



THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of January 12, 2024

Attendance

Present: Ben Du (President), Kamil Kanji (VP Academic & University Affairs), Abhi Mishra (VP Finance), Ian Caguiat (VP Administration), Joshua Kim (VP External), Justin Lieu (Managing Director), Kathleen Simpson (Senior Manager of Student Services, arrived 11:33), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Guests: Max Holmes (Elections Administrator)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 11:12 am in Nest Room 3511.

Agenda

- The agenda was approved (Kamil, Ian).

Minutes

- The minutes of January 5 were approved as corrected (Ben, Abhi).

Goals Progress

- *Ben's goals:*
 - Wanting to carry forward the spirit of Esmé's goals:
 - Strengthening relations with campus partners:
 - Recognizing clubs, inviting all club presidents to the awards gala.
 - Maintaining structures/meetings with the Affiliates through the Affiliates Committee and the Constituencies through Presidents Council.
 - Improving relations with Athletics & Recreation, including a new student appreciation night; also the Winter Classic.
 - Advocacy: supporting Kamil.
 - Implementing plans and policies:
 - The new Strategic Plan.
 - Thinking of connections between today and 5, 10, or 50 years from now.

- Policy renewals: PC1 and PC2; also new policies on the financial side, bridging the gap between the two sides of the organization.
 - Approachable engagement:
 - In person engagement, like we did last year with display boards. Can be better than online surveys.
 - Customer loyalty cards.
 - Supporting our businesses:
 - The employee handbook.
- *Josh's goals:*
 - The team did SUDS in the summer and then the ABCS lobby week.
 - Lobbying on tuition policy, international student support, sexualized violence, increased scholarships, food security.
 - U-Pass subsidy expanded over the summer.
 - 480 bus restoration still on our mind:
 - TransLink hesitant because of budgetary restraints.
 - A long-term thing.
 - Transit advocacy: talking to TransLink a lot.
 - Canadian Experience Express Entry for international students: fast tracking to permanent resident status.
 - Indigenous support: still waiting for the Indigenous Constituency to be formed.
 - Other things in progress or completed.
- Ben:
 - What is the value of SUDS?
- Josh:
 - From what I can tell, the AMS ranks the highest operationally and in advocacy.
 - We host SUDS to provide workshops that will be useful to other student unions, sharing our knowledge and experience.
 - It also provides a place to get together.
- *Justin's goals:*
 - Ongoing goal as Managing Director of building knowledge of AMS operations: the AMS is a massive organization; so many different things in it.
 - Making progress towards financial stability, reducing the deficit:
 - Updating the budget, reforecasting.
 - Looking to increase contributions, introduce better controls and planning tools: on track with that, helping reduce deficit.
 - Improving staff teambuilding , the culture:
 - Started with senior management.
 - Bringing back staff engagement: town halls, newsletters.
 - Looking at enhancing staff appreciation.
 - Building relations with stakeholders.
 - Will take time. In progress.
 - At least five I'm working on now.

- Sponsorship.
- Establishing direction for businesses and services.
 - Buy-in from staff.
 - Alignment with AMS Executive goals.
- Sustainability/efficiency:
 - Improving systems and tools.
 - In progress in Events: staff onboarding, staff hiring.
 - Still to come: Executive transition, file management.
- Supporting the Executive team.

[Kathleen arrived.]

[Max arrived.]

Elections

- Max:
 - A week less of nominations this year: nominations will close a week earlier than before.
 - Planning more events, especially one where candidates can meet current Executives, e.g., the VP Finance would meet VP Finance candidates.
 - If you're comfortable with that, great.
 - What if you're running for re-election?
 - Then we might bring in past Executives.
 - These meetings should focus on the positive, encouraging people.
- Kamil:
 - If we're sharing what the roles are like, shouldn't we be honest and make sure people know what the role entails?
 - Important to be positive, but they should know the challenges.
- Max:
 - I don't want to discourage people.
 - People know the negatives.
 - The aim would be to talk through their platforms with current Executives.
- Abhi:
 - Are we refining their platforms?
- Max:
 - You'd give feedback.
 - This is optional for candidates.
 - Informally this sort of thing already happens: some candidates come speak to current Executives.
 - Trying to formalize it.

- Ben:
 - There's an opportunity to be both positive and real.
 - The more candidates, the better.
 - Should we extend this to permanent staff? Food & Beverage, Services; have them tell the candidates what they could do.
 - But don't want to overburden candidates.
 - And candidates will feel they have to attend.
- Max:
 - Thinking of doing this February 13-16.
 - If current Executives are not available then, we can go to the AVP's or former Executives.
- Abhi:
 - Turnout goal?
- Max:
 - Same as last year: 25%.

Referendums

- Max:
 - February 7 seems like it would be the Council meeting to put forward referendums.
 - Are there any planned?
- Ben:
 - Not at the moment.
- Max:
 - Hard to find a year without a fee referendum.
 - The vacuum might be filled by petitioners.
 - You'll need a job posting for Referendum Coordinator.
- Ben:
 - An opportunity cost:
 - Assigning time and money to a referendum we're not confident would pass.
- Max:
 - Money is budgeted already.
- Ben:
 - If it's not clear what a fee referendum is for, those tend to fail.
- Max:
 - Besides having Council vote to hold a referendum, the AMS can petition for one itself.
 - That's a way to build support and judge the amount of support.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59 am.