THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of November 19, 2021

Attendance
Present: Cole Evans (President), Eshana Bhangu (VP Academic & University Affairs), Mary Gan (VP Finance), Saad Shoaib (VP External), Lorris Leung (Senior Student Services Manager), Mitchell Prost (Student Services Manager), Keith Hester (Managing Director), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Guests: Maia Wallace (AMS Equity and Inclusion Lead)

Regrets: Lauren Benson (VP Administration)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order
• The meeting was called to order at 3:04 pm in Nest Room 3511.

Agenda
• Lorris asked to add motions on using funds from the International Projects Fund.
• The agenda was adopted (Mary, Saad).

Minutes
• The minutes of November 3 and November 9 were approved (Eshana, Saad).

International Projects Fund

MOVED COLE, SECONDED MARY:

“BIRT the Executive Committee recommend that Council allocate $2500 from the International Projects Fund for a proposed SASC event with an international focus.

BIFRT the Executive Committee recommend that Council allocate $2500 from the International Projects Fund to purchase culturally diverse food items for the Food Bank.”

Note: There is $37,611 in the fund (as of July). Annual intake of the fund is $16,000.

... Carried
Equity Plan Goals

- Maia:
  - The Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee of Executive Committee has been reviewing these.
  - Trying to be realistic about what can be accomplished.
  - Aiming to take them to the December 1 Council meeting.

- Cole:
  - December 1 is a limited meeting.
  - January’s too late.
  - We told Council we’d be presenting in October.

- Saad:
  - The subcommittee wants more time.
  - We can’t rush these goals.

- Eshana:
  - Council will understand.
  - I don’t think January is a problem.

- Maia:
  - This is supposed to live beyond this year.
  - We’ve been missing a foundation.
  - We don’t have any documents surviving more than a year. Trying to be mindful of that.
  - Mainly following the Sustainability Action Plan structure, with an initial document and feedback.

- Cole:
  - Maybe we can look at the final document at the next Exec meeting.

- Maia:
  - We’ve been looking at:
    - Training, goal development.
    - Distributing the goals between staff and Executives.
    - Business operations, finance.
  - Would like to encourage each portfolio to have its own channels of equity instead of relying on a single two-person office for the whole AMS.
  - Indigenous healing:
    - A priority.
    - Changing based on feedback.
    - Want to ensure consistent action.
  - Encouraging use of materials in the Student Services.
  - Central Identity Network.
    - Currently we have a reactive approach.
    - Clubs are outside but under us.
    - Creating an informal network can lead to a better flow of information.
• Can help propel more initiatives.
• Shouldn’t rely on Executives to do everything.
  o Campus Community Coordination, e.g., with UBC’s Equity and Inclusion Office and the UBC President’s Office.
    ▪ If we can connect to them, it will lessen the burden on the AMS.
    ▪ Last year we hoped to create an anti-racism course, but the VP Students Office already had one.
    ▪ Our conversation should focus on gaps, what we can fill without duplication.
  o Biggest section: Indigenous Community Communication.
    ▪ Want to understand how our relationship with the Indigenous community will work.
    ▪ The AMS as an ally.
  o Structural reforms.
  o Need to figure out how equity will live past this moment.
  o Hoping to send goals next week.

Records Request
• Cole:
  o A student has made a request for investment information.
  o The issue with investments is that they change every day.
  o Our investment funds are managed by an outside company, and our holdings change all the time.
  o Keith has drafted a response which we can send.
• Keith:
  o We invest mostly in provincial bonds, also company bonds.
  o The fossil fuel free market is limited.
• Cole:
  o I think we should do our best to honour the request from the student.
  o We will send him links to our funds.
  o This is as much as we can really do.
• Keith:
  o Should we have him come in or send them?
• Cole:
  o It’s not an actual physical record; it’s just links to the equity funds.
  o We can send those, and if the student likes, they can follow up with RBC (our portfolio manager).
  o We invest in government bonds, provincial bonds, Canadian banks, fossil fuel free companies.
Pit Incidents

- Cole:
  - Some events in the Pit last week seem not to have been in compliance with Provincial Health guidance.
  - One by the Plug, one by AMS Events.
  - There was dancing.
  - What are we doing to ensure we’re compliant?

- Keith:
  - For all events in the Pit, following the Provincial Health Order, we cover up the dance floor by placing furniture there.
  - We consulted the RCMP and got their blessing.
  - The tickets said no dancing, wear a mask.
  - On Facebook we said people had to be double vaccinated and wear masks, and we said there was no dancing.
  - We had 10 security guards asking people who got up to dance to sit down.

- Saad:
  - People were dancing at their tables.
  - That’s still not allowed.
  - We could hire more security.
  - We should have an AMS representative present.

- Keith:
  - The Plug is not going to be allowed to book anymore.
  - For AMS events, we will have an AMS manager present.
  - But if people are told to stop dancing and they ignore us, what can we do?
    - Kick them out?
    - We did turn off the music.

- Saad:
  - Stopping the music is a good strategy.
  - As long as the Society is doing the most it can ...

- Cole:
  - It’s our responsibility even if it’s an outside event.

- Keith:
  - At the Plug event, attendees cleared furniture off the dance floor so they could dance.

- Cole:
  - It’s important to follow PHO guidelines.
  - Maybe we need to double the number of security people, ensuring zero tolerance for dancing.
  - The Executive Committee has concerns about these incidents and wants to make sure PHO guidelines are followed.
Vaccination Updates

- Cole:
  - We sent a draft of a survey to the lawyers, and they suggested some additional questions.
  - They said they like surveys.
  - There will be 7 or 8 questions.
- Keith:
  - Before sending it out, we have to meet with the union and the Health and Safety Committee.
- Cole:
  - The questions are asking people to voluntarily self-declare about their vaccination status.
  - They can do so anonymously.
  - We will also be asking people how they feel about mandatory vaccination policies.
  - There will be a question about rapid testing.
- Keith:
  - The question will then be what is the AMS doing now.
- Cole:
  - The answer is that we will be evaluating the options.
  - We will see if can implement a mandatory vaccination policy, with exemptions.
  - Also rapid testing.
  - Our main aim is to make sure everyone is safe, and the first step is collecting data.
- Keith:
  - The union will ask, Once we get the data, are we doing to do a mandatory vaccination policy?
- Cole:
  - The answer is that we will be evaluating the options.
- Saad:
  - The reason for the survey is to see whether a policy is necessary or not.
- Cole:
  - Keith will talk to the unions, then we’ll send the survey.

Managing Director’s Update

- Keith:
  - Business plan for a brewery.
  - Vaccination survey.
  - Compensation reviews.
  - Financial systems project to serve the clubs better.
  - Hiring despite labour shortage.
  - Signed up with an agency for recruiting the HR Manager.
Flooding in Abbotsford has led to supply shortages for us.

- Cole:
  - What’s the timeline on reopening the Porch?
- Keith:
  - Not till January.
- Cole:
  - About the brewery:
    - Instead of putting it in the old Pie R location, why not put the test kitchen there and put the brewery in the basement?
- Keith:
  - The basement space is smaller.
  - The Pie R space would give us room to do it properly.
- Cole:
  - We could break down some walls to connect the basement location to the Pit and leave the prime Pie R location for a test kitchen.
- Keith:
  - In fact, that was the original plan when the Nest was being built: to have the brewery next to the Pit.
- Cole:
  - If the brewery is just for manufacturing, I have a concern about devoting a prime area in the Nest to it.

Executive and Services Updates

- Cole’s update:
  - Rolling out the Student Experience Survey.
    - 13,000 opens
    - 1,000 click-throughs
    - Happy if get 2,000 responses
    - Putting it on social media
    - The Nest Experience Survey in 2019 got 2400
    - Open till December 3.
  - Working with Governance Committee on governance review:
    - Sending out a survey to Council to get feedback.
  - My assistant Dana is working on Council orientations and transitions:
    - Building up a Canvas module.
    - Thinking about a possible overlap week of new and old Executives, new and old staff.
    - Possibly compensation for both incoming and outgoing.
  - Starting planning for the All-Presidents Dinner.
  - Strategic Plan.
o Setting up planning for the 100th anniversary of the Great Trek, though really it’s something for the next President.
o Drafting referendum questions; going to hire referendum coordinators for the start of January.

• Mary’s update:
o Q2 financial report.
o Fee restructure: talking to fee receiving groups.
o Working out distribution of funds for the Sustainable Food Access Fund.

• Saad’s update:
o All our recommendations were accepted by the provincial budget committee.
o Organizing federal lobby week with UCRU.
o Working with the student candidates in the UNA elections.
o Working with SEEDS on equity-based research.
o Drafting questions with Utile to bring to Council about housing.
o TransLink event about SkyTrain extension: who’s going to fund the other 20% of the business case.

• Mitchell’s update:
o Safewalk:
  ▪ Vehicle maintenance.
  ▪ Naming of the vehicles.
o Food Bank:
  ▪ New freezer.
  ▪ Food coupons.
o eHub:
  ▪ RBC Get Seeded very successful.
o Peer Support:
  ▪ Volunteers trained on using fentanyl strips.
o Tutoring:
  ▪ Exam Jam.

• Saad:
o Can contribute money from the SUDS surplus to the fentanyl strips.

• Cole:
o Money for that should come from the Health & Dental reserve.
o Need to go to the Health & Dental Committee.
o We should always spend from a fund first.

• Lorris’s update:
o Working with Studentcare on information sessions.
• Cole:
  o Can we provide support to deal with SASC burnout?
  o Do we want to increase the SASC fee?
  o If we’re doing a fee restructure anyway, we could do that.
  o This could help pay for additional things at SASC, like education campaigns.
• Lorris:
  o It could go to increase wages.
• Saad:
  o Can SASC provide a report on what it would do with additional funding?
• Lorris:
  o With more money, we could do more staff appreciation.
• Cole:
  o Could help stop turnover.
  o Let me know how much money is needed.

• Eshana’s update:
  o Cole and I went to the Alumni Achievement Awards.
  o OER Champions.
  o Our campus Safety Audit is happening.
  o Senate passed a motion to deregister students who fail to comply with UBC’s vaccination policy.
    ▪ Will only affect students attending in person classes, not online classes.
    ▪ The hope is the Board of Governors will do something similar for faculty and staff.
  o Student Affordability Task Force:
    ▪ Pushing for final report.
  o Beyond COVID: a Teaching and Learning report from UBC.

Council
• Cole:
  o We will ask Council to suspend Policy I-9 to let us make our Executive Goals submission December 1 instead of in November.
    ▪ But we will make a presentation at next week’s meeting.

Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.