![AMS logo — EST. 1915]

Agenda of the AMS Governance Committee
(Agenda for June 9th, 2021 Meeting at 8pm | Zoom)

Attendance

Present: Katherine Feng, Sheldon Goldfarb, Kyle Gough, Romina Hajizadeh, Kamil Kanji, Jason Liao

Regrets: Rebecca Liu, Saad Shoaib

Guests: None

Recording Secretary: Kamil Kanji

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:06pm.

Territorial Acknowledgement

Approval of the Agenda

Moved: Katherine   Seconded: Jason

"BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda be adopted."

1. **Introduction**

- Everyone introduced themselves
- Sheldon gave an intro to Governance Committee

2. **Vice-Chair Appointment**

"BE IT RESOLVED THAT Kamil Kanji be appointed as Vice-Chair of Governance Committee"

Move: Katherine   Second: Romina

The motion passes unanimously

3. **Council Attendance Code Amendments**

- Came out of conversation from council
- Idea was to allow for remote attendance to council meetings even during normal times when we aren't in a pandemic
- Jason: What are some reasons we should allow remote attendance despite extenuating circumstances?
- Katherine: The Speaker would approve remote attendance for good reason such as being away or sick (41.b)
- Sheldon: Until 5 years ago there was no remote attendance and you had to show up in person but we began to allow remote attendance for committee meetings, 3 years ago a councilor convinced council to allow remote attendance at meetings during summer (remote attendance had to be approved by Speaker) but they did not count towards quorum, when COVID hit we had emergency rules put in place that in times of crisis or emergency we can have whole council meetings be remote with remote attendance counting towards quorum, current COVID inspired exceptions do not account for hybrid meetings
- Katherine: One of my concerns for hybrid meetings continuing post-pandemic is that people could be less engaged. It might make sense for committee meetings

- when people have long commute times for one hour meetings, but less so for council
- Kamil: I would agree. I think council meetings have a sense of accountability. We're accountable to a broad group of students so we should be as actively engaged as possible, which tends to happen less virtually. I also agree Committee meetings could be more difficult to consistently make with long commutes and could cause challenges. In favour of committee meetings being hybrid, less so council meetings
- Romina: For the near future it's on the safer side to have hybrid meetings for everything as vaccine rollout is a little unpredictable and it probably won't be a problem for the majority of students but for the minority who may not be able to get here it is safer to keep hybrid as an option
- Katherine: I would agree. One possibility is to say the exception for hybrid meetings stays in place for a certain period of time
- Sheldon: We could pass an amendment that says it lasts till a certain amount of time and suspend code for that time as well, the amendment that has been drafted says that remote attendance is fine as long as the speaker approves it
- Kamil: In the amendment that's been drafted, making room for the speaker to approve remote attendance may help in the transition back to in-person.
- Katherine: I agree. Could it be an issue that the amendment language is a little vague?
- Sheldon: Based on consultation with Saad, he advocates for strong language in the amendment. It's vague but it also provides the Speaker enough cover.
- Jason: It's vague but it gives the speaker a broad ability to approve or deny which is a good thing
- Kyle: Are we replacing email vote with digital vote?
- Sheldon: Currently the only time we can do email votes is for committee appointments and also in extraordinary circumstances at the President's discretion. The new proposal allows for email votes at any time for anything at the President's discretion.
- Katherine: Concerned that an email vote is sent out for something that people want to have more discussion on. And that people are more likely to just approve. The ⅓ threshold for discussion is a little high and may prevent councillors from being able to raise concerns.
- Romina: Agreed. This has been proven with Student-At-Large appointments as there was little engagement with those votes. It's a slippery slope if we allow email votes for everything.
- Katherine: Will inquire with Cole about this email vote item.

- ○ Cole's comment: Email votes: I would be in support of keeping the new rules we currently have in place. Email votes always have to show up on the next set of minutes anyway, and anything that's actually important will have to go to Council for approval. I'd be in support of letting Council email vote items at the discretion of the President, and if 1/3 of people want further conversation it goes on the agenda. We should also rename all this to "digital vote" to allow for alternative methods of vote collection (i.e OnBoard).
- Jason: The ⅓ threshold is too high especially for issues that affect faculties directly or even if two people just want to debate an item further.
- Katherine: One solution is that if there's one person who objects to the email vote item then it goes to council for conversation.
- Sheldon: That's the rule for committees already so we could make that the rule for council.
- Agreement from committee
- Kamil: Who sends out email items?
- Sheldon: Probably the President
- Kamil: Doesn't speaker facilitate votes?
- Sheldon: Yes, they would be if they're chairing.
- Kamil: Does the Speaker decide the agenda?
- Sheldon: No, that would be the president.
- Katherine: Since it's the Speaker that leads voting, should it be at the discretion of the Speaker rather than the President?
- Sheldon: I can see the case for both. Maybe we need the President or Speaker here to explain this?
- Katherine: Agreed. Will invite.
- Kyle: If we need stronger language for the first part of the amendment, should we have it stronger towards the "Chair's discretion"?
- Sheldon: Does the section that is already written in "b" not already give enough power to the Chair?
- Kyle: Yes it does. That section explains it more.

4. Goals and Planning

- Katherine: Would like to determine what the Committee would like to prioritize and set goals for the summer. Let me know if you have any goals or ideas in mind. Here are a few:

- ○ Based on discussions from the end of last year: executives regularly met at an executive strategy meeting prior to the actual executive committee. Issues raised were that they lack accountability to the public, students, and council and may hinder executive communication with management. President-MD meetings may also lack accountability.
  - ○ Faculty Student Senator elections. Speak with people involved in Senate and AMS elections to determine how we can have students run student elections within the rules that UBC must follow
  - ○ Rereferda responsibilities fall to VPAUA who has indicated they do not have capacity but Chief Electoral Officer might. One issue is the timing of referenda and hiring of Chief Electoral Officer
  - ○ Review of internal policies. I-2 (cheque signing policy) lists an outdated body as its responsible body.
  - ○ Conflict of interest and looking at who is responsible for getting statements of office signed and declarations of conflict
  - ○ Looking at Policy I-9. Changes were made last year but more have been suggested.
- ● Jason: First two items about accountability are a priority
- ● Agreement from committee
- ● Katherine: Invite executives in to talk about it next week. Reviewing Internal policies would likely not be very complicated
- ● Sheldon: Finance Committee said they would review the I-2 Policy a year ago but I will probe them.
- ● Katherine: I-17 and I-18 are up for review
- ● Sheldon: Executive committee is responsible for these two policies.
- ● Katherine: Does Governance Committee need to provide input?
- ● Sheldon: Get in touch with Cole and see if Governance Committee can?
- ● Katherine: Are people interested? If so, will send out policies so people may leave comments providing feedback. Committee has indicated that it would like to prioritize the first item so I will reach out to people on that. Is there interest in working on referenda responsibilities and faculty student senator elections?
- ● Sheldon: We might want to wait till we have a new Chief Elections Officer?
- ● Katherine: When does that role get filled?
- ● Sheldon: HR Chair will know
- ● Katherine: Will ask. We can put those on the backburner until someone is hired.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to be on June 16th at 8pm.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07pm.