



**THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER**

AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of June 16, 2021

Attendance

Present: Cole Evans (President), Mary Gan (VP Finance), Lauren Benson (VP Administration), Saad Shoaib (VP External), Keith Hester (Managing Director), Lorris Leung (Senior Student Services Manager), Mitchell Prost (Student Services Manager), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Guests: Eric Lowe (AMS Marketing & Communications Manager), Reva Nambiar (AMS Communications)

Regrets: Eshana Bhangu (VP Academic & University Affairs)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 12:04 pm and took place by videoconference.

Agenda

- The agenda was adopted (Saad, Lauren).

Minutes

- The minutes of June 9 were approved (Lauren, Saad).

Website Redesign

- Reva:
 - Hoping to make the website more efficient and user friendly.
 - Remembering our aim is putting students first, we want to raise awareness of the AMS, improve connections, create more engagement, and inform students about services, events, clubs, and campaigns.
 - Specific goals:
 - Improve ease of navigation
 - Make the mobile version more accessible
 - Get rid of the corporate image
 - Increase the number of return visits
 - Increase the number of monthly users
 - Decrease the bounce rate.

- Compared to four other student society websites: McGill, Western, SFU, U of T.
- All have an About feature, which we don't have, something to answer questions about the organization: who they are, mission statement.
- McGill has a calendar feature that allows easy access to check out events.
- Western's home page focuses on students and includes a clear diagram showing the student union as separate from the University. Easy to understand.
 - All their items can be reached in two clicks.
 - Not possible for us: we have more content.
- SFU has an About Us page and a COVID-19 panel.
- U of T: Like their organization, but very content heavy (like the AMS). Can get lost. Need 4 or 5 clicks.
- All have prominent social media plugs connected to the website.
- The AMS website:
 - Has large visual features: very appealing, but corporate.
 - A good Get Involved page and Contact Us page.
- Issues:
 - Very corporate energy; want to connect to students better.
 - No About Us page.
 - We don't open with a home page that answers queries and provides relevant information.
 - Hard to find what you're looking for.
 - Too many clicks to get to content; aim should be to avoid having more than three levels of navigation.
- New Information Architecture (IA) Proposal:
 - A What We Stand For page.
 - One link to take you to Support and Services
 - A Your Voice page (including Student Leadership, Governance, and Code, Bylaws, Policies)
 - Your Building (the Nest)
 - Student Life: social aspects (Events, stories, deals)
 - Student Opportunities (jobs, volunteer opportunities, elections, committee openings)
- We want to get the IA approved, finalize content, and then hand off to the developer.
- Saad:
 - What ways are there to get rid of the corporate image?
- Eric:
 - We'll have the visual language draft next week, with suggestions.
 - We're looking to use more relevant photos, better slices of student life, better colours (bright).
 - Also less corporate copy.

- Cole:
 - Maybe we can do rethinking of our pages, condense them, remove some, like the committees page, which is blocky, or the BoG-Senate one, which is just a landing page.
 - Maybe merge Council and committees into one page.
 - Make our content more accessible by having fewer sections.
- Eric:
 - A lot could be collapsed, but we don't want to throw out the baby with the bath water.
 - We still need committee pages.

Auditorium (Norm Theatre)

- Cole:
 - We're making an application to the Canadian Cultural Spaces Fund (CCSF) for funding for the Auditorium project in the Life Building.
 - Just wrapping up a feasibility study with UBC, a costing report.
 - The project cost will be just under \$3.3 million.
 - We're looking for a \$1.7 million grant from the CCSF.
 - But the rest is still not a price we could pay outright without emptying our Capital Projects Fund (CPF).
 - Also seeking funding from the Faculty of Arts and from a donor.
 - Would still have to pay a few hundred thousand from CPF.
 - The fate of the project depends on the CCSF application.
 - Will give a full presentation at Council.
 - Key components:
 - Accessibility and washrooms (current ones not up to code for wheelchairs).
 - Looking to introduce gender neutral washrooms (there are some elsewhere in the Life Building, but you shouldn't have to leave the theatre to get to a washroom).
 - Expanding the lobby to increase capacity; currently there's not a good large space.
 - Adding a dressing room backstage.
 - Curtains, lighting, piping, stage extension.
 - Acoustical treatment on the ceiling.
 - Asbestos risk to be evaluated.
- Michael Kingsmill:
 - We're envisioning a new life for the Auditorium.
 - We will be able to resume live productions.
 - Currently we cannot have live productions because they require all sorts of features.

- Right now we're limited to single speakers and movies.
 - This venture will allow a multi-use venue.
- Cole:
 - The purpose is to restore the status of the Auditorium as a multipurpose venue.
 - Hasn't been that for two decades at least.
 - Recently the main user has been Filmsoc for movies.
- Michael:
 - Events used to host Laffs@Lunch at noon there.
 - And we ran things like Budget 101 courses.
- Cole:
 - Want to make it more accessible for students.
 - Building better community at UBC.
 - Could expand Conferences & Catering bookings if we have a full theatre.
 - Events could book external acts.
 - The goal is a \$3.3 million project for which we pay only 10% of the costs.
 - Lots of steps still to take. Lots of things have to go right.

MOVED COLE, SECONDED SAAD:

"That the Executive recommend to Council that it approve in principle the continuation of work on the AMS Auditorium Renovation Project."

... Carried

Exec Goals

- Cole:
 - Any changes from last time?
- There were no changes from members of the Executive for their individual goals.
- Cole:
 - Collective Goals:
 - Prioritizing Communication and Community Engagement (new brand guidelines; electoral engagement).
 - Pandemic Recovery: Restart Plan.
 - EDI: creating guidelines for consultation with marginalized communities.
 - Executive policy reviews: I-5 (communication with the Musqueam), I-13 (media policy), I-17 (sexual violence), I-18 (respectful community).
- Saad:
 - EDI may overlap with my individual goals.
- Cole:
 - That's fine.
 - The collective goals are more high level.

Restart Plan

- Cole:
 - Philosophy:
 - Student safety is the top priority.
 - Follow provincial and federal health directions.
 - Consider the diverse accessibility and other needs of our members.
- Saad:
 - How will we address such things as business problems, clubs, student services, the student experience?
- Keith:
 - Food & Beverage, Conferences & Catering, and SASC have done their plans.
 - Building Operations, HR, and Events are working on theirs.
- Cole:
 - Big question: HR approach to the return to the office.
 - As soon as next month, employees will be back in the workplace without masks – but how?
- Keith:
 - Working on that.
- Saad:
 - Another issue is Mental Health: where students can go to talk about uncertainty.
- Lauren:
 - Students will have different comfort levels.
 - Need a balance in guiding back to normal life.
 - Students will move at different paces.
- Keith:
 - What will happen to Policy I-7A, the mask policy?
- Cole:
 - For now we'll wait and see.
 - Most likely rescinded in September.
 - July and August will be a transition phase.
- Lauren:
 - Currently, the punishment for violating the policy is expulsion from the Nest, which made sense for the COVID-heavy time at the beginning of the pandemic.
 - But it's different now.
- Lorris:
 - If we're planning to reopen study rooms, will we provide hand sanitizers and wipes?
- Cole:
 - Good question.
 - Might not need as much cleaning.
 - Might not be a bad idea to get more hand sanitizer stations.

- Last week I met with deputy health officers at the Ministry of Education, and I brought up the fact that they had issued nothing about student activities, so they got me to write it.

Managing Director's Update

- Keith:
 - Draft finances getting ready.
 - Auditors coming next week.
 - Meeting my direct reports about their reviews.
 - Submission to Council (with Mary): financial report.
- Saad:
 - Any movement on the Policy Advisor?
- Lorris:
 - Waiting to hear.

Executive Updates

- *Mary's update:*
 - Budget delayed: need a Code suspension.
 - Q4 done and already went to Council.
 - Courses going well.
- *Lauren's update:*
 - Sensory Room.
 - Clubs:
 - Biweekly newsletter went out yesterday.
 - They're asking about bookings.
 - Discussing welcoming them back to the building.
 - Met with SEEDS and the Climate Hub about sustainability priorities.
 - Hatch Art Galley Director still to be hired.
- *Saad's update:*
 - Meeting the federal Minister of Employment next week, along with UCRU, about student employment.
 - Meeting our MLA (and BC Attorney-General) David Eby about goals.
 - Climate Action Plan.
 - BC budget consultation submission.
 - Sheldon and I are presenting to the Special Committee to Review PIPA about the situation of our Affiliate members in relation to privacy laws that restrict us from receiving information about them.
 - Working with the Affiliates and David Eby on the postgraduate work permit issue (eligibility of Affiliate students).

- *Mitchell's update:*
 - Delay in arrival of Safewalk vehicles because of delay in plexiglass dividers.
 - We can wait, get them without dividers, or get them and add dividers later.
 - May not need them, since we won't be using them till September.
 - Peer Support team leads.
- Cole:
 - I can confidently say we won't need plexiglass in September.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:36 pm.