

Agenda of the AMS Governance Committee, August 4, 2020

Attendance

Present: Sebastian Cooper (Chair), Carter Maclean (left at 4:52), Christopher Hakim, Danny Liu, Georgia Yee, Nicola Vanderveer, Ryan Wong, Sheldon Goldfarb

Guests: Justin Zheng, Associate, Policy and Governance; Cole Evans, AMS President

Regrets:

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at _____ 4:05pm

Agenda Items

Territorial Acknowledgement

Approval of the Agenda

Moved: Sebastian; Seconded: Nicola

That the agenda be adopted.

[The motion carries.]

Approval of Past Minutes

Moved: Sebastian; Seconded: Carter

That the minutes of July 21, 2020 be approved

[The motion carries.]

Policy I-21 Review (Discussion)

Following discussions at the July 20 Govcomm meeting, Justin Zheng and Cole Evans will present on a revised draft Policy I-21 (Policy on Committee Appointments).

Prez: goal is to make Council more efficient, and take appointments completely out of Council

Justin: found a software that can conduct ranked ballots! Called: Election Buddy. Used before. Aim is to get this passed through Committee to be on the docket for August 26th meeting

Chair: what happens if a member drops? Worried about a scenario of people putting themselves forward for many committees but only wanting one. New draft doesn't have provisions for that.

Justin: basically once people are notified of their appointments, and they decide to drop, they can notify the President, who will then just go down the list.

Chair: need a mechanism in the policy that allows people to withdraw. Also, since that scenario happened a lot in May, president should include in your transition report of how the votes occur in terms of the smaller details like dates of when the email is sent out

Prez: if the committee isn't confident enough on the policy alone, then we should make it as clear as possible in the policy

Chair: then maybe we should add a paragraph allowing candidates to withdraw their candidacies prior to the Council meeting.

Chair: is the goal to get it approved at this Committee meeting or next one?

Prez: Probably not this one

Chair/Georgia: The language of number 14 (dealing with a tie break) needs improvement.

Prez: ties could be unlikely; we should play around with the election software first maybe

Chair: not comfortable with the current language; it switches back and forth between first past the post and preferential ballot.

Justin: could change the language to mean that the number of candidates that tie will have a second vote just involving them.

Chair: Let's make it a revote.

Chair: What's the plan with the duplication of parts of Code here?

Prez: plan is to remove any overlapping things from Code and have the policy be the important document.

Chair: Can you bring the committee your proposals for what language needs to be removed from Code.

Ryan: is there going to be an official vote in Council on the committee memberships?

Prez: the idea is not to have one because Council just voted in the ranked ballot. Council would just be notified.

Chair: We should have a Council vote. Important that Council expresses confidence in the finalized committee membership.

Prez: the timeline for this policy would be such that it runs out of alignment with the Council meeting schedule. We want to bring it completely out of in person Council.

Ryan: I would be uncomfortable not having a Council confirmation vote. I would be comfortable with an email vote.

Chair: does Code allow for email votes in non-pandemic times

Prez: not really, but we could make it such that it will allow that. I will work with Sheldon to amend the Policy such that there will be a Council confirmation vote.

Chair: expressed concerns of transparency about the vote: Council is supposed to oversee executive but a member of the executive is overseeing Council committee appointments.

Prez: Clerk of Council will verify the results. There is also wording that allows for Councillors to access the detailed results of the vote.

Chair: Clerk should report to Council confirmation verification of the results. There isn't currently wording that allows Councillors to access the vote results - we should add this.

Georgia: Want to raise Sheldon's comment on the draft: number 17 about who appoints the Chair of Committee if no one puts their name forward.

Sheldon: currently all of Council votes to approve the Chair. This would mean only the Committee approves the Chair.

Prez: we would be delegating that power to Committee, as we would need to get rid of that part of Code.

Chair: you can add once the Committee has been selected they can report back to Council.

Justin: we think it should just be an FYI to Council that the Committee has elected a person

Ryan: what if we make the language such that "at the first Committee meeting, the Committee moves to appoint an interim Committee Chair and further move to recommend their full approval at the next Council meeting."

Justin/Prez: yes can do that.

Ryan: what happens if a person gets elected Chair, but not to Committee, is it necessary to include language about that?

Sebastian: to add to that, if someone gets a bunch of votes for Chair but not Committee, then it's almost like a wasted vote.

Justin: don't think language to address the first issue is necessary; unlikely to happen.

Sebastian: I don't think the wasted vote would be too big of a deal. Let's evaluate the results after the September run.

Sheldon: Do we want to suspend Code that says one Standing Committee so they can apply to just be on sub-committee/adhoc

Justin: Yes

Sheldon: asked about finance committee exception for student at large

Sebastian/Ryan: we're fine with leaving it for now.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting is August 18, 2020.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30.