



THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

**AMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Minutes of February 2, 2024

**Attendance**

Present: Ben Du (President), Abhi Mishra (VP Finance), Kamil Kanji (VP Academic & University Affairs, arrived 11:25), Ian Caguiat (VP Administration), Justin Lieu (Managing Director), Kathleen Simpson (Senior Manager of Student Services), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist & Clerk of Council)

Regrets: Joshua Kim (VP External)

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

**Call to Order**

- The meeting was called to order at 11:10 am in Nest Room 3511.

**Agenda**

- The agenda was approved (Ben, Ian).

**Minutes**

- The minutes of January 26 were approved as amended (Ben, Abhi).

**Advisory Board**

- Ben:
  - Meetings are supposed to happen once a month, but they're not.
  - Issues are often resolved before meetings.
  - An asynchronous component might be useful.
  - Could be a meeting every two months, plus emails.
  - We can amend Code.

**Child Care Bursary Fund Referendum**

- Abhi:
  - The fund has \$360,000 in it, but only five or six people apply to it.
  - We abolished the fee, but the fund still exists and we can't use it for anything else.
  - It would make sense to repurpose.
- Kathleen:
  - 14% of Food Bank clients have children, so I'm surprised there aren't more applications.

- Abhi:
  - UBC has facilities. People use those.
- Ben:
  - BC's \$10 a day child care program reduces costs.
  - Our fund pays out only \$7,500 a year.
  - The proposal is to move the money to the Endowment Fund.
  - We can do this by referendum.

[Kamil arrived.]

- Justin:
  - The money is already invested and collecting interest.
  - Moving it to the Endowment Fund won't change that, and you can't touch the principal in the Endowment Fund.
  - It might create more benefit in a more general fund.
- Ben:
  - Want to ensure broader use by students.
- Kamil:
  - Either keep the money to invest, or move it to use it more accessibly.
- Abhi:
  - Operations is where the problem is.
  - To deal with that you cut costs or find new revenue.
  - If we cut any more, we'll be down to bare bones.
  - One way to increase revenues is to take from the funds.
- Kamil:
  - Why not change our investments?
- Justin:
  - We could do that, but investments can turn into losses.
  - The larger issue is that our operations need to be made sustainable.
- Abhi:
  - The \$300,000 would give us three years to come up with a solution.
  - If we don't get external funds, how do we fix the deficit?
- Justin:
  - Spend less, cut things, increase revenue through businesses or ask for more money via a student fee.
- Abhi:
  - We've cut as much as we can.
- Justin:
  - Then go to fees.
- Kamil:
  - Difficult to pass a general membership fee increase.

- Perhaps a specific Student Services fee.
- Sheldon:
  - We used to have a Student Services fee.
- Kathleen:
  - Not enough prep time to hold a referendum for a Services fee.
  - Next year would be better.
- Justin:
  - Not sure how much we need to raise to make changes.
  - Still waiting for data based on the changes we made this year.
  - Maybe wait and plan for next year.

*The meeting recessed at noon.*

*The meeting resumed at 4:05 pm.*

- Ben:
  - When in deficit, have to start using dormant funds.
  - The Endowment Fund turns out to be irrelevant; it just generates interest.
  - What about the idea of reopening the Food Bank to non-students?
  - We recognize the discontent over restricting the Food Bank to students; this would be a creative solution: using the \$360,000 from the Child Care Fund to expand access to the Food Bank.
- Kamil:
  - That would mean walking back our commitment to prioritizing students.
  - And will this mean UBC will pull out of funding the Food Bank?
- Justin:
  - Council said no to non-students using the Food Bank.
  - It would take resources and access away from students.
- Kathleen:
  - Even with more money, it would be logistically difficult to expand Food Bank operations.
  - It would not be possible to open for an additional day.
  - And there would be an upsurge.
  - Also, in three months the money from UBC will be finished and we will have to restart negotiations with them.
- Justin:
  - There will be staff and operational issues that would take time to figure out.
- Kamil:
  - It will become a recurrent issue.
- The consensus was to move on and leave things as they are.

**Financial Strategic Planning**

- Abhi:
  - Want a bylaw amendment to guarantee we do three-year financial plans.
- Kamil:
  - The exact rules will be in policy.
- Justin:
  - Easier to add to Code instead of amending the Bylaws.
- Ben:
  - Stronger in Bylaws.
  - The permanent staff need stability.
  - This will ensure there's a plan.
  - Don't want something longer than three years, but not less either.

**External Lobbying Fund**

- Ben:
  - There was a fund in the 90's.
  - Its initial purpose was to allow the Society to lobby and to support the VP External and the VPAUA.
  - Out of it comes \$15,000 a year for municipal, provincial, and federal elections (in an Election Reserve Fund).
- Kamil:
  - But nothing for the VPAUA.
- Ben:
  - Want to re-expand the scope.
  - Abolish the Election Reserve Fund.
- Kamil:
  - Could divide the \$90,000 equally between the VPAUA and the VP External.
- Ben:
  - We will need a Code change for this.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:31 pm.