



GSS Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday March 20, 2014

GSS Ballroom

Present:

Alexis Black, Ali McAfee, Arni Thrastarson, Barak Caracheo, Christopher Dickman, Christopher Jenkins, Christopher Quick, Christopher Roach, Colúm Connolly, Conny Lin, Dan Cohen, Daniel Wood, Eric Becklin, George Furey, Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle, Hafizur Rahman, Jack Hickmott, Jackie Davis, Jahidur Rahman, Jon Newell, Julia Varela, Julie Zhang, Julienne Jagdeo, Kaleb Boucher, Kreso Sola, Kristan Marchak, Laura Bohachyk, Lena Patsa, Lili Meng, Luz Caudillo, Michael Firmin, Michael Ries, Michelle Kwon, Min Xia, Natalie Marshall, Nayantara Duttachoudhury, Patrick Lo, Paul Save, Pooya Hosseini, Raphael Rocco, Shona Robinson, Sima Valizadeh, Sneha Balani, Sofiya Lazarova, Tobias Friedel, Vince Chan, Vivian Lam, Yuanyuan Liu

Regrets:

Angela Zhao, Bethany Schmidt, Brett Kolesnik, Craig Kerr, Cynthia Min, Ehsan Espid, Hamid Omid, Ingrid Olson, Inti Dewey, Jeff Abeysekera, Jens Vent-Schmidt, Justin Wiebe, Mahsa Mojahednia, Mitchell Meler, Omid Nourbakhsh, Richard Sandlin, Sarah Simon, Yvonne Dzal

A. Call to Order and Adoption of the Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 5:46pm.

1. BIRT the agenda be adopted as presented.

Mover: Eric Becklin, **Seconder:** Daniel Wood

PASSES

Amend the agenda to include the appointment of a Chair for the Human Resources Committee.

Mover: Tobias Friedel, **Seconder:** Colúm Connolly

PASSES

Amend the agenda to move the presentations by Erik Allas (Tompkins, Wozny, Miller & Co.) and Sophia Haque (StudentCare) to immediately follow the adoption of the agenda.

Mover: Christopher Roach, **Seconder:** Tobias Friedel

PASSES

B. Presentations (Part 1)

- **Financial Statements**, Tompkins, Wozny, Miller & Co, Erik Allas
Refer to the Financial Statements handout provided by Tompkins, Wozny, Miller & Co.
It was asked what the provision for 'Allowance for doubtful accounts' referred to? (On Page 7).
It was answered that this refers to 'Bad Debts' such as uncollected invoices.
There was a provision of \$20,000 for the year 2013, which was an increase from 2012, where the provision was \$10,000.
The Audit Report can be found on page 1..
- **Health and Dental Plan**, Sophia Haque
Refer to presentation provided by StudentCare.



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It was asked whether there are plans to increase to time limit to submit receipts and noted that students would prefer to have more time to do this.

C. Council Motions (Part 1)

2. Approval of the Financial Statements

BIRT the GSS Council approves the 2013 Financial Statements of the Society as amended by Tompkins, Wozny, Miller & Co.

Mover: Paul Save, **Seconder:** Colúm Connolly
PASSES

BIFRT Tompkins, Wozny, Miller & Co provide additional information in the notes of the financial statement to include more detail about the allowance for doubtful accounts and what bad debts this refers to.

Mover: Christopher Roach, **Seconder:** Vivian Lam
PASSES

3. Council Recess

BIRT the GSS Council takes a recess until the end of the 2014 GSS Annual General Meeting.

Mover: Michael Firmin, **Seconder:** Pooya Hosseini
PASSES

Recess taken at 6:22pm

Meeting reconvenes at 6:36pm

D. Introductions

E. Presentations to Council

(10 minutes, 5 minutes for questions)

- **CPIF Project Closure**, Christopher Roach
Refer to presentation.
- **Your Graduate Degree – What Next?**, Deirdre Parker
Refer to presentation.

Dinner Recess

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Meeting reconvenes at 7:26pm.

- **Executive Oversight Committee**, Barak Caracheo
Refer to the presentation.
The new executive will be asked to submit their goals for the upcoming term.
It was asked why only 14 responses were received, to which the response was that the evaluation depends on councillor participation and that it is not mandatory for councillors to submit an evaluation.
The Executive Oversight Committee plans to move the review process online with the hope that this will increase participation.
It was asked whether the number (14) includes evaluations from executives, to which the response was 'No'.
It was asked 'Is it not a councillor responsibility to participate in the review process?'
Changes to the bylaws could be made to reflect this but at this time, it is optional for Councillors.

F. Executive Remarks

(3 minutes)

- **President – Colúm Connolly**
Will be setting executive goals to the Executive Oversight Committee
One of the first projects will be the budget
- **Vice-President Academic & External Affairs – Daniel Wood**
Transition will begin tomorrow
The executive recently partook in a strategic retreat to establish goals and vision
- **Vice-President Administration – Kevin Mehr**
A continual focus on improvements to the building, increasing graduate bookings, and better utilizing the space
The first task will be to familiarise with the building and current processes
- **Vice-President Finance – Tobias Friedel**
April is budget month and work on this will commence
- **Vice-President Services – Min Xia**
Reviewing the events record, website improvements, and how to best encourage students to hold events at the GSS

G. Committee, Taskforce, and Operations Reports

(3 minutes)

- **Academic & External Affairs Committee – George Furey**
There have been 2 meetings since the last Council Meeting. The Committee has received emergency fund requests and are currently reviewing the policy to make the process more efficient.

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- **Code and Policy Committee – Julienne Jagdeo**
Continues to work on the Standard Policy Revision form, preparation for the AGM Presentation and Motion and Sections 3 and 4 of the Policy Manual.
- **Executive Oversight Committee – Jeff Abeysekera**
Refer to the earlier presentation.
- **House-Finance Committee – Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle**
Continues to receive and process Special Event Fund requests.
Thank you to Lili Meng and Christopher Roach for all their help throughout the year.
- **Human Resources Committee – Tobias Friedel**
Ongoing hiring, performance reviews and preparation for transition
- **Services Committee – Min Xia**
Recent events include salsa night and ski trips to Cypress and Whistler. There had been some complaints about using a school bus for transportation so we have since upgraded to a coach and the feedback has been positive.
Preparation for the soccer and softball summer leagues; team registration, booking venues and setting dates will follow.

H. Representative Reports

(3 minutes)

- **AMS Council – Christopher Roach**
PAI AMS Executive bonus (performance) review
Committee Brew Pub
- **Graduate Council – George Furey**
Attended the all-faculty meeting; some bylaw changes were made
The number of graduate 6 seats has been reduced from 15 to 6; and we are unsure how to address this and allocate these seats – feedback is welcome.
- Senate – Julienne Jagdeo

I. Approval of Minutes

4. BIRT the minutes of the GSS Council meeting dated “February 20th, 2014” be approved as presented.

Mover: Conny Lin **Seconder:** Jon Newell

PASSES

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5. BIRT the following committee minutes be approved as presented:
Code and Policy Committee - January 6
Code and Policy Committee – January 20
Executive Committee – January 7
Executive Committee – February 18
Service Committee – February 5

Motion to table the Academic and External Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes until the next council meeting due to a clerical error.

Mover: Natalie Marshall, **Seconder:** George Furey
PASSES

J. Seatings, Unseatings, and Appointments

6. Notice of unseatings (*no vote necessary*)

Conny Lin has been unseated as an AMS Representative.

Conny Lin has been unseated from the Health and Dental Plan Committee.

Min Xia has been unseated as Chair of the Service Committee.

Paul Save has been unseated from the House-Finance Committee.

Vivian Lam has been unseated from the Code and Policy Committee.

7. BIRT the following seatings are approved:

Christopher Roach be seated to the Code and Policy Committee.

Pooya Hosseini be seated to the House-Finance Committee.

Jack Hickmott be appointed **Chair** of the Human Resources Committee.

Sima Valizadeh be appointed **Chair** of the Services Committee.

Natalie Marshall be seated as an AMS Representative.

Mover: Shona Robinson, **Seconder:** Alexis Black
PASSES

8. BIRT **Christopher Roach** be seated to the Extended Health and Dental Plan Committee.
Mover: Alexis Black, **Seconder:** Pooya Hosseini
PASSES

Motion to have the ballots destroyed



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Mover: Colúm Connolly, **Second:** Christopher Dickman
PASSES

K. Council Motions Part 2

9. Special Event Fund Application – Botany Graduate Student Association

WHEREAS the Botany Graduate Student Association (BGSA) has successfully applied for \$350.00 of funding for their Student Symposium event from the House-Finance Committee;

WHEREAS they would still like an additional \$350.00 of funding from the GSS;

WHEREAS the House-Finance Committee has recommended the GSS Council allocates an additional \$350.00 towards this event;

BIRT the GSS Council approves the expenditure of an additional \$350.00 for this event from the Special Events Fund (12-809).

Mover: *Sima Valizadeh*; **Second:** *Nayantara Duttachoudhury*
PASSES

It was stated that this Special Events Fund application meets all requirements.

It was asked how House-Finance voted on this application to which the response was 2 in favour and 3 – 4 abstained.

It was asked whether there are Departmental Organisations Funds still available, to which the response was that this event is not eligible for the DOF as it is not being held at the GSS.

It was stated that the venue that has been chosen is appropriate for this type of event as it has breakout rooms needed for smaller discussion.

There is currently an excess of funds in the SEF which will reset soon.

Both the SEF and DOF application processes are being reviewed.

The event is open to all graduate students however the presenters will largely be from Botany.

There will be a post-event BBQ which will be co-hosted by Zoology.

Those who abstained did so because they were unsure whether the event was 'open' to all graduate students, and were attempting to be fair to all applicants and make similar decisions.

It was asked how many graduate students are expected, to which the response was 120 attendees, with the majority from Botany, Zoology and Forestry, as well as Professors and postdoctoral students.

Those who voted in favour did so because the event appeals to a number of departments and is also a social event. The event is very important for the Botany department and is an opportunity to share research and data.

Motion to Call to question

Mover: Arni Thrastarson, **Second:** Michael Firmin
PASSES



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10. Appointment of the Auditor

BIRT Tompkins, Wozny, Miller & Co. be appointed as financial auditor for 2014 – 2015.

Mover: Jack Hickmott, **Seconder:** Guillaume Beaulieu-Houle

BIRT this motion be tabled until the Vice-President, Finance can assess other options.

Mover: Tobias Friedel, Christopher Roach

PASSES

The GSS would like to investigate other options and perform a cost comparison

The total cost with the current company is \$8-8,500.

11. BIRT the Vice-President, Finance be tasked with presenting on auditor options at the next Council Meeting.

Mover: Colúm Connolly, **Seconder:** Tobias Friedel

PASSES

It was noted that we should take into consideration the relationship with have with the existing auditing company.

L. Other Business and Notice of Motions

M. Discussion Period

The process of approving DOF and SEF applications takes up a lot of time in Council. A more accessible and streamlined process would reduce the time spent on this.

Code and Policy is currently reviewing the structure of council minutes.

Fund survey data will assist in the drafting of new policy around these funds.

Social: Koerner's Pub after Council.

N. Submissions

O. Next Meeting

Thursday April 17, 2014

P. Adjournment

12. BIRT there being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 8:42pm.