



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

### AMS Governance Committee

Minutes of October 28th, 2019

**\*\*NOTE:** Agenda was sent out less than 48 hours in advance, and was not available on the website.\*\*

#### Attendance

Present: Katherine Westerlund (Chair), Jeanie Malone (Councillor), Michelle Marcus (Councillor), ~~Max Holmes (Councillor)~~, ~~Alex Gonzalez (Councillor)~~, Sahar Dua (Student at Large), Cole Evans (VP Administration), Sheldon Goldfarb (AMS archivist - non-voting)

Guests:

Regrets: Alex, Max

Recording Secretary: Jeanie and also Katherine

#### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 pm.

#### Introductions

#### Approval of Agenda

Moved: Michelle

Seconded: Jeanie

That the agenda be adopted.

***The motion carries unanimously.***

#### Approval of Minutes

Moved: Jeanie

Seconded: Cole

That the minutes of , 2019 be approved.

That the minutes of Oct 21st, September 30th, August 19th, August 12th, August 26th be approved.

***The motion carries unanimously.***

**Code Changes for consideration - 20 mins**

Check the drive for this meeting to see some of Michelle's ideas!

**IDEA 1:** Extending time for students at large to speak at council, and making time for them to respond back to councillor's responses

[Michelle]: frequently seems like people want to be able to respond back.

[Jeanie]: The response thing I worry about getting real back and forth but maybe we can frame it as councillors can ask questions?

[Max via google doc]: I worry that this is going to create individual conversations at Council when Council is supposed to be about collective conversations as a Board. I would not support extending Council's time for responses and/or questions.

[Cole]: Hesitant to give students at large the ability to debate with councillors.

[Michelle]: Give them something to say if the response from councillors is sufficient.

[Katherine]: Concluding thought?

[Sheldon]: 3 min statement, 3 min for councillors to respond, 1 min for closing thoughts?

[Sahar]: I like this, don't want full debate time.

[Jeanie]: Once we are past this 7 min here, it's the speaker's imperative to remind councillors they can add discussion periods. Talk to Kareem about reminding people we can do discussions

**IDEA 2:** Creating a spot on the agenda for Statements from Councillors (this was suggested by Daniel Lam and Michelle thinks it's a neat idea)

[Jeanie]: How is this different than the "other discussions" section at the end?

[Max via google doc]: This is redundant. Anyone can add a discussion period at any time. This is essentially the same thing as a "statements from Councillors" section.

[Michelle]: Seems good...

**IDEA 3:** Mandating publishing of the council agenda and docket (minus unapproved minutes) on the AMS website x number of hours before the meeting - Michelle cannot seem to find anything about publishing the agenda in code

[Jeanie]: This is big. very into

[Max via google doc]: I agree, do it.

[Sheldon]: Did I already do this? I will do this.

[Jeanie]: What day makes the most sense?

[Sheldon]: Normally we publish it on Mondays. End of day works.

[Michelle]: Main thing I want to emphasize is we should upload the rest of the docket (sans unapproved minutes).

[Jeanie]: Submissions can do, presentations are harder

[Katherine]: Committee reports too! Both on council and committees section. I prefer reports over minutes.

[Sheldon]: ok I will draft code changes for amendments to the students at large section and publication sections.

**NEW THOUGHT:** posting agendas before committee meetings, and time/locations of meetings

[Sheldon]: I should tell committee chairs how to do this.

[Michelle]: Could add contact info onto committee page? Then students at large can email and ask.

[Katherine]: Challenging to get things posted if we need to work with staff who aren't available during non-business hours, especially since chairs often send out items etc on the weekends.

[Jeanie]: Template to go to council that Chris sent us?

### **Elections Code review - 20 mins**

We made some code changes over the summer, and it seemed like we had ideas that were larger than what we could accomplish at the time. What do we want to do, what do we want to ask the HR committee to do? Old elections discussions are in a doc in the drive for your reference.

**IDEA 1: DON'T ASK YOUR STAFF TO WORK FOR CAMPAIGN**

People that report to you shouldn't be able to help you on your campaign

- a. this was proposed last year by Halla
- b. think student staff should be able to volunteer and sign the form, but don't think people should be able to ask the staff that work for them to volunteer/endorse them
- c. potential for abuse of positions of power, doesn't seem like a good thing

[Max from google docs]: I think this is a horrible idea. We have already put requirements on student staff to sign a declaration in order to endorse or work on any bodies campaign. Now we want to limit the people who have some of the most knowledge from being involved in the campaigns of people they work with. Why do we not just simply make it a campaign violation to: pressure anyone into assisting you with their campaign (such as an employee). Why would we punish the student staff who want to be involved as opposed to punishing the candidate who may pressure someone to be involved. Also, this is an HR issue not a governance issue. We should not implement a change like this without informing student staff before they are hired. We should TRUST our staff that they will be able to navigate these situations and have both HR, the Elections Committee, and the Ombudsperson to go to if they feel uncomfortable with their boss asking them to volunteer for their campaign. We should not limit how staff those who do so much for this organization and who are often the most passionate about elections from being involved. I would strongly oppose any change that limits the way staff can be involved in elections campaigns since they themselves are students (voters) like everyone else. I would also oppose any change that make staff take a mandatory leave to be involved in elections. I have never actually heard this being an issue amongst staff but rather the Elections Committee which has never provided any real evidence for this being an issue beyond saying "it doesn't look good" despite their being no real complaints.

[Sheldon]: Don't ask... not mandate that they can't?

[Cole]: Better...

[Michelle]: Need to be careful about power dynamics.

[Sheldon]: Definitely can't be during their hours.

[Cole]: HR thing or code thing?

[Jeanie]: Is this enforceable at all?

[Michelle]: Shows that it is serious.

[Cole]: Only way is for staff to report/screencaps

[Jeanie]: Don't want to give the elections admin something that just results in a lot of hearsay/complaints, high effort to investigate.

[Cole]: CEO would need to think about penalties/requirements for upholding complaints

[Sheldon]: What problem are we solving?

[Jeanie]: Protect staff

[Katherine]: Worries about power influencing ability to compete in elections

[Cole]: Send to Praneet and ask her for advice on how she would handle it.

**IDEA 1: VACATION ELECTIONS**

[Katherine]: No one involved gets to work!!! Queens does this. Shorter elections.

[Cole]: Don't hate this. Still pay but no expectation of work

[Katherine]: We need to check in HR and see if we are violating contracts etc. Needs to be in place before we run elections this year so that this is understood by candidates.

[Jeanie]: Need to determine who is the minimum we need for AMS to operate

[Cole]: Cheques, contracts

[Sheldon]: We expanded elections to deal with BOG/SENATE

[Jeanie]: Nominations period only. Can make it shorter again. Also I think we only care about campaign period for this.

[Cole]: Didn't increase voter turnout anyways

[Michelle]: Need some campaign time before voting

[Katherine]: MON/TUES campaign WED-FRI vote one week let's go

IDEA 3: PRESERVING CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

IDEA 4: CLUBS/CONSTITUENCIES

IDEA 5: APPEALS COMMITTEE

**A peek into the future - 1 min**

I've gotten the equity report from Cristina (linked in drive)! Going to be talking about this next meeting (Nov 4th).

**Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting is [Month] [Date], [Year].

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 pm.