This document contains an overview of the activity from this office from June to September 2013. It also includes progress and updated goals.

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Vice President, Finance
September 23rd, 2013
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1 Introduction

Students are finally back on campus relaxing on the lawn or rushing from one building to the next. Welcome Back BBQ and Imagine Day have happened. I guess it's that time of year again, September is here. Happy autumn! With students back on campus my day to day has certainly changed from projects and planning to meetings and administrative work. I hope that whatever help I am able to provide for students and clubs goes a long way to improve the student experience here at UBC.

This report includes an update on the work that my office has been working on for the past few months.

2 Hiring

The past few months have certainly been challenging in terms of human resources. Sustainability Coordinator, Justin Ritchie, and Sustainability Outreach Coordinator, Jenna Singh, have both decided to focus on their studies in order to complete their degrees. Though their resignation was expected and discussed early on, finding capable individuals has been challenging. This goes to show the great contributions made by Justin Ritchie and his team over the past few years. Justin built AMS Sustainability into the well-recognized and impactful office known today. On behalf of the AMS, I want to thank Justin and Jenna for their incredible contributions to the Society and notable support for sustainability on campus. The endeavour to find replacements for these individuals began in August and has recently concluded with the hiring of Jennifer Sun as the new Sustainability Coordinator. I am confident that she brings the necessary skills required to continue the work of the Sustainability Office.

Below is a chart of available positions within my office, vacancies, and plans to fill them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finance Commission Vice Chair</td>
<td>Hired</td>
<td>Jeff Aschkinasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Vice President Finance</td>
<td>Vacant due to financial constraints</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientations Coordinator</td>
<td>Vacant due to financial constraints</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funds and Grants Commissioner</td>
<td>Vacant due to financial constraints</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid Commissioner</td>
<td>Vacant due to financial constraints</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability Coordinator</td>
<td>Posting x2, Screening, Interviews, References, Offer</td>
<td>Jennifer Sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability Assistant Coordinator</td>
<td>To be hired by Mid-October</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composting Coordinator</td>
<td>Contract ends December 2013</td>
<td>Brett Lawton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composting Coordinator</td>
<td>Contract ends December 2013</td>
<td>Emme Lee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to Sustainability hiring, I was tasked by the Business and Administration Governance Board to take part in the hiring for Senior Human Resources Manager. Over the month of June, I worked with the President and General Manager to screen applicants, conduct interviews, and select a successful candidate for the position. Ken Yih was selected to fill the vacancy for his diverse skill set, ability to move forward change, and cultural fit for the Society.

3 Sustainability

3.1 Restructure

In light of changing needs and with the notion of the New SUB, the Sustainability Office underwent a restructure. The AMS Sustainability Office has been growing in terms of its duties for a few years. With the establishment of the Sustainability Projects Fund and closer relationship with the University Sustainability
Initiative (USI) the demand for time has increased greatly. While this growth is beneficial to the Society, some negative side effects occurred along with it. The positional duties have become muddled and have resulted in less efficient communication internally and with our partners. After careful evaluation of the years ahead and feedback from employees working in that office, it was determined that clear duties were to be determined once again taking into account added responsibilities. In response, the Sustainability Coordinator was relieved of most administrative tasks and instead refocused on strategy development and implementation, relationship building with higher level University administration, and support for SEEDS projects. Additionally, the Sustainability Outreach Coordinator was repurposed as an assistant to the Sustainability Coordinator, taking care of website, fund administration, and partnership building with student groups. Waterfillz has been delegated to the Communications Department to complete implementation.

3.2 Food Systems Strategy Review
As an outcome of the AMS’ partnership with the USI, a SEEDS project was created to review the Food Systems portion of the AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy. I attended several meetings with the UBC Food Systems Project Coordinator to review and assess the results of the project. Recommendations from this exercise will be presented to Council in the form of a submission in the coming weeks. Next steps will be determined in collaboration with the new Sustainability Coordinator.

4 Collective Agreement Negotiations
Collective Bargaining occurred early in July to negotiate the terms of a new agreement after the previous agreement ended in April of this year. Director of Operations, Uli Laue, took charge of the negotiations while supported at the table by Director of Finance and Administration, Keith Hester, and myself. During the second round of negotiations in July a tentative agreement was reached between the COPE 378 bargaining committee and the AMS. The tentative agreement was ratified by the AMS 2 days later. Due to coordination issues, the union membership did not vote to ratify the agreement until its third attempt. At that meeting the membership rejected the agreement. Recently, the Union called a meeting to vote on a motion to strike. We will be waiting for the results of that meeting to decide next steps. Note that the AMS has a labour disruption plan that would be implemented if a strike were to occur.

5 Finances
A brief budget update was presented at the August 21st Council meeting on the first quarter of the fiscal year. Most departments are on or under budget with a few exceptions. As discussed with Council, I have met with most of the department heads to discuss their expenses thus far, raise any concerns, and plan for the remainder of the fiscal year. Two departments that remain outstanding are the President’s Office and Vice President Administration’s Office. The department that presents the most concern is the VP Administration Office which is projected to be significantly over budget. I will be taking steps to find a solution to the matter. This concern is not singular to the VP Administration but is rather exemplary of the structural deficit we face.

AMS Businesses performed well over the summer given the circumstances they face with continued construction and aging businesses. At the moment AMS Businesses are $137,000 ahead of budget as of August 31st.
6 Performance Accountability Incentive Goals

The following are the goals that Council passed on June 12th at the recommendation of Oversight Committee.

1. Develop and implement zero-based budgeting process for the Society to increase financial responsibility and stability.
2. Review Lighter Footprint Strategy to determine achieved goals. Develop a 3-5 sustainability strategy reflecting current and future needs of the Society.
3. Develop a detailed long term financial plan for the Society shifting its current model.
4. Review and develop more sustainable financial policies and implement financial management tools.
5. Increase awareness of fees amongst students and the use of Society’s money.

To date, goal 1 has been completed and goals 2, 3, and 4 remain in progress. Goal number 4 has seen the most progress with the implementation of two tools. The first was the pre-authorization process followed by monthly budget reports and meetings. The timelines for all of these projects have been delayed significantly due to a number of factors. The Whistler Lodge report delayed most of these by two months due to the fast turnaround time and detail required. Furthermore, the LFS review was also delayed due to vacancies in the Sustainability Office.

I will be speaking to Oversight Committee about changes and updates to my goals for the remainder of the year. I will note, however, that it is rather concerning that Oversight Committee has not met with me once to discuss progress or update on activities within my office. I would be interested to have a discussion the process, expectations, and defining success for executives.

7 Finance Commission

7.1 AMS Membership Fees

As a result from review of processes in the AMS and conversations with the Medical Undergraduate Society, Faculty of Medicine, and Student Care, my office decided to streamline some of these processes. In the past, 3rd and 4th year MD students who wished to opt into AMS fees would need to complete three different paper forms and visit Brock Hall, AMS, and Health & Dental Plan Office. In an effort to streamline the process and make it easier for students, all forms were moved online. Additionally, in collaboration with the Registrar’s Office and Student Care, we were able to allow students to simply complete one form online, as opposed to three. The form was made available for 3 weeks for students from late July to mid-August. As a result of communication issues from the Faculty of Medicine, the form was re-opened two more times to allow students to opt-in. This exercise proved to be complicated as we had to balance the demand from students, capacity of UBC Enrolment Services, and contractual obligations. The most challenge came from the U-Pass contract as it has prescriptive language on eligibility, deadlines, benefits, etc. In order to meet all of our obligations and continuing to serve students, the AMS VP-External, UBC Transportation Planning, UBC Enrolment Services, and my office had several meetings where we were able to create the opportunity for these students who would otherwise not be able to access U-Pass and Health & Dental Plan. A few students who wished to opt-in were left out as they missed the deadlines prescribed. My office will continue to work with the other stakeholders to create an opportunity for these students to opt-in in Term 2. I will note, that it is concerning that the AMS has essentially created optional membership and circumvents the 1966 Referendum with opt-in provisions for 3rd and 4th year MD students. We and should work with the AMS Representative to determine the best way of rectifying this anomaly.

On a similar note, Distance Education students and Incoming Exchange students have been interested in accessing our Health & Dental Plan. A similar process was created for those students who wish to opt-in to
our fees. Due to contractual obligations with U-Pass, the U-Pass fee was excluded so as to not create issues with the integrity of the program. Students who were previously eligible for the U-Pass will continue to be eligible but no student may become eligible through this opt-in process. It has been limited to Health & Dental and other services and fees. Some issues of eligibility persist and my office continues to work with VP-External and UBC Transportation Planning to clarify.

With the return of students to campus, my office has been inundated with emails and questions regarding the purpose of each fee, the ability of opt-out of all fees, and the processes to follow in order to opt-out of fees with such a provision. In an effort to be proactive, my office coordinated with CiTR and Bike Kitchen to determine the opt-out process for students. The AMS Resource Groups were failed to respond despite multiple attempts. To date emails and process has been facilitated as best possible but a few concerns remain. The first is the fact that the opt-out process requires students to visit 4 different offices with varying available times, and inconsistent opt-out procedures. The second stems from a conversation with one of the groups where they mentioned that they didn’t want to make the opt-out process completely online in fear that too many students would opt-out. My office will be having conversations with all of these groups in order to streamline this process in the future. The AMS should also consider whether broad knowledge and ease of the opt-out process is a better policy than a cumbersome process that is not widely known on campus. Students should have this information communicated more effectively and the processes should be made quite easy. High opt-out rates, especially for smaller fees could be used as a performance indicator.

7.2 Financial Hardship Subsidies
Summer Term 1 and Term 2 financial hardship subsidy applications were made available to students. The VP-External and my office reviewed the applications and communicated with the Registrar’s Office to issue credit to those students in financial hardship. Summer Term 2 subsidies were delayed in being issued onto students’ SSC accounts due to capacity overload of UBC. These will be issued by the end of the month. Winter Term 1 financial hardship subsidy applications have been made available online. This decision was made in early summer in order to ease accessibility to students and maintain a better record of these applications. In the first few months as VP-Finance, I found that applications were inconsistent, hard to find, and a few were lost. Moving forward, Finance Commission will be assessing applications for Winter Term 1 in October and will be working on creating more descriptive criteria.

7.3 Clubs
This year, the Finance Commission has been much more consistent with its policies regarding club finances. More than 25% of club accounts were frozen due to late, or no, budget submissions. The Commission worked hard on contacting all of these clubs to submit budgets, attend orientations, and respond to inquiries that came up. Furthermore, a review of our loan program for clubs was completed and several concerns were raised. Clubs with outstanding debt were called in to make repayment plans. Finally, Square and Modo are two new services that were created for clubs to use.

8 Whistler Lodge
Needless to say, this was the main project that I was working on for the past few months. Since a complete report was submitted to Council on August 21st I will refrain from speaking on the scope, and findings, recommendations of the report. I will comment, however, on the process. While my office is the appropriate place to complete this report since most councilors view this topic as a financial issue, I would like to note that the expectations were unrealistic. A similar report was written in 2011 by professional consultants after roughly 4 months of work. My office was expected to complete the report in less than half the time and with
increased scope. It was a great learning opportunity and allowed me to leave the office often to seek advise from UBC administration who are experts on the topic. I would like to note however that by completing this report my office was distracted from preparing and progressing on other goals. Furthermore, the oversight responsibilities of this property lie on the Vice President Administration and Student Life and Communications Committee in regards to operations and renovations, respectively. I would encourage Council to consider more carefully the groups within the organization to which it delegates issues and determining realistic timelines.

9  Business and Administration Governance Board
BAGB has been hard at work and I can finally say that it is now at the place where it should be. It has been equipting itself with the tools it needs and done a fantastic job determining its scope and pace. Though it needs more work, BAGB will hopefully begin to show a positive contribution to the Society. We have passed several policies and determined questions that need to be asked and issues to be tackled in order to improve our businesses. Moving forward, BAGB will be evaluating businesses scheduled for the New SUB and developing strategies for various parts of our businesses and administration Office.

10 Other Projects and Activities
The items below are other committees, activities and/or projects that my office has been working on for the past few months. For further information on these please contact me:

• Truth and Reconciliation Commission
• Ombuds MoU and Fee
• Residence Hall Association Outreach
• Orchard Commons Working Group
• Global Fund Advising
• Lobby Days
• CUS Endowment
• Student Union Development Summit
• Exam Database Hiring
• Legislative Procedures Committee
• Education Committee
• Health and Dental Plan
• Canadian Student Horizons Group
• Regional Sustainability Council

For more information on any of the items discussed above please contact my office.

Respectfully submitted on September 24th, 2013,

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