

## Minutes of the AMS Advocacy Committee

January 11, 2018

**Attendance (Invited):** Sally Lin (VP External & Chair), Max Holmes (VP Academic and University Affairs), Daniel Lam (Vice-Chair, Student at Large), Kevin Doering (Student Senate), Jeanie Malone (Board), Chris Hakim (Councillor), Kelsi Wall (AMS Policy Advisor)

**Guests:** Albert Tung (Councillor)

**Regrets:**

**Agenda Items:**

### 1. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 14:05

### 2. Approval of Agenda

- Sally wishes to add a discussion item on a tuition referendum.
- Moved by Jeanie, Seconded by Chris
- Passes unanimously.

### 3. Land Acknowledgement

### 4. Happy/Beef

*Max Holmes arrives at 14:09.*

### 5. Approval of Minutes dated November 24, 2017

- Moved by Max, Seconded by Jeanie
- Passes unanimously.

### 6. VP Academic and University Affairs Updates

- Had workshop to appoint project leads
- Lots of developments on strategic plan, will have meeting with VP Students and Provost. GSS, AMS, SUO exec invited.
- Joined Senate. Sit on curriculum committee and the Health Sciences Subcommittee. Also sit on Agenda Committee.
- AMS will contribute to pow wow this year.
- AES almost finalized. Having session tomorrow.
- Board of Governors meeting upcoming.
- Finalizing Musqueam communication policy and AMS Indigenous Advisory Group

- Policy 73 will be reviewed.
- Sexual Violence and Respectful Environment Working Group is doing work.
- Marijuana policy is going great.
- Kevin: Will the AMS also push for other drug legalizations?
- Max: Ask the VP External on that. It's advocacy to the government.

#### **7. VP External Affairs Updates**

- Set up team with research projects. They've been assigned with 2-3 topics each.
- Had a mayor's forum beginning in winter break where we engaged with mayors on consultation processes.
- Maria documenting and tracking U-Pass complaints in inform work moving forward. Brooklyn working on SLFS on housing fair. Will bring together landlords and rental resources.
- RWR has 800 signatures so far. Amazing.

#### **8. External Policies**

- EP-2014-06 Possible Closure of Pine Free Clinic
- EP-2014-07 Societies Act White Paper
- EP-2014-08 Increase in UBC's International Tuition Fees and Housing Contracts
- EP-2014-09 Official AMS Statement on UBC's Proposed International Tuition and Housing Fee Increases
- Sally: These have all expired. I recommend they just expire.
- Kelsi: Any sentiments captured through these will just be in our Affordability Policy.

#### **9. Tuition discussion**

- Max: A few preliminary discussions were held on this. The policies that we have right now is that no increase can go above the 2% domestic cap. Just because we have had a past referendum on this, thinking about the international tuition increases, if there are future increases, and that they may happen in the next few years. We should have a referendum on what our next steps should be in the future. The past referendum was very vague; it says we needed to advocate for reduced tuition. We would not be successful. Making the referendum more accurate is important. The referendum could just work in both the Academic and External work as well. It could also be a general affordability referendum. There are a lot of options.

- Kevin: The people will come out from the left and have some rally. Most students will agree with you but some won't and won't vote.
- Jeanie: Should we step out of this meeting?
- Max: You can stay. Or declare a conflict of interest. What would be great is to look at whether we are okay with the current status quo.
- Sally: I wonder if this would make our advocacy easier.
- Jeanie: There've been contradictions in the past where the AMS has been in favour and also against certain increases because of this policy.
- Max: I think the referendum reflected the spirit of the times. Do we want to continue that?
- Chris: Is it restricting our negotiations?
- Max: Currently following the affordability policy. It allows a 2% domestic cap so as long as it is justified. We did voice concerns with the last increase. Right now the referendum is not restricting us. What I'm asking of is are we okay with the current policy and should we follow the referendum in context?
- Albert: How much has international tuition been increased in the past?
- Kevin: The increases ended up being 40% over three years. There was also a 20% housing increase.
- Jeanie: Next year they will make a new plan on international tuition.
- Max: There have been big international tuition increases in the past. It doesn't mean we should be opposed to a 2% increase as long as it is justified.
- Albert: Are we wanting to expand the 2% increase to also include international students.
- Max: The 2% increase is a government cap for domestic students.
- Sally: This discussion really is about the University advocacy side of things in a referendum. Not for external and governmental advocacy.
- Max: There is a great risk in running this referendum too. It could damage the reputation of the AMS if it fails. There is little risk to the status quo as well. The benefits of passing this referendum are not that great. It only really just builds us up for the upcoming increases.
- Jeanie: Past referenda are another can of worms. There have been a lot of
- Max: Nobody has come out and said that they are in favour of this.

- Daniel: We've been in the status quo for a while and while it's a nuisance, it's worked, and university officials have gotten used to us opposing things now.
- Max: So I think I've heard from this committee we don't want to run this. Done.

**10. Announcements**

- Sally: Wendy is leaving us. We will appoint someone else next Council.

**11. Next Meeting:** January 25th at 14:00

**12. Adjournment**

- Meeting adjourned at 14:43.