AMS Annual General Meeting Minutes
October 28, 2014
SUB Ballroom

Call to order
The meeting was called to order at 12:50 pm by Tanner Bokor, AMS President, who declared that quorum (500 AMS members) was present.

1. MOVED MARJAN HATAI, SECONDED JUDE CRASTA:
   “BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda be adopted as presented.”
   • It was agreed to move the President’s Address to later in the agenda.

2. MOVED GABRIEL D’ASTOUS:
   “BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda be amended to add a motion opposing the 10% increase in tuition for international students.”

3. MOVED MITCH MAMMEL:
   “BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda be amended to add a motion opposing the 20% increase in housing fees.”

4. MOVED TESS FOREST:
   “BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda be amended to add a motion calling on the AMS to advocate for tenants’ rights in University housing.”

5. MOVED OLIVIA MANN:
   “BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda be amended to add a motion calling on the AMS to advocate for increased postsecondary funding.”

6. MOVED MARINA CLASSEN:
   “BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda be amended to add a motion calling on the AMS to support student groups opposing the fee increases.”

7. MOVED ILANA SHECTER:
   “BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda be amended to add a motion calling on the AMS to organize protests against the increases.”
8. MOVED JANIS VETSCH:

“BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda be amended to add a motion calling on the AMS to publish the motions passed at this AGM.”

All the above amendments were voted on and approved in one vote.

9. MOVED MARJAN HATAI, SECONDED JUDE CRSTA:

“BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda be adopted as amended.”

…Carried

10. MOVED KAITLYN MELTON, SECONDED JANIS VETSCH: [SCD322-15] [SCD323-15]

“BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alma Mater Society Membership accept the President's and the General Manager’s Annual Reports as presented.”

… Carried

11. MOVED WILLIAM SULLIVAN, SECONDED THOMAS THOMPSON: [SCD324-15] [SCD325-15]

“BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alma Mater Society Membership accept the Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements as of August 30, 2014 for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2014, as presented.”

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Society approve the Financial Statements as of April 30, 2014.”

… Carried

12. MOVED EMMA BRIONOS, SECONDED JENNA OMASSI:

"BE IT RESOLVED THAT the D&H Group be retained as the Auditors for the Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia Vancouver for the ensuing fiscal year.”

… Carried

13. MOVED MITCH MAMMEL, SECONDED SYLVIA HANDFORD:

“WHEREAS the University has proposed to increase international undergraduate student tuition by 10% for the incoming 2015/16 cohort,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMS oppose the proposed increases to international student tuition to be implemented in 2015.”

• Jenna Omassi: Council has already passed a motion opposing both the tuition and the housing increases.

The Chair declared that quorum had been lost and called a recess. Quorum was restored three minutes later, and the meeting resumed.

• Jenna Omassi: Council has already approved a motion opposing the increases.
Mitch Mammel: But a motion passed at an AGM with quorum is one of the most binding motions that can be passed. It’s important to vote again here.

14. MOVED MONA MALEKI, SECONDED TRISH EVERETT:

“That the question be called.”

Note: Requires 2/3rds

… Carried

15. MOVED MITCH MAMMEL, SECONDED SYLVIA HANDFORD:

“WHEREAS the University has proposed to increase international undergraduate student tuition by 10% for the incoming 2015/16 cohort,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMS oppose the proposed increases to international student tuition to be implemented in 2015.”

… Carried

16. MOVED MITCHELL HO, SECONDED ERICA MASON:

“WHEREAS the University has proposed increases in housing fees, including rent and meal plans, by up to 20% starting September 2015,

BE IT RESOLVED that the AMS oppose the proposed increase to housing fees to be implemented in 2015.”

… Carried

17. MOVED TRACY GIDDOSH, SECONDED BREE FRASER:

“WHEREAS University housing is exempt from the Residential Tenancy Act of British Columbia, which governs the relationship between tenants and landlords, leaving students without tenants’ rights,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMS advocate to the provincial government for legislation that ensures tenants’ rights within university housing.”

Joaquin Acevedo: The idea of putting University residences under the Residential Tenancy Act has come up before. Has the Executive spoken to the RHA (Residence Hall Association)? Is this something that you really want to do? Currently, there’s a closer relationship with UBC and you can more easily affect housing contracts the way things are now.

Anne Kessler (VP Academic & University Affairs): My office is doing a report on housing which we will send to the RHA. It’s a conversation. We talk to the University, we talk to the government. It’s worth exploring that avenue (talking to the University), but we need to go bigger. UBC has said No to changes.

Gabriel D’Astous: The motion doesn’t say we want residences put under the tenancy act. We’re not asking for that.
• Ilana Shecter: UBC is our governing body. The Board of Governors controls everything. It's important to have some sort of independent body involved.
• Tracy Giddosh: The current contract doesn't protect residents' rights. Some of us don't even have clean water.

18. MOVED TRACY GIDDOSH, SECONDED BREE FRASER:

"WHEREAS University housing is exempt from the Residential Tenancy Act of British Columbia, which governs the relationship between tenants and landlords, leaving students without tenants' rights,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMS advocate to the provincial government for legislation that ensures tenants' rights within university housing."

... Carried

19. MOVED MOHAMED SHAABAN, SECONDED RYAN HILL:

"WHEREAS the provincial government has recently cut core funding and considers further cuts to funding for postsecondary education,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMS advocate to the government for increased postsecondary funding."

• Emily: Would this funding be for education for students or for research?
• Tanner Bokor: For all, and it would include financial aid.
• Adrian Hsi: What kind of actions would be taken?
• Bahareh Jokar (VP External): Currently we're working with the Alliance of BC Student Associations, doing provincial lobbying, getting meetings. To date we've met with two ministers.

20. MOVED MOHAMED SHAABAN, SECONDED RYAN HILL:

"WHEREAS the provincial government has recently cut core funding and considers further cuts to funding for postsecondary education,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMS advocate to the government for increased postsecondary funding."

... Carried

21. MOVED PETER ZENN (?), SECONDED KELLY GERLINGS:

"WHEREAS the student body has voiced its strong opposition to the proposed housing and international tuition fee increases.

Be it resolved that the AMS support student groups mobilizing and organizing to oppose these fees. This includes but is not limited to provision of meeting spaces, promotions, materials and people power."
22. MOVED MOHAMED SHAABAN, SECONDED MARJAN HATAI:

“That the question be called.”

Note: Requires 2/3rds

... Carried

23. MOVED PETER ZENN (?), SECONDED KELLY GERLINGS:

“WHEREAS the student body has voiced its strong opposition to the proposed housing and international tuition fee increases.

Be it resolved that the AMS support student groups mobilizing and organizing to oppose these fees. This includes but is not limited to provision of meeting spaces, promotions, materials and people power.”

... Carried

24. MOVED JENSEN (?), SECONDED JOHN FITSCH (?):

“WHEREAS the student body has voiced its strong opposition to the proposed housing and international tuition fee increases,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMS organize student protests to oppose said increases until the decisions by the Board of Governors.”

- Jenna Omassi:
  o I have a few problems with this motion.
  o Student protests are much more effective when they come from the grassroots; they are less effective coming from student government. We made quorum today not because the AMS reached out but because the I Am A Student group rallied students.
  o The AMS as a body is not structured to organize protests. We sit in meetings with the University Administration.
  o The Executives at those meetings are there on your behalf. However, if we start organizing protests, how much longer will we be invited to have our voice heard?
  o We need to be at the table for many issues.
  o It’s dangerous to have the AMS organize the protests. It’s a better idea to have the AMS support the groups doing the protests.

- Gabriel D’Astous: Just because the AMS organizes doesn’t mean others won’t too, and why isn’t the AMS mobilizing and organizing? Let’s create strength, get protests going. Let’s do this.

- Mohamed Shaaban: I don’t agree that the AMS should not be organizing protests because of its structure. The AMS represents students, and if students think we should do protests, then we should.

- Mitch Mammel: It’s true it could be dangerous to hold protests; it may strain the relationship with the University a bit. But it’s important to show solidarity with the protests. And if the AMS says it’s too dangerous, it looks like the AMS is scared.
Viet Vu: It’s not the first time tuition increases have happened. Back in 2003 the only reason proposed increases were reduced was because the AMS was at the table, talking to the University. Most change happens because people are sitting at the table. What will really make a difference is being at the table.

Student (Vincent Furlong?): The AMS should not be afraid to act on behalf of the student body for fear of dismissal by the University. If it does not act, it may invite the scorn of the student body. If the University opts to dismiss the AMS, then that will just lead to an acceleration of our demands similar to what happened in Quebec, in Paris, in London.

Claire: This is a student union. Unions have strength at the table with employers because they have the right to organize.

Tanner Bokor: We’re not a union, but a society.

A question was raised about what happens if the Board of Governors goes ahead with the increases. Will the AMS just protest until it makes its decision?

Anne Kessler: We need a time limit. The Board will be making decisions in November and February.

25. MOVED _____ (?), SECONDED GABRIEL D’ASTOUS:

“That the motion be amended to add the phrase ‘until the decisions by the Board of Governors have been reversed’.”

- Anne Kessler: We can’t say that because there are no decisions yet.

26. MOVED ANNE KESSLER, SECONDED GABRIEL D’ASTOUS:

“That the amendment be amended to read ‘until the increases have been voted down by the Board of Governors.’”

*The amendment to the amendment and then the amendment as amended passed.*

27. MOVED JENSEN (?), SECONDED JOHN FITSCH (?):

“WHEREAS the student body has voiced its strong opposition to the proposed housing and international tuition fee increases,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMS organize student protests to oppose said increases until the increases have been voted down by the Board of Governors.”

… Carried

28. MOVED JANIS VESTCH, SECONDED _____(?):

“BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMS will publish motions passed at this AGM to major media outlets.”

- Student: What media outlets?
• Tanner Bokor: We have a standard distribution list: Vancouver Sun and Province, the Globe and Mail, the Courier, the Vancouver Observer.
• Trish Everett: Given all the motions already passed, the next step is to spread the word. The minute the media is involved, the University has to listen. I’m so proud of you.

29. MOVED JANIS VESTCH, SECONDED _____(?):

“BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMS will publish motions passed at this AGM to major media outlets.”

... Carried unanimously

30. MOVED ANNE KESSLER, SECONDED JOHN (?):

“That the agenda be amended to add a presentation after the Presidential Address.”

... Carried

AMS Presidential Address – Tanner Bokor
• This is the first time in 40 years we’ve met quorum at an AGM.
• The Nest is opening sometime in the second term. Thanks to Ava Nasiri, VP Administration, for her work on that project.
• Come the opening of the Nest, we will be a different society.
• New policies and procedures are coming, new technology and staffing, new businesses.
• We recently lost a member of our team, a staff member, Michelle Macatangay, who passed away.
• Our doors are always open; we’re happy to talk to students. Come out to events.
• We will ensure that the motions passed today are implemented.

Presentation on Tuition and Housing – Tanner Bokor
• Tanner Bokor summarized the history of consultation on tuition, adding:
  o I have concerns about the consultation process.
  o The pressure for tuition increases comes from reductions of the government grant and a desire by the University to improve academic excellence.
• On housing, we need more student housing and prices should remain competitive with Vancouver housing prices.
• UBC says it wants to enhance financial aid.
• UBC Policy 71 requires the University to consult with students for at least 30 days on tuition. We’ve pushed them to extend, and the consultation has been extended to November 21, with the vote on tuition coming in early December.
• There’s no process on housing fee increases, no UBC policy. They have asked for feedback. There is consultation with the RHA.
• I met with UBC President Gupta yesterday. I think he now gets our concerns.
• On October 14 AMS Council voted to oppose the increases.
• The AMS is working with campus partners on this: I Am A Student, the International Students Association, etc.
31. MOVED JAY CARRELL (?), SECONDED _____ (?):

“That the meeting be adjourned.”

… Carried

The meeting adjourned at 2 pm.