THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of August 11, 2021

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

Regrets: Eshana Bhangu (VP Academic & University Affairs), Lorris Leung (Senior Student Services Manager)

Guest: Dana Turdy (Strategy and Governance Lead, President’s Office)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order
• The meeting was called to order at 12:43 pm and took place by videoconference.

Agenda
• The agenda was adopted (Saad, Mary).

Minutes
• The minutes of August 4 were delayed until next time.

Strategic Plan
• Cole:
  o This will be a lot of work.
  o Discussed with Advisory Board.
  o We don’t have the capacity in my office to do the plan even if I dedicated Dana to it 100%. And I don’t have the time to do it myself.
  o Other options:
    1. Just work on the initial framework this year: a value statement, overarching categories ... and leave it to next year’s team to fill in the rest.
      • But switching teams like that can lead to problems in continuity and enthusiasm.
      • This has been our constant cycle for 20 years.
2. Bring on more capacity; hire a master’s student dedicated to just doing this job.

3. Go outside: an RFP for an external firm, a consultant.
   - The risk in that is that though it makes it easy for us (they’ll do the heavy lifting), it may not be popular: people may not want to spend money on a strategic plan, may not understand why it’s important.
   - Also, sometimes outside agencies don’t understand student unions; we’re different from the corporate world.
     - The goal is still to get something done.
     - No option to do no work.
     - Just looking for a feasible way to do it.
   - Keith:
     - I like Option 2.
   - Saad:
     - I agree with Keith.
     - And this is the best time to do it, coming out of COVID, renewal time.
     - Hiring a staff member would be a good move.
     - Can bring the Policy Advisor in on this too.
   - Keith:
     - A master’s student from UBC would get it.
   - Dana:
     - Happy to support in any way.
   - Cole:
     - If people are thinking that’s the best direction, Dana and I will look into getting someone, producing a job description.

Gallery and Pie R

- Cole:
  - Been discussing these.

Gallery:

- Saad:
  - Want to see renovations, refurbishing, arcade games.
  - Would be really good to get new furniture as we welcome new cohorts.
  - Give it more of a sports bar vibe, with TV’s, events.

- Cole:
  - Less a sports bar, more lounge-y.

- Saad:
  - It has a really good social atmosphere already, but we could boost it.
  - Bring people back from Brown’s.
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- Cole:
  - The Gallery is performing well.
  - More a perception thing: make sure its image is up there with Brown’s; it’s a good night out.
  - Still don’t want to make it pretentious.
  - It’s an informal fun casual place.
  - Ready to get money from CPF.
  - Nothing too intrusive: some new furniture.
- Lauren:
  - As a regular patron of the Gal, I think it’s doing quite well, but there’s room to make it more exciting.
  - Brown’s has neon signs and a cool set-up.
  - The Gal is quite familiar and comfortable, which is great, but we want to keep it fresh; do something with the decor.
- Keith:
  - In 2016 or 2017 when we closed down the Perch, we set up the Gallery by begging and borrowing furniture, which is now showing wear.
  - The plan was always to bring in new furniture.
  - Don’t want to go too high end: that’ll drive people away.
  - Can put an awning over the patio, add more TV’s – but not the whole sports bar route.
  - Upgrading the furniture is easy.
  - Re-laying the floor would have to wait till next summer.
- Saad:
  - Bring in TV’s and you’ll bring in new people.
  - I don’t think the problem is with the flooring, just need new furniture.
  - Arcade games would be good.
  - Want to see some good competition with Brown’s.
  - What hours can we do on weekends?
- Keith:
  - Can definitely open Saturday.
  - Problems finding staff for Sunday.
  - Re arcade games: want to trial them in a nook on the main floor; if we get good reception, then use the back area of the Gallery.
- Cole:
  - For weekends, maybe start with brunch offerings.
  - Don’t have to commit too much with that.
  - I don’t remember the Gal ever being that popular on weekends.

Pie R:
- Cole:
  - Busy pizza scene at UBC.
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- Lauren:
  - Pie R has a lot of competition in the area.
  - It’s getting overlooked by students: there are so many other places to get pizza.
  - But there’s a void for good pasta.
  - Maybe change the branding, refresh it.
- Keith:
  - Changing the name?
  - But there’s so much brand equity.
- Cole:
  - I know we decided against changing the name a few years ago, but it’s been Pie R Squared for 30 years.
  - Good time for a change.
  - It’s a hard name to market unless you get the play on words.
  - Maybe change it to Pi, the Greek letter $\pi$.
- Sheldon:
  - When we moved to the Nest, we had a consultant who told us to change Pie R to Boom!Pizza, but Council stepped in and said no way.
  - The thinking was that there was a lot of brand recognition.
  - As to pasta, we used to have a pasta place called Tortellini’s, but we closed it down. Not sure why.
- Keith:
  - Declining sales.
  - Pasta was becoming less popular then, but things are changing.
- Cole:
  - There’s interest in pasta now.
  - It would be amazing if we could sell cheap penne and sauce.

Managing Director’s Update

- Keith:
  - Supply chain issues because of the wildfires, along with a lot of restaurants reopening, have meant there’s been difficulty getting product or the product has gone up in price.
  - The union rep retired, so we’ve had to push back collective bargaining to October.
  - Made an offer to a new Policy Advisor, who has accepted. She will start on August 23.
  - The air conditioning project was approved. Work on it will be done over the next few months; should be minimally disruptive.
- Cole:
  - Downlow Chicken Shack is coming to campus.
• Keith:
  o We’re going to try to upgrade the chicken dish in the Gal in advance of them coming in.

Executive and Services Updates

• Mary’s update:
  o Working out repayment terms with a couple of clubs.
  o Looking at budgets from clubs and fee-receiving groups.
  o New financial administrator coming in.

• Saad’s update:
  o Regent College MoU:
    ▪ To legal review soon.
    ▪ For Council the meeting after next so Eric can start getting lists (of names and email addresses for contacting our Regent members).
  o Get Out the Vote campaign:
    ▪ We’re doing UCRU’s web design.
    ▪ Working with Western and McMaster.
  o Federal pre-budget submission:
    ▪ Asking for removal of loan interest on student loans.
  o Working on provincial budget submission:
    ▪ Harm reduction/overdose campaign (with Mitchell and Peer Support).
  o Talking to TransLink about messaging about vaccination and comfort using public transit.
    ▪ Want students using sustainable transit rather than cars.

• Keith:
  o U of Ottawa is going to make vaccination mandatory.

• Saad:
  o In talks with the U of O: their student union is supportive of this as a move to get students protected.

• Cole:
  o The ball is in UBC’s court.
  o Back and forth with the government and the Provincial Health Office.
  o We have to wait and see what happens.
  o I’d be shocked if UBC does the same as U of O; we’ll be lucky to get vaccination mandated in residences.
  o But I’d also be surprised if UBC does nothing at all.
  o Hope they do something.
  o Western is requiring vaccinations in residences; they said that’s as far as they can go.
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- Lauren:
  - UBCO is requiring masks.
- Cole:
  - If case numbers keep going up, I expect UBC to reintroduce a mask mandate for lecture halls.
- Saad:
  - SUDS sponsorship:
    - Amazing one from Studentcare.
    - Excited to be reaching out for more sponsors.
    - SUDS is looking really good.
    - Payment portals will open at the end of this month or early in next.

- Lauren’s update:
  - The Sustainability team and I are preparing for the opening of the Interactive Sustainability Centre:
    - Furniture, technical aspects.
    - Also planning an event: September 28, the same day as Clubs Days.
    - Dashboard, decals.
  - Administration:
    - Clubs notified about lockers.
    - Deconstitutions mostly done.
    - Clubs & Societies Working Group is reviewing club applications.
    - Talking to the Operations Committee about partnership: their goals and the VP Admin’s goals.
    - Communication around CampusBase as of September.

- Mitchell’s update:
  - Peer Support training:
    - Volunteers getting ready.
    - Working on harm reduction with Saad.
  - Food Bank:
    - Assessing space needs.
    - New fridge and freezer.
  - General outreach/boothng to increase awareness.
  - Finalizing contracts.

Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 pm.