

Minutes of the AMS Steering Committee

March 12th, 2021

Attendance

Present: Cole Evans (AMS President), Lucia Liang (Vice-President Finance), Agam Gill (Chair of Student Life), Katherine Feng (Chair of Operations), Sebastian Cooper (Chair of Governance), Joanne Pickford (Administrative Assistant), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist)

Regrets: Lawrence Liu (Chair of Human Resources), Rosaline Leung (Student at Large), Mathew Ho (Chair of Advocacy)

Recording Secretary: Haiger Ye (Assistant to the President)

Committee Updates and Council Agenda Items

Ethics and Accountability

- Katherine:
 - Aiming to have a report on the Kalith investigation to Council by next meeting
 - Looking to have in camera update from the committee
 - Thinking either to move the report to the meeting after or do both the report and the in camera update at the next meeting. Thoughts?
- Cole:
 - The motion said the report would be presented April 7th. Will it be ready by the next meeting? Or are you planning to give an update at the next meeting and come back to it on April 7th?
- Katherine:
 - Yes, just an update.

Operations Committee

- Katherine:
 - We've been working on policy manual changes and club constitution. Both are done internally within Operations committee, but we will submit documents to Council so everyone can get a chance to look at them.
- Sheldon:
 - Are you going through the Clubs and Societies subcommittee?
- Katherine:
 - Constitutions have already gone through subcommittee and recommendations have been made and Operations committee is meeting next Wednesday to go through that.
 - I'll also be submitting subcommittee minutes to Council.
- Sheldon:
 - Clubs will often ask when they were constituted, so we would like to have a record of that.
- Katherine:
 - Okay, I will send that over once they are approved.

Student Life Committee

- Agam:
 - No major changes to the agenda since my last update at Council.
- Cole:
 - Have you heard anything about Grad Class Council from Sylvester?
- Agam:
 - Yes. We got in touch with Eric to send out the form Sylvester had made. Form is currently out and will close on March 15th. Sylvester will look through those submissions and go from there.
- Katherine:
 - Is student life committee working on elections engagement?
- Agam:
 - We had Isabelle come to our meeting and we talked about including an elections section in the AMS Experience Survey asking how students find out about elections and where we are lacking. Also ask about why students are or are not voting.
 - Currently working on draft questions, hoping to finalize by next meeting.
- Sebastian:
 - How would we make sure what you're doing doesn't replicate what the ad hoc committee is working on?
- Agam:
 - After we finalize the questions, we can send it to the ad hoc committee as a guideline. Allows the ad hoc committee to have a say in what is being done.
 - They can choose whether they want to include the questions in the final product. If they don't include them it could still act as a good guide to follow.
- Sebastian:
 - Do you have any thoughts on who should be on the ad hoc committee?
- Agam:
 - Since the work is a lot on student engagement, would be useful to have a Student Life committee member. Also, Isabelle and anyone who is more involved in that aspect of student engagement and knows about elections.
- Sebastian:
 - Do you think it would be useful to have students at large on the ad hoc committee? Is there a way to facilitate that for an ad hoc committee as opposed to a regular committee?
- Sheldon:
 - Is this a subcommittee of Student Life?
- Sebastian:
 - No, there was a motion put forward at Council to create an ad hoc committee and look into increasing student engagement for election.
- Sheldon:
 - Ad hoc committee could have student at large, but I thought this was referred to Governance and Elections?

- Sebastian:
 - Referred to Governance and Elections committees to look into who should be on the committee.
- Agam:
 - Since we have the ad hoc committee, I will make sure Student Life won't do anything without them knowing and everything we work on will be sent to the committee.
 - I think it would be useful to have someone on Student Life committee on the ad hoc committee.
 - I'll also prepare transition reports for the incoming chairs with everything we've worked on so they don't need to start from scratch.

Governance

- Sebastian:
 - Finalize everyone's thoughts on how to modernize policy I-9. That will hopefully be coming to Council soon.
 - Policy I-22 on guidelines for transition reports hasn't been approved by Finance. Wanted to remind people that the policy exists and will most likely be enforced soon and maybe now is a good time to start thinking about transition reports.
- Cole:
 - Good point Sebastian.
- Sheldon:
 - Going back to ad hoc, will the creation of the ad hoc committee be coming to the next Council meeting?
- Sebastian:
 - I presumed we would all discuss that at the next Governance committee meeting. I would then speak to Isabelle about who she thinks should be on the committee and maybe chat with Agam. Given that timeline I don't think it would be ready by the next Council meeting, but maybe the following meeting.
- Cole:
 - The motion was vague and there didn't seem to be too much urgency to have this done right away.
 - Might be good to have this done before the turnover, won't be productive to leave this to the new group.

Finance

- Lucia:
 - For the agenda we have policy I-6, I-2 the honoraria piece for transition, preliminary budget for 2021/2022 which is due in April. We also need to set student fees for next year which will be approved at the upcoming Finance Committee to send to Council and make it to the April Board meeting.
 - Cole, do you know the date of the April Board meeting and the deadline I need to send student fees to the Vice-President Students office?

- Cole:
 - Board meeting is April 19th and committee meetings are on April 7th and 8th. I believe Finance committee would have to approve the fees before they are sent to the Board, so I would say you should aim to send the fee schedule over by April 1st.
- Lucia:
 - That's what I was thinking too. Normally we send them earlier, but there were some delays because of the Health and Dental fee. There are no changes to the fees, we just need to have it approved by Council at the upcoming meeting.
- Sheldon:
 - Is the student fee approval new? We never did that before.
- Lucia:
 - I don't know if it's new. But if it isn't in code I think it's something we should do.
 - A few years ago, the VP Finance got in trouble for sending the fees over to the university before they were approved in Council.
- Cole:
 - I think you might need to submit the fees to Council if there were any changes like passing referenda or changing value of a fee.
 - If the fee isn't changing or if it's just a CPI increase, I don't think you are required by code have Council verify the fees.
- Lucia:
 - Yeah, CPI increase does not count as a change.
- Sheldon:
 - Only changes if a fee went up by more than 5%, then Council would need to approve.
 - Changes in referendums don't have to go to Council unless they are constituency fee referendums.
- Lucia:
 - What about not assessing the fee?
- Sheldon:
 - That's true, last year there was an emergency non-assessment of the Athletics fee. That was quite irregular and I'm not sure what will happen this year.
 - Are we planning to collect the Athletics and Rec fee?
- Lucia:
 - From my understanding, Georgia does not want to collect that fee. I don't think the execs have made a decision about that fee.
- Cole:
 - That's going to be a tough one because we are leaning towards back in person next year. It will probably damage our relationship with Athletics and Recreation for next year if we didn't collect the fee, so i don't know if that would happen.
- Lucia:
 - Even if I send the fee schedule to the Board in April, we still have time to decide on the Athletics and Rec fee since it doesn't get assessed until September.

Health and Dental

- Lucia:
 - I want to submit a report to Council on what has happened with Health and Dental committee this year. Include some RFP information from the year before because next year there's a possibility an RFP might happen since our contract is ending with Student Care.
 - What does everyone think would be best practice for sending Health and Dental meetings to Council?
- Cole:
 - Might make sense to make Health and Dental an extraordinary committee.
- Lucia:
 - What is the best way to approach this?
- Cole:
 - Touch base with Sheldon, it might have to go through Governance committee.
 - Should be a pretty straightforward change since the structure is there, just need to change designation.
- Sheldon:
 - Kind of complicated, this is a joint committee between AMS and GSS. Not a committee created in code, it was created through a contract with the GSS.
- Sebastian:
 - If the only concern is how to submit minutes, does the process need to be formally stated in code before you can submit minutes to Council? Could it not be submitted just as a document?
- Sheldon:
 - We've received Health and Dental minutes at Council in the past. I'm not sure where we put them, but Council does not technically have the authority to approve those minutes.
- Lucia:
 - I guess we can just submit them as an update.
 - Other than the submissions section there is no way to bring this discussion to Council, whereas the GSS can discuss with their Board.
- Sebastian:
 - Could you provide a presentation to Council and include meeting minutes?
- Lucia:
 - We could do that, it would come on a less of a regular basis.
- Cole:
 - Maybe equate this to the information in code of the CiTR board and who is appointed to the board. Maybe create a small section for Health and Dental Plan Committee which would include member appointment and minutes submission process.
 - I see Lucia's point about putting something somewhere because things tend to get forgotten if they don't get written down.

- Lucia:
 - We are supposed to meet on a monthly basis but there is no accountability if it isn't in code.
 - I think this is a pretty big service to our students, there could be a lot more discussion happening if people were more actively engaged.
- Katherine:
 - Could we have an update on the Council agenda for the Health and Dental committee similar to Services update?
- Lucia:
 - I think that would be good, just to have a section where the committee can submit things.
- Cole:
 - Lucia, touch base with Sheldon and Sebastian and we can figure something out down the road.

Discussion

- Cole: Sheldon, are we supposed to receive a sustainability presentation this month? Or is that in April?
 - Sheldon: This month. Doesn't have to be a presentation, can be a report from either Sylvester or his AVP Sustainability.
 - Cole: Okay, might be good to remind Sylvester if you haven't already.
 - Sheldon: Reminded a few weeks ago, but I can do it again.
- Katherine: I think now that we want this meeting to be more than standing committees, we should invite chairs of the affiliate and extraordinary committees.
 - Haiger: They're included in the meeting invite, but I'll send an email to let them know their attendance is optional.
 - Sheldon: In code it says the chairs of ad hoc and extraordinary committees are on Steering Committee.
 - Cole: Extraordinary committee chairs are on this committee but in code it also says they will attend as needed. The only ad hoc committee right now is Events Structure and Audit and I am the chair. Council voted to delete the ad hoc Affiliate Institutions Committee on Wednesday.
 - Katherine: What kind of committee are SHAPE and Fermentation?
 - Sheldon: Ad hoc.
 - Cole: Chair of SHAPE is me and Lawrence chairs Fermentation.
 - Katherine: In the future will ad hoc committee chairs be required to come?
 - Cole: I think ad hoc committee chairs should come because a lot of their work is ongoing and there are pretty frequent updates. Extraordinary committees meet less frequently. If committees only meet once a term, they might not always have updates to bring to a bi-weekly meeting. In the future we will work on making it clear to people what the expectation is for this committee.



Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:44 PM.