THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

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AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of July 15, 2020

Attendance
Present: Cole Evans (President), Lucia Liang (VP Finance), Georgia Yee (VP Academic & University Affairs), Sylvester Mensah Jr. (VP Administration), Kalith Nanayakkara (VP External), Keith Hester (Managing Director), Ian Stone (Student Services Manager), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Regrets: Abdul Alnaar (Senior Manager of Student Services)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order
• The meeting was called to order at 12:07 pm and took place by videoconference.

Agenda
• The agenda was adopted (Kalith, Lucia).

Minutes
• The minutes of July 8 were approved (Lucia, Sylvester).

UNA MoA
• Kalith:
  o Hope Council approves the agreement.
  o A few amendments when the UNA passed it: we’ll talk about that.
  o Tomorrow the UNA Board is to pass it.
• Cole:
  o Really good mediation.
  o We were able to get as much as we could for the students and the AMS.

Updates
• Georgia’s update:
  o COVID survey done: over 7,000 responses.
  o Presenting on it and on the AES on August 5.
  o ToR for UBC’s SC-17 implementation committee:
    ▪ We had to push for SASC representation on it.
  o Student Well-Being Fund and Strategic Well-Being Fund online.
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- Got funds for medical-dental program that hope to get established for the end of the year.
- Harm reduction.
- Met UBC’s Andrew Parr for updates on data:
  - Looking at 50% occupancy on campus.
- Discussions on climate justice.
- KPI’s.
- Going to talk to accessibility and disability groups about accessibility of the Nest.
- Proctorio: sent off the open letter.
  - Advocacy surrounding that: academic integrity, best practices.
- Consulted on budget.
  - Keith:
    - How firm is the residency data?
  - Georgia:
    - Not 100% sure. Maybe in August we’ll know for sure.
  - Sylvester:
    - Looking forward to working with Georgia on an accessibility audit of the Nest.
- Lucia’s update:
  - Working on subsidy for Health & Dental.
    - Looking at possibility of opt-outs for international students who can’t enter the country.
  - Talking with the Bike Kitchen about a deficit repayment plan:
    - They’ve had no sustainable plan.
    - Have often been asking for short-term loans.
    - They’re also thinking of going to referendum to increase their fee.
    - I told them that’s a last resort.
    - I suggested cutting back; they say they already have.
  - Other clubs: some have repaid their deficits.
  - Looking into how we collect data:
    - We used to collect club data (for AMS fee subsidies) through Clubhouse.
    - Now that’s moved to the website: want to make sure it’s secure.
- Sylvester’s update:
  - Looking to find out about four things through our club survey:
    - Demand for club bookings in the fall.
    - What are clubs planning to do? So we can see if we can help (with virtual events etc.)
    - Issue of clubs retaining members because of lack of in-person activities: people won’t see the clubs.
    - Are there other ways the AMS can provide for the clubs?
  - Asked in the survey about doing workshops on marketing, SASC, mental health.
 Clubs are concerned there won’t be people on campus, but are happy with our guidelines for bookings.
- Working with them to make sure things are as smooth as possible.
- We’re encouraging clubs to continue their programming: looking at our subsidy fund and at alternative online platforms.
- Providing resources outside the Nest.
- They want access to the Clubs Resource Centre.
- Clubs Days: The clubs are excited about virtual Clubs Days.
- They will have to be more creative in their recruiting.
- One barrier is the membership fee: we’re allowing clubs to change the fees.
- The clubs loved the workshop idea, especially for marketing and recruitment and for how to host an event in the COVID world.
- Also looking at financial training to help them better manage their funds.
- Also educating clubs on EDI related to their activities.

- Keith:
  - What is happening with the MoU on data collection?

- Sylvester:
  - Working with UBC to update the data collection MoU.
  - Making sure we’re doing due diligence on privacy.

- Kalith’s update:
  - Transit subsidy: only 50 applicants. Less than expected.
    - Putting out more messaging.
    - Hopefully we’ll get more applications.
  - Submission to Premier Horgan’s office.
  - Equity-based grants research: Finalized summer timeline:
    - Policy page
    - Looking at other groups and a pilot program
    - Pursuing further research with grad students.

- Ian’s update:
  - Safewalk finally hiring.
    - Hopefully can start service in a couple of weeks.
    - Coordinator arrives in mid-August.
  - Tutoring:
    - Developing marketing plans with Nimbus.
    - Reaching out to different groups, Constituencies.
  - Revamping hiring process.
  - Peer Support:
    - Want to make it appeal more to students.
    - Looking at text and chat support.
  - Food Bank:
    - We have lots of food; we need more people to use it.
  - Services Orientation Day.
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- Housing: Looking to hire someone.
- Looking into joint presentation with SASC at Jump Start.

- Cole:
  - That’s a good avenue to showcase our services.

- Keith’s update:
  - Working on next version of the budget.
  - Auditors are here.
  - Nest cooling project: still looking like it will cost a lot more than we hoped.
    - Uncertain what we will do.
  - Helping Lucia on the Health Plan subsidy.

Norm Theatre

- Cole:
  - Working with the GSS and the University on the allocation of money to student priorities.
  - We agreed that a portion should go to long-term capital development.
  - One such development is the Norm Theatre.
  - We just invested $300,000 to get it operational, but it’s still barebones and very under-utilized.
  - There’s a lot of opportunity to create something exciting for students.
  - There’s also a business case: it could generate revenue.
  - Will keep working with the University on it.
  - Reached out to the Faculty of Arts: they’re interested.
  - Lots of traction with this; lots of positive feedback.

- Sylvester:
  - Really excited to see the project develop momentum.

Get Thrifty

- Sylvester:
  - The Thrift Store is working on potential expansion and reopening in the fall.
  - They’re working with Michael Kingsmill (the AMS Designer) on options.
  - Funding is from their referendum fee.
  - Because of the pandemic, students have not been able to appreciate their activities.
  - We’ve said they should just expand for storage.
  - Once we understand the effects of the store, we can suggest what they may want to do.
  - We haven’t had much time to evaluate.

- Lucia:
  - We’re waiting for the business budget.
• Sylvester:
  o Their club executives were looking at extending their retailing position.
  o That might not be beneficial this year because of COVID.
  o Delayed the business plan.
  o Now that we’ve decided on options, the business plan should come soon.

Q1 Budget Reforecast
• Lucia:
  o Reflecting on business numbers.
  o Did a projection with a $1.2 million deficit.
  o But now we’re getting an extended wage subsidy from the government and have heard the good number about percentage of occupancy on campus: not 5% but 50%.
  o So I’m remodelling our business projection.
• Keith:
  o If we’re going to have a deficit, we want to make sure it’s as small as possible.
  o Our businesses are doing better than others.
• Georgia:
  o Do we have data on who’s using our businesses?
  o Commuters versus residents?
• Keith:
  o We don’t have any stats, but it’s an interesting question.
  o We’re reaching out to residents: there are few options on campus.
• Cole:
  o We probably won’t see that many changes for Services and the Executive from the passed budget.
  o We’re going to reduce operational costs on the business side.
  o We should be fine.

Fee Restructure
• Cole:
  o Lucia, Sylvester, and I are working on how to make the administration of fees more efficient.
  o Thinking of a working group model.
  o Have a group like the RGAC (for the Resource Groups) to administer funds.
  o Give more power to groups that run referendums.
  o Currently groups run referendums; then it’s up to the AMS to implement their fee even though we didn’t ask for it.
  o Want to decentralize and create more accountability.
  o Also a question about a general fee restructuring, but that’s down the road.
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- Lucia:
  - Happy we’re working on it.
  - Fincom ends up doing the administration for fees brought in by the Food Access groups or the Campus Culture and Performance group or others.

- Sylvester:
  - Get Thrifty ran a referendum to collect fees.
  - They feel entitled to the money, but at the end of the day they’re part of the AMS.
  - The AMS has the final say on AMS space.
  - The money is the responsibility of the fee-receiving group.
  - We should be able to address this.

Wage conversation

- Lucia:
  - In meetings, gathering information, outlining proposals.
  - Looking at a wage structure model for Student Government and the Student Services.
  - Re-evaluating job descriptions.
  - Looking to categorize properly: Tier 2, Tier 3, etc.

- Sylvester:
  - This is much needed.
  - It’s time we compensated the students, who often overwork themselves.
  - The structure we have isn’t working. Need to improve it.

- Kalith:
  - Could pay the living wage.

- Keith:
  - Where will the money come from?
  - In Vancouver the living wage is $21 an hour.

- Kalith:
  - Just my opinion.
  - I know with the reforecast things are not looking too good.

- Lucia:
  - Qualifications for Tier 1 are similar to Food & Beverage staff.
  - Looking at updating the JD’s to see if people are at the right tiers, as opposed to changing the whole Tier system.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm.