



## THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

Minutes of the AMS Steering Committee, January 17 2019

### Attendance

Present: Marium Hamid (President, Chair) Kuol Akuechebeny (VP Finance, Chair of Finance Committee) Chris Hakim (VP Administration, Nick, Jerome Goddard (Chair of Student Life Committee), Jonathan Tomalty (AVP Finance), Conor Doherty (Asst. to the President), Dylan Braam (Chair of Governance Committee) Piers Fleming (Student Services Manager), Cole Evans (Chair of Human Resources Committee), Abdul (Senior Manager of Student Services)

Regrets: Max Holmes (VP AUA, Chair of Advocacy Committee) **Joined following AdvoComm.**

Recording Secretary: Conor Doherty

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm

### Agenda Items

Agenda moved by Cole, Seconded by Chris

Minutes moved by Chris, seconded by Cole

#### 1. Codification of Steering Goals

##### a. Review of Goals

- i. Orientations (own agenda item)
- ii. Committee and Council Timeline/Calendar
  - Marium has spoken with HR, wanted to add Council appointments, hiring
  - Dylan: confirmed orientation dates necessary
  - Chris: adding the ABS timeline important
  - Cole: we should start referring to it as the AB cause it's the Advisory Board
  - Marium: latest date of referendum approval to keep handy for people. Potentially including

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guideline times for consultation (only AMS referendums). Two weeks from the voting seems fair for presenting to Council.

- Kuol: increasing minimum days between question posed and voted on could improve consultation
- Marium: would require a bylaw amendment, and the purpose is not to vote on the question but to consult.

iii. Working with Student Life for Grad Class Council

iv. Strategic Plan

### 2. AMS Strategic Plan and Mission Statement

- Marium: have a read of the Mission Statement. Does the statement suffice? Do we like it and do we want it to guide our Strategic Plan?
- Dylan: consider removing “the interests of UBC” and post secondary line
- Marium: if the goals are aligned with us, they are automatically AMS goals
- Dylan: its long but we’re a complex organization
- Jon: better than the “not Strategic Plan” strategic plan. It would be hard to shorten.
- Jerome: don’t see the value in post secondary as a whole line. I don’t see a lot of mention of the student experience which we do
- Nick: not sure the point of the “solve problems constructively” line
- Kuol: shouldn’t we say UBC Vancouver, since UBCO has their own society. We also lobby with others for greater post secondary education matters which it doesn’t specify

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- Marium: we shouldn't always take a stance with other unions in the province, should be for our students primarily
- Abdul: should we expand the preamble? Meaning the first line. I have seen one-page preambles followed by purpose. What does personal lives mean?
- Dylan: Vice and Food Bank apply to that
- Kuol: we should keep the post secondary part to reflect our commitments to cooperating across the province
- Marium: that part is fine, the UBC specific part should be ditched
- Cole: some good, some sucks. Agree with Jerome that student experience should be included. We don't advocate for student learning, we do for experience. "Flexible to accommodate the changing world" comes out of no where. So, does the line Nick mentioned. Its weird and doesn't mean anything. Foster communication "internally and externally", what does that mean to non AMS involved students? I like the idea, but the language is confusing.
- Marium: probably with the University and external in the province.
- Piers: should include support for the diverse AMS community and membership. Inclusion of recognition of indigeneity within the AMS should be there.
- Marium: all manager goals have had to align with the Strat Plan when there's been one in the past? Is that good, do we need one, and are we fine

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with a strong Mission Statement as our guiding principle? If so, are we happy with this one?

- Cole: Strat Plan good, Mission Statement not enough to go off. Strat Plan identifies the key pillars in the society, and overarching core goals for the longer-term future. Should be built from scratch.
- Abdul: current MS was passed in 1994
- Piers: Services shouldn't be in overall AMS plan, since its so different it should follow its own.
- Chris: Services is still AMS, should be included.
- Piers: I don't see the AMS one happening this year and one of Services goals is to have one.
- Cole: it doesn't have to be controlling but overarching, for the whole society. Same values with different implementation.
- Jerome: Keith should be here if its that important. Could a third party be involved like the Governance Review?
- Marium: are we looking to create strategies? Values? Values wouldn't be a strat plan, would be a mission statement. Strategies can be changed by a new exec. People don't like the Strat Plan since exec turns over every year. Values and operations are separate.
- Cole: its important to have a Strat Plan since yu don't know who you get in turnover, and we need to ensure the long-term values and AMS survival and growth will continue to guide no matter goals of execs.
- Cole: yes, we want one, but don't want to handcuff people in the future. Vague, but more of

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- a framework. Concern with legacy documents that write the path for future with frequent turnover. Not too bearing on future administrations.
- Chris: Goals doc for council has values. The council as board ensures that exec and managers are fulfilling Council values. Council ensures accountability.
  - Kuol: valuable to guide, 5, 10 year growth. While working on the plan, we can learn where to avoid restrictions. Look at what we want first and begin working and we can detail specifics on the way.
  - Jon: shouldn't handcuff but specificity can help there to focus on what should be worked on. Hold accountable to what's realistic. Huge document that's super wide will handcuff.
  - Marium: re. 3<sup>rd</sup> party, UBC's process failed miserably and the firm they hired to fix it knew nothing about UBC and it got worse. No one knows the organization as well as those in it. Someone can facilitate but someone within the organization needs to guide and consult with as many people as possible. It would be costly and detrimental.
  - Dylan: a strategic plan when elections already determine strategy? Candidates have platforms already, how do we tie those into such a plan. We should have a guiding document, but can we call it a strat plan?
  - Marium: what ive learned is that new people know that steps they want to take but not know what to look out for, account for. I.e. consultation, accessibility, affordability. I would have liked to

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have principles to guide what is important, not steps.

- Piers: Services and AMS Businesses should work on their own plans anyway.
- Marium: their goals are different so they can still work on their own, but principles that matter to the AMS community are important. Don't want to see people only a few values in the future.
- Abdul: guiding principles of the AMS. The MS essentially is that. Could be 1, 2, 3, 4... etc.
- Marium: Moral values shouldn't account for objective values; the MS already says some. Accessibility, affordability. Can we brainstorm a bunch in the same grammatical category to add?
- Kuol: so no to plan, but guidelines. Keith, Abdul, Piers can do specific for their departments. We can come together and combine on them all.
- Marium: it should be guided by the student perspective and needs, and not our own.
- Jon: I interpreted it as something you can reference your goals to. Book called Principles Ray Dalio has a good format for us to follow.
- Marium: if people can't decide a specific goal, these should guide what those goals include no matter what. Difficult task ahead but it needs to include everyone, resource groups, grad students, etc. Do we want to commit in principle to the idea of Principles?
- All voted in favour of moving forward with "Principles"
- Marium: better to do this than a Strat Plan!

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- Action Item: next meeting we will discuss what those principles are and what we think they should be.

### 3. ABS Agenda Topics

- Marium: We have approved AB! There are difficulties in organizing busy people to sit on this board for little money.
- Piers: Most these people make way more money than we offer.
- Marium: they are high up into their professional lives, or on the way. Difficult to committing, and those who have committed have a bunch of concerns, ie. Liabilities. Concerns: how much work will it be time wise? Do we have to follow up with feedback?
- Abdul: don't they meet 5 times a year?
- Marium: 4 now because one meeting was pointless. What do we want this board to achieve? Had we listened to past boards we may have avoided trouble. We need to know their objective and their timeline before we go back to the people involved. Onboarding these people will be a significant time concern.
- Kuol: five people on the board.
- Marium: concerns are identical for them all, who have professional lives at risk. Not a new concern. They've relented based on interest in the AMS and care for people in the society.
- Dylan: people with past connection to the AMS is what we want, people with vested interest. We don't want people complaining about the inconvenience of the job. If they cancel on ¼

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meetings a year because of their other commitments that's pointless. BoG works because they take it seriously, we need those types.

- Marium: two people are AMS connected, a few years out (Louis and Ron). One from Toronto student union experience and two profs. What should they look at?
- Chris: wage increases, collective bargaining, our businesses
- Abdul: fee structuring within non-profits, discretionary and non-discretionary
- Dylan: business advice is important. Management structure, governance structure, all needed. The point of the board is to not spring for expensive consultancy or constant review but having people who know how it works and how it should.
- Kuol: financial experience is key. Auditing would be a big help. Discussions about the audited finances apart from just the VP Finance, since they have outside experience.
- Marium: don't want to convene unless we know the purpose. Supposed to meet this month but Prof availability is busy without long previous notice. I would like permission for a later time for orientation, so we have time to prep and fit in a 2-hour long meeting. I have met everyone in person apart from 2.
- Kuol: personal meetings with those we haven't would be big for talking about importance.
- Marium: would need support to reach out to members. Louis and Ron shouldn't be as much of a concern. I can talk to the member with the



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biggest concerns. We can give a deadline for end of next week to hear back.

- Cole: only two people need onboarding. Perry, and Darini.

#### 4. Orientations (Introduction)

- 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> for new council and constituency execs transition. When nominations open it will say this and it will be on the ballot. It must be mandatory.
- **MAX MAKES AN APPEARANCE**
- Cole: my concern is that I was gone by April 20 after my election.
- Marium: you can call in then via video. Abdul has mentioned we should film everything.
- Kuol: date closer to end of classes to have more people available.
- Max: we shouldn't bring people in on the 3-day pre-exam break.
- Kuol: it is better then having people wait around.
- Marium: they should feel shame for missing it. You sit on a multi-million dollar board so be serious. If you can't be there you must call in or prove you have watched the provided videos. Most people do make it.
- Kuol: video call should be fine.
- Marium: last days of the execs should be exec orientation. Outgoing people shouldn't have to stay and not get paid, so the new people should start early. Important that the outgoing execs sit down to spend two days in the office coordinating with the new execs. Plus outgoing execs are being paid anyway. Important since there is confidential stud they should be helped with. Rest of week is

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with managers and new staff later that week.

Ending with the spring welcome which will invite new councillors and all staff. Digital versions of all files will be curated.

- Max: Sheldon's handbook should be condensed and beautified.
- Marium: we are on that. Cool benefits will be included like Pit List. Practical stuff, not nonsense. It will make transition better.
- Cole: if councillors get a nice-looking handbook you want to read it will actually help them. Not 26 pages of text.
- Marium: it should be the go-to book for councillors.
- Kuol: how do committee chairs get transitioned?
- Marium: they don't but there will be outgoing committee reports and prep for all councillors.
- Cole: should committee chairs have an office?
- Marium: chairs have plenty of privileges.
- Conor: Jerome uses enough office space.
- Marium: what makes it easier for being councillors.
- Jerome: being informed. Communication for this should be better.
- Abdul: we will be more diligent.
- Marium: we can get info from Halla as soon as people win.
- **Action: Remind Halla we need post election elected people contact info.**
- Jerome: councillors need to find their 'thing', what are they interested in, why did they run?



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- Marium: we will mix cohorts and have returning councillors to help with goal setting.
- Jerome: knowing what the exec staff does is very informative.
- Marium: assigned seating in council?
- Chris: prefer unassigned, physical voting blocks in council
- Cole: what you bring to council is the issue, not who you sit beside. People look at their laptops. Some people engage well, others watch hockey for example.
- Marium: it's the example you set!
- Max: we could ban electronics.
- Abdul: we spoke about agreements on Council conduct.

### Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting is January 31st.

### Adjourn

1. Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Marium \_\_\_\_\_, Seconded \_\_\_\_\_ Jerome \_\_\_\_\_

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm