



## Minutes of the AMS Executive Committee

September 8th, 2021

### Attendance

Present: Lauren Benson (AMS VP Administration), Eshana Bhangu (AMS VP Academic and University Affairs), Cole Evans (AMS President), Mary Gan (AMS VP Finance), Keith Hester (AMS Managing Director), Lorris Leung (AMS Senior Services Manager), Mitchell Prost (AMS Student Services Manager), Nicolas Romualdi (Guest), Saad Shoaib (AMS VP External)

Regrets: Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist and Clerk of Council)

Recording Secretary: Emily Covell (Executive Assistant to the AMS President)

### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:04 am.

### 2. Territorial Acknowledgement

### 3. Approval of the Agenda

Moved: Saad

Seconded: Eshana

“BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda be adopted as presented.”

... Carried

### 4. Approval of Previous Minutes

Moved: Mary

Seconded: Saad

“BE IT RESOLVED THAT the minutes from the August 25 Executive Committee meeting be approved and sent to AMS Council.”

... Carried

### 5. Introductions

Cole: Does anyone have anything to add to the agenda?

Saad: Add a discussion about a TransLink ticket vending machine possibility.

Cole: Today we have a special guest, Nicolas, and we are here talking about the AMS strategic plan.

Nicolas: Round of introductions for those of you who I haven't met before, if that is okay?

Lorris: Hi, I am the Senior Manager on the AMS Services side.

Mitchell: I'm the Student Services Manager (replacing Ian Stone).

Mary: Hi, I'm Mary. I'm the VP Finance.

Nicolas:

- I was the VP of the GSS for a while. Today I am here as a consultant to the AMS to work on the strategic plan.
- I want to get perspectives from everybody -- the objective of me coming to this meeting is, I have reflected on how I see things, and I want to make sure we are aligned moving forward.

## 6. Strategic Plan

Nicolas: I understand you want to have a strategic plan in place before the current Council cycle is up.

Cole: Yes.

Nicolas: Okay. A little bit of background,

- I understand that this is not the first time the AMS has tried to implement one, so I would like us all to keep an open mind so that we can be successful this time.
- I see this confusion a lot of times, societies get obsessed with having a plan, instead of generating one that supports you.
- The point of the plan is to have a document that supports the organization. It's important that we don't lose the fact that we want to have this as a tool.

Saad: I fully agree.

Nicolas: Next, fun fact, I used to be a semi-professional chess player back in time. One of the first things that you learn in learning chess is the difference between strategy and tactics.

- Tactics, you use along the way to help you achieve the strategy. Things change, if the context changes, we need to be prepared to change the strategy. We are making this now with our best predictions moving forwards.
- Looking at previous attempts, they love to do benchmarking, and we need to be very careful in how the AMS does its benchmarking because there are many pieces to consider in the AMS.

Keith: Be careful saying that we run businesses for profit, they are there to support the services. I would avoid the word “profit” moving forward.

Nicolas: Yes that's the meaning for the asterisk, thanks for pointing that out.

Nicolas: Moving forward --

- Set an objective, scope, draft, iterative process, until we are happy with reviewing, then move onto approval.
- I think it is key to get the objective and scope correct.

Keith: I don't think doing a strategic plan by section of the society is the way to go. I think we need to look at how we want the society to be as an entity.

Nicolas: So for a clear vision as an entire organization?

Keith: Yes. If we do them separately, what we are doing in one area may be in conflict with what we are doing in another.

Nicolas: So my question is, do you all have clarity in where you want to be in 3 to 5 years as an organization, as a whole?

Cole: I think that's what we need to discuss here.

- I think that we haven't really had an exercise where, as an entire organization, we have sat down and looked at what we are looking towards together.
- I agree with Keith about not separating the plan. One of the biggest issues that came up in the governance review was that the business was divided from the rest of the society. I think having one united plan, that has components that touch on those separate pieces, is important.

Nicolas: So you're talking about a vision of where you want your organization to be in five years. If you look at it right now, is there currently a clear understanding of how all of these pieces are connected?

Cole: From my perspective, I think yes.

- I don't really see, from the board level, what we are doing strategically ( for example, what does it mean that we are providing world class facility services for conferences? ).
- Instead of it being just solely focusing on, “we are here to support spending money on students”, what are the other strategic pieces in other areas of the organization that may or may not exist?

- It is important so that the future board, and the future executive, can understand what direction things are moving in and why.

Nicolas: One thing that's important to understand, is that a strategic plan is like going to the psychologist not going to the psychoanalyst. We understand that this is a fairly well aligned organization that wants to develop clarity. I heard about scope, and from you Keith I heard about objective, but who is going to be reading the plan? Who do you expect to actually go over it?

Keith: I agree with Cole. I think certain people in the organization do understand that we are here to support students, but I think at the board level, it might be a bit confused. That's why we need one, so that we can have an organized vision for the organization. So to answer your question, that's a risk that we face with our structure. There could be a totally different structure next year -- it's our job to orient the following years about what we are doing.

Nicolas: So what I'm hearing is, board awareness, and some sort of wisdom passing. Ideally, in your vision, if an individual wants to apply to join the board, or as an executive, they would read the strategic plan and then go about doing so.

Saad: How is this implementation going to be executed? Around the advocacy plan, every single VP External and VPAUA has different advocacy plans, and it's subjective to the time -- so how are those individuals supposed to be involved with it if it doesn't align with those current things?

Nicolas: One option is, we leave advocacy out of the scope, but there is risk there. Another option is to outline, not what is being advocated, but how the organization views advocacy. It's not about the issue, but good practices in advocacy. That's where I was going with scope, we have to be intentional about what we do and don't want to touch on.

Eshana: I think when it comes to scope, Nicolas, I agree with you. I think it's important to have a set of values and goals that remain constant. So I think for portfolios like VPAUA and VP External, it needs to be something so core that it ensures that they will do these things.

Nicolas: So what I'm getting is, we will have a single guiding plan, but it will manifest itself differently in different sections within the organization? Correct?

Cole: Yes I think that's the direction we are looking for. Just so that we can move on,

- I think as we move forward, we are going to need to spend some time on who is reading this and who is going to be implementing this.
- I think this should exist sub-board, I think this needs to exist somewhere between the board and the managing director.

Eshana: If we were to put something in, is there any way to put something in like how we do for things in code?

Cole: Yeah we definitely could.

Nicolas: I see a lot of times the first step gets glossed over, and everybody just steps forward without a clear plan. With that in mind, thinking that after we lock that in, and we agree on what kind of plan we want, we will be able to move forward successfully. We have to spend some time on step one though. If we want to move forward, I'd like to start meeting in a more workshop setting.

Cole: While you're here, when we had talked, you had mentioned potentially going to Council next week, or are you looking to spend more time first?

Nicolas: I am thinking we will bring this to Council sometime in late October, but go to Council next week about bringing forward the plan.

Cole: So in terms of next steps,

- I think the goal would be to bring a presentation to Council next week, just about some direction about where we are going with this.
- Then after, we will need to go to Finance Committee to request a budget amendment, then we would bring that to Council.
- Aim for October 1 start date.

Nicolas: Is “revenue-generating” a better term?

Keith: “Contribution” might be a better way of putting it.

Cole: As to pricing, Nicolas and I have chatted a bit. We're looking at something similar to how much we would pay if we hired a master's student, but this way, in my opinion, you get probably the most qualified person for this at UBC.

Eshana: I agree, it is pretty reasonable. Nicolas is very competent, and what we would get from him is pretty valuable.

Cole: If we are going to go the UBC student route, you will not find a more qualified UBC student.

Keith: I think Nicolas is an excellent choice. What you'll find is with a professional firm they won't really get us, but Nicolas will.

## 7. Vaccination and Rapid Testing Requirements

Cole: UBC came out yesterday and announced their self-declaration process. Keith do you know if the staff also received an email about that?

Keith: Don't know. I haven't heard of them receiving one.

Cole: That's something we are going to have to figure out -- how UBC expects our staff to fill it out without a CWL.

Keith: How could they apply that to our staff though?

Cole: I think the mandate is for everyone on the property.

Cole: I think everybody got the presentation that I sent out yesterday.

- It talks about more details about the vaccine requirement program.
- Key takeaways: Starting October 24th, it seems that there will be a full vaccine requirement for high risk areas.
- It seems likely that by then we should see almost complete relaxation of restrictions. I would anticipate that phase 4 might come into effect then too.
- They are also going to introduce a BC vaccination card scanner app. You do not need to show your vaccine card until September 26, and up until then you are allowed to show your paper card (When you are checking that card it is also required that you check their ID).

Saad: So with these vaccine cards, do you need a special scanner?

Cole: You just need a smartphone, any smartphone.

Keith: We have people in place to do this for all the venues, and they have procedures, we are just waiting on the app to be ready. When we were going through the procedures, we realized that the election is an indoor event with more than 50 people, so what would we do for vaccine requirements there?

Saad: Elections Canada is not going to require it, because they believe that is suppressing a democratic right.

Cole: I would say that's an Elections Canada thing. In addition, I also don't think its necessary to add anything to our policy, we are just going to do what the provincial health order is.

## 8. AGM Date Selection

Cole: Looking at the calendar, October 28th? Okay.

Lauren: Is the AGM all virtual this year?

Cole: Yeah. We may also need to start talking about what potential things we can bring to AGM.

## 9. MD Updates

Keith:

- We have already talked about the vaccine evidence process.
- Mary and I are working on stuff for the Q1 report.
- In terms of outlet reopening, we have had a few events cancelled due to the vaccine mandate.
- First week events are going well, they're mostly outdoor, well attended. Getting ready for the bigger one on the 17th.

Cole: On the audit statements I was looking at the breakdown of revenues and expenditures, and it looks like the 5 million number is kind of deceiving, but when you look deeper in the numbers, everything else seems to cancel out, except the investments.

Keith: It's an unrealized gain, it's a book increase, not an actual increase.

## 10. Executive Updates

Saad:

- So Vancouver-Quadra is today, and leadership watch party is tomorrow. Please come to both.
- We are currently working on the Get Out The Vote campaign with UCRU. It is going very well.
- We are also working on our BC budget consultation submission -- we are going to be finalizing that and giving an update at the next Executive Committee meeting.
- Also working with TransLink, working on our harm reduction campaign, and currently in contact with emergent biotech solutions. I believe Eshana's office is working on fentanyl strip deliveries as well. Those are mostly the major projects that we are working on right now.

Lauren:

- Very busy right now. The graphics were installed in the Sustainability Centre this week.
- A lot of Club Days prep work now. We are going to start letting cubs know that applications have been accepted this week.
- A lot of planning in terms of COVID safety going on. Working with Campus & Community Planning to book some space out there, to give options for different comfort levels. Trying to give students lots of options. Also taking a heightened focus with the online component, to ensure no technical issues. Lots of little loose ends getting done.

Mary:

- Getting really busy, continuing to authorize treasurers, and currently working on the Q1. Hopefully everyone can send me that today.
- A couple of budget amendments are coming up.
- Health and Dental, I'm going to be looking into seeing if we can make it more realistic for students.

## 11. Services Updates

Mitchell:

- Safewalk vehicles are ready to go.
- Tutoring team training will be happening this weekend.
- Our residence MoU for Tutoring has been completed.
- Found new storage space for the Food Bank that we can use.
- Housing support team has been hired and is working.
- Bothing has been going well; it's been great to connect with students.
- We have been meeting with other groups, affiliate colleges.

Lorris:

- Also in recruitment stages for Assistant Student Services Manager.
- For the shuttle, looking into a naming competition.

## Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting will be on September 15 at 11 am.

## Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:48 pm.