



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

**AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Minutes of June 29, 2022

**Attendance**

Present: Eshana Bhangu (President), Dana Turdy (VP Academic & University Affairs), Rita Jin (VP Finance), Ben Du (VP Administration), Erin Co (VP External), Mitchell Prost (Student Services Manager), Lorris Leung (Senior Student Services Manager), Keith Hester (Managing Director), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Guests: Aashna Josh (SASC Manager), Mimi Neufeld (Policy Advisor)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

**Call to Order**

- The meeting was called to order at 10:29 am in Nest Room 3511.

**Agenda**

- The agenda was approved by consensus.

**Mask Mandate**

- Keith:
  - We received a legal opinion saying we can go ahead and remove the mandate as long as we fulfill two duties:
    - To accommodate employees.
    - To accommodate those to whom we are providing service.
- Eshana:
  - Let's make sure we still have free masks in the outlets, and hand sanitizer stations.
    - Maybe add more stations.
  - Our signs can say masks are encouraged (instead of required).
- Ben:
  - We will no longer have the power to expel anyone from the Nest for not wearing a mask.
  - Won't be able to quote policy at them.
- Eshana:
  - Enforcement's been tough, and we'll be following the examples of BC's Public Health Office, the CDC, and now UBC in lifting mandates.

- Ben:
  - If we suspend the policy instead of rescinding it, we can revisit it later.
- Eshana:
  - Council gave us the authority to rescind.
  - If we need to bring it back, we can still do that.
- Dana:
  - Maybe talk to student groups, disability groups.
- Keith:
  - We do have a duty to accommodate.
- Erin:
  - In our messaging, we can still say we have masks.
- Ben:
  - We should respect individual choice.
  - The province said that when they lifted their mandate.
  - People are still able to wear masks, just there's not a legally enforceable requirement.
- Rita:
  - I like the idea of reaching out to groups, but we can still rescind the policy.

MOVED BEN, SECONDED ERIN:

“That effective June 30, 2022 at 12:01 am, Policy BU1-A (Mandatory Face Coverings and Other COVID-19 Measures) be rescinded.”

Note: Council at its June 22 meeting gave the Executive Committee authority to take this action.  
... Carried Unanimously

### **Managing Director's Update**

- Keith:
  - The Advisory Board has given us advice on preparing a report on long-term deficit recoupment for Council (for August).
  - Interviewing.

### **Services Updates**

- Mitchell:
  - Revamping the restocking of Food Bank in order to reduce line-ups.
  - Planning Outreach.
  - Full team now.
  - More hiring.

**SASC's Post-Referendum Funding**

- Aashna:
  - Support and Advocacy Program:
    - Restructuring.
      - Previously only part-time employees; not the greatest structure.
      - Now there will be three full-time plus two part-time.
      - We'll see how this works out in fall and winter when demand is more intense.
    - Additional financial supports for transportation, emergency housing.
    - Looking at counselling funding for January.
  - Education and Volunteers:
    - Adding a full-time educator to create more consistency.
  - Goal:
    - By adding more folks, increase capacity and do more advocacy.
    - Also develop more robust harm reduction pieces.
  - Sexual Assault Initiatives Fund (SAIF):
    - Looking into ideas for new projects for January.
  - Seeking to increase staff retention by increasing wages.
  - Hours:
    - Talking of expanding in the fall.
    - Reduced for the summer, but working well.
  - Drafting strategic plan.
  - Decolonizing and Indigenizing training.
  - Deficit is paid off.
    - Partly from government tax cuts.
  - Budget for 2022/23: \$818,219.
    - There will be leftover funds, but eventually they will be used up.
    - Collective bargaining will lead to changes.
- Lorris:
  - Revenue will be \$864,000
  - Budget of \$818,000.
    - Not under-spending: we're deliberately setting aside \$40,000 for future planning.
    - Wages will increase, and we want to have an extra buffer.
- Keith:
  - Relaunching SAIF for students at large?
- Aashna:
  - In January.
  - We've pulled from SAIF to cover the deficit.
  - In general, our services are not changing: we're maintaining them and offering a bit extra.

- Eshana:
  - Can you talk more about advocacy?
- Aashna:
  - We have Support and Advocacy.
  - Typically advocating on behalf of individual students in dealing with professors, UBC Advising, etc.
  - We also do education work; we are an anti-violence organization, and we do general values-based advocacy.
  - We have values based on providing a safe, inclusive space.
- Ben:
  - What internal mechanisms does SASC use to communicate its stances?
- Eshana:
  - To approach that question through a different lens, SASC is part of the AMS.
  - SASC values are AMS values.
  - The AMS takes stances.
- Ben:
  - The overarching concern is about discrepancies between what SASC and the AMS want to put forward.
  - We need consistent messaging.
- Lorris:
  - It depends on the issue.
  - Not everything will be asked for by the AMS.
  - AMS policy development takes a long time.
  - Hard to define what SASC will have to come to the AMS for; not every little issue.
- Eshana:
  - We need to emphasize that SASC is part of the AMS.
- Aashna:
  - We do have our own values based on our needs.
  - There are a lot of things that we speak to.
  - My concern, if we need to seek permission every time, is that there will be a barrier.
- Eshana:
  - We need to establish a mechanism.
- Aashna:
  - If an issue is coming to the AMS, SASC can check in on it.
- Eshana:
  - If it's a sensitive issue, a big issue, it shouldn't be SASC speaking on its own.
  - SASC is not separate from the AMS.
  - We need a process.
- Aashna:
  - We have no problem checking in if an issue is coming to the AMS.
- Eshana:

- We need to not alienate students from accessing our services.
- Aashna:
  - What would the process be?
  - What would we check in on?
- Eshana:
  - That's what we need to develop.

### **PC1 and PC2 (Policies on Sexualized Violence and Respectful Community)**

- Mimi:
  - Looking now at definitions, jurisdiction, and investigations involving general AMS members.

#### Definitions

- Mimi:
  - Wanted to spend time on the definitions in a decolonial way, making sure we use terms like survivor rather than victim.
  - In PC1 (Respectful Community) split up bullying and harassment, allowing us to better define sexual harassment, a topic that could be discussed in PC1 or PC2.
  - We define EDI terms like equity, intersectionality, and diversity; also terms related to power and how violence works.
  - We draw a distinction between AMS staff and other AMS members.
  - Instead of the old examples sections, we've added a Procedures section laying out and expanding on forms of violence, e.g., misgendering.
  - We've put a lot in, but could develop secondary documents and take some things out.
  - For PC2, again, we have an expansive definition section.
  - One issue is with the terms complainant and respondent.
    - The first is seen as too negative; the second is not necessarily clear.
    - We thought it would be good to find alternative, neutral terms, and came up with Person Reporting (PR) and Person Named (PN).
- Eshana:
  - Those terms seem fine, but Complainant and Respondent are pretty standard.
- Mimi:
  - Checked with WorkSafe, and we don't have to use Complainant and Respondent, but UBC uses those terms, so it may cause confusion.
- Ben:
  - Maybe put the old terms in parentheses or at the top of the report.
- Mimi:
  - Not everyone may want to be called the same thing.

#### Jurisdiction

- Mimi:
  - Looking at what we can do.
  - Looking at expanding our scope beyond the grounds in the BC Human Rights Code.
- Ben:
  - Should we add something saying clubs are prohibited from making their own investigations?
- Eshana:
  - That would be more an educational piece.
  - The policy is what to follow.
- Mimi:
  - There are limits on what we can do.
  - We cannot expel from the AMS.
  - We cannot deny services.
  - As to clubs, might include removing from a club.
- Ben:
  - Would it ever be fair to penalize an entire club?
- Mimi:
  - That's a case by case thing, e.g., club hazing.
- Ben:
  - Maybe add that to the policy.
- Mimi:
  - Or put it in the Operations Manual.

#### Investigations for General AMS Members

- Mimi:
  - Currently these cases go to the AMS Ombudsperson.
  - Feedback we've received:
    - Ombudspersons are advocates for fairness and don't generally do investigations.
  - Investigations are not really what Ombudspersons are for.
  - The AMS Ombudsperson told me they deal with bullying and clubs; they don't do much on the staff side.
  - They talk to the complainant and respondent and to witnesses; they also review policies.
  - Key structural issues:
    - They find they're not really supported.
    - It's a part-time position with a small budget.
    - Some things, e.g., sexualized violence, are beyond the capacity of the office.
    - Who should do the investigations?

- Options:
  - Make the Ombudsperson a full-time investigator.
  - Hire an external person.
  - Create a new position.
- Eshana:
  - No way to partner with UBC's DIO (Director of Investigations)?
- Mimi:
  - Have chatted with them.
- Eshana:
  - We'll talk more about this.

### Minutes

- The minutes of June 8 and June 15 were approved as amended (Dana, Erin).

### Farewell to Lorris

MOVED ESHANA, SECONDED ERIN:

"Whereas Lorris is a traitor for prioritizing her husband and family over us,

Therefore be it resolved that the Executive Committee condemns Lorris for leaving us.

Be it further resolved that we still kind of love her and we wish her the very best in her exile."

... Carried

Noted: Ben abstained.

### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 am.