remain in the Internal Regulations of Finance. He considered creating separate Investment and Reserve Fund Protocols but concluded that these matters should not be amended frequently and are therefore better suited to the more stable Internal Regulations of Finance. Although retaining them will make the document longer, approximately 40 of its existing 70 pages are being removed, making the revised document considerably more accessible. He asks whether General Manager Proietti nevertheless recommends creating a separate protocol.

General Manager Proietti does not recommend a separate protocol at this stage. She proposes continuing their discussion regarding capital expenditures and how they should fit within the revised structure.

Director Jason Wang agrees to address the matter during their future consultation.

The Chair asks whether there are any further questions or discussion.

Seeing none, Discussion Point 9a is concluded.

b. Athletic Team Fee (Officer Knickerbocker)

Officer Knickerbocker presents Discussion Point 9b. The athletics teams will join the SSMU in the fall under the newly established athletics team classification. During the onboarding process, Officer Knickerbocker and Vice-President Jason Wang identified several costs associated with maintaining these groups. The teams will remain self-financed for most of their expenses through membership fees, fundraising, and donations. These expenses include competition and registration fees, accommodations, uniforms, and other operational costs. The only consistent long-term expense borne by the SSMU will be the maintenance of the teams' bank accounts and credit cards. The SSMU currently covers these costs for clubs through the Club Fund. As athletics teams will no longer be classified as clubs, it would be inappropriate to continue using the Club Fund for their banking expenses. She therefore seeks the Board's views on establishing a dedicated athletics fee. The proposed fee is based on the annual cost of maintaining each team's bank account and credit card. The SSMU has already covered the initial cost of opening the accounts as part of the onboarding process. Ongoing bank account fees amount to $3.75 per month, or $45 annually, while each credit card costs $30 annually. The total annual cost is therefore $75 per team. With 12 athletics teams, the SSMU's total annual expense is $900. She recommends keeping any new fee as low as possible because students already pay a substantial athletics fee to McGill. An additional SSMU athletics fee may create confusion when both charges appear on students' accounts. She also questions whether it is appropriate for the entire student body to fund services benefiting a relatively small number of students. Based on the current costs, the proposed opt-outable fee would amount to approximately $0.06 per student annually. If the SSMU anticipates requiring such a fee in the future, it may be preferable to establish it now while students remain familiar with the transition of the athletics teams

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to the SSMU. Securing approval for a new fee several years later may be more difficult. Although $900 represents a small portion of the SSMU's overall budget, it remains an ongoing expense requiring a designated funding source. She asks whether an opt-outable fee charged to all students is appropriate, whether the proposed amount should be increased or decreased, and whether such a fee should be established at all. She identifies an alternative option under which each athletics team would pay the SSMU an annual membership fee of $75 to maintain its status. However, she does not support this approach because the cost is not communicated to the teams during onboarding and may cause some groups to remain clubs rather than transition to athletics team status. This would undermine the purpose of creating a separate classification that reflects their distinct operations. The teams already independently fund their principal expenses and imposing an additional charge after inviting them to join the SSMU may be inconsistent with the support initially offered. She expresses a preference for an opt-outable fee of approximately $0.06 per student. She proposes linking the maximum fee to a formula based on the annual cost of maintaining one bank account and one credit card, multiplied by the number of athletics teams and divided by approximately 70% of the student population. This would allow the amount to adjust with actual costs and the number of teams while preventing students from being charged more than necessary.

The Chair opens the floor to discussion.

Director Harry Wang asks whether the Club Fund could be used to cover the costs, given the perceived similarities between clubs and athletics teams.

Officer Knickerbocker explains that athletics teams are not closely comparable to clubs, which is the reason for establishing a separate category of student group. Athletics teams incur distinct expenses and operational requirements, including coaching contracts, tryout processes, and participation in collegiate competitions as representatives of the SSMU. She opposes using the Club Fund for athletics teams because it is intended to support club events and reduce the financial burden on club executives. Redirecting those funds from clubs, which serve a substantial portion of the student population, to the comparatively smaller athletics program would be inappropriate. She anticipates that the differences between clubs and athletics teams will become increasingly apparent over the coming year.

Director Jason Wang corrects the initial calculation, noting that issuing a credit card also incurs a $50 fee in addition to the annual maintenance fee.

Officer Knickerbocker recalls that the SSMU agreed to cover the initial costs of establishing the teams' bank accounts and credit cards, while the proposed fee is intended to cover only ongoing maintenance costs.

Director Jason Wang clarifies that the $50 bank account opening fee is a one-time expense. However, a new credit card must be issued whenever the signing officer changes, resulting in an additional $50 charge. If each athletics team appoints a new financial officer annually, this effectively becomes a

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recurring expense. Combined with the $30 annual credit card fee, the annual credit card cost is approximately $80 per team. Including this amount in the calculation would increase the proposed student fee from approximately $0.06 to $0.10 per year.

Officer Knickerbocker explains that the formula shared in the Board chat is intended to illustrate the approximate cost to students rather than establish a final amount. The specific fee may be discussed further with the Board and the Legislative Council. She asks whether Directors support an athletics fee of approximately $0.06 to $0.10 per student, prefer charging the athletics teams directly, or wish to consider another funding option.

Director Lai recommends giving the fee a distinct name so that students can clearly distinguish it from McGill's existing athletics and recreation fee and understand what the SSMU charge supports.

Officer Knickerbocker proposes the name SSMU Athletics Teams Fee, noting that athletics teams will be the official designation used in the SSMU's governance documents alongside clubs, services, and Independent Student Groups.

Director Jason Wang adds that McGill's existing fee appears on Minerva as the Athletics and Recreation Fee. Naming the proposed charge the SSMU Athletics Teams Fee would therefore clearly distinguish the two.

Director Ngassam questions whether a separate student fee is necessary for an annual expense of approximately $900 to $1,500. He suggests that the SSMU may be able to absorb the cost directly and express concern that creating a dedicated fee for such a limited amount may be disproportionate.

Officer Knickerbocker acknowledges that $1,500 may appear insignificant within the SSMU's overall budget but explains that no existing budget line covers the expense. The SSMU would therefore need to reallocate funds from another area. Although the amount is currently limited, it represents a recurring annual expense that must be accounted for and may place increasing pressure on the SSMU's finances. She notes that additional athletics teams may join in future years and that other unforeseen costs may arise. For example, the SSMU already incurs increased insurance expenses to cover teams during competitions. A dedicated fee would provide a reliable source of revenue from which these costs could be paid. Establishing the fee now will be easier than introducing it several years later if athletics teams become considerably more expensive. Students are currently familiar with the varsity team cuts and the teams' transition to the SSMU. Future students may lack this context and question why the SSMU can no longer absorb costs it previously covers. She therefore suggests establishing a small fee while the transition remains recent.

Director Ngassam questions whether creating a fee now would resolve this issue. He notes that if annual costs increase substantially, for example from approximately $1,500 to $15,000, the fee may need to rise from $0.10 to approximately $1.00 per student. He asks whether securing approval for such an increase would present the same difficulty as establishing a new fee at that time.

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Officer Knickerbocker explains that the SSMU regularly seeks approval through the Legislative Council and referendum to increase existing fees. She believes that students who already pay a small athletics teams fee will more readily understand an increase tied to rising costs than the introduction of an entirely new fee several years later without the original context.

Director Jason Wang identifies additional indirect costs not captured by the proposed fee. Beyond banking, credit card, and insurance expenses, athletics teams require significant administrative support from the Accounting Department. Their volume and value of transactions are substantially greater than those of clubs, creating additional financial risk and requiring more staff time. Although these costs are difficult to quantify, they may eventually result in overtime expenses or the need for an additional part-time position.

Officer Knickerbocker adds that the fee may be eliminated in the future if operational data demonstrates that it is unnecessary or if the student body prefers that the SSMU absorb the costs. She believes that removing an existing fee would be easier than introducing a new one after several years. She reiterates that the SSMU already incurs costs associated with the athletics teams and that a dedicated fee would provide a financially sustainable means of supporting them. However, she recommends that the initial fee reflect only the tangible banking and credit card costs, or exceed those costs only minimally, to avoid charging students unnecessarily. Most athletics team operations will continue to be self-financed.

The Chair asks whether there are any further points of discussion.

Seeing none, Discussion Point 9b is concluded.

c. Appointing 2 Board of Directors members for Faculty Committee/IRP Issues (Officer Tang)

Officer Tang presents Discussion Point 9c on behalf of the AVCs. She explains that the SSMU has not had AVCs for several years and that this is therefore a relatively new matter for the Board. In light of three ongoing IRP matters requiring investigation, two non-executive members of the Board of Directors must serve on the Faculty Committee. The committee is chaired by the AVC and the selected Directors are expected to remain available during September and early October. New members will subsequently be selected to review future IRP matters. She invites interested Directors to volunteer and explains that the role requires a relatively limited time commitment. Meetings may occur online or in person, and the AVCs will prepare the necessary materials. Participating Directors will be responsible for reviewing the materials and deliberating with the other members of the committee. She emphasizes that appointing two Directors is mandatory.

The Chair opens the floor to discussion.

Director Ngassam nominates himself to serve on the committee.

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Director Duncan conditionally volunteers if no other Director is available. He suggests giving priority to a Director with greater availability or a stronger interest in the role.

Following call back to order, Director Harry Wang moves to suspend the rules to add a motion appointing Director Ngassam and Director Duncan to the IRP Faculty Committee.

Director Ngassam asks whether the Directors are being appointed to an existing committee or specifically to the IRP Faculty Committee and requests clarification regarding its relationship to the GSVP Committee.

Coordinator Ginnetti explains that the IRP provides that the composition of the SSMU Faculty Committee follows that of the GSVP Committee. The GSVP Committee's composition includes two members of the Board of Directors selected by the Board, two SACOMMS representatives, and two members-at-large selected by the AVCs within the prescribed period before or after the Fall General Assembly. She adds that the formal appointment process will be implemented during the coming year in consultation with the AVCs and that the present appointments constitute an interim measure.

The Chair asks for a seconder.

Director Lai seconds the motion.

The Chair asks whether there is any opposition to adding the motion to the agenda.

Seeing none, Motion 8c is added to the agenda.

10. Adjournment: 18:59

The Chair asks whether there are any further points of discussion.

Seeing none, the Chair adjourns the meeting at 18:59.

11. Call back to order: 19:00 (procedural error)

Following a false adjournment, the Chair recalls the meeting to order.

12. Adjournment: 19:05

The Chair asks whether there are any further points of discussion.

Seeing none, the Chair adjourns the meeting at 19:05.

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