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Attending

Andrew Blakney, Avital Horowitz, Barbara Christina Mindt, Camille Delouche, Cheng Zhu, Claire Elizabeth Anne McLeish, Environment Commissioner (Amir Nosrat and Victor Frankel), Erin Shier Coyne, External Affairs Officer (Bradley Por), Financial Affairs Officer (Behrang Sharif), Frédéric Louis Voisard, Grace Olivia Dupuis, Health Commissioner (Julia Nantes), Hossein Amini Kafi Abad, Internal Affairs Officer (Sahil Kumar), Jason Olaf Jensen, Jennifer Marton, Jethro Sanz-Robinson, Laura Merdsoy, Logan James Smith, Member Services Officer (Brightita Lungu), Rachel La Selva, Recording Secretary (Christina Liu), Renata Helena Bahous, Secretary-General (Danielle Toccalino), Shaun Daniel Wilson Retallick, Sophie Elizabeth Kabash, Student Life Coordinator (Jacinthe Deschenes), Sylvia Elena Josephy, Tessa Claire Maclean, Vasiliki Nataly Rahimzadeh, William Weiqian Liu, Academic Affairs Officer (Devin Mills)

Guests

Scott (CHEGSS), Cem Ertekin (Daily), Jonathan Mooney, Ghazaleh Aghili Dehkordi (DDSS), Marc Ouellette (GAP), Julia Nantes (GSAN), Marianna Uceda (MMGESa), Robyn Graham (NGSA)

6:37 PM Call to order

6:38 PM Approval of the agenda

1. Motion to amend the agenda to add to a discussion item to section "8.3 - Grant Policy"

2. Motion to amend the agenda to add a discussion regarding the of using electronic devices as polling instruments during council meetings.

Speaker called agenda for approval.

Agenda approved.

6:39 PM Speaker’s report

Speaker introduced herself. She thanked everyone for coming to this impromptu meeting. She noted that participation during this meeting will be awarded with fun prizes.

3:00 PM Announcements

6:40 PM Departmental Orientation - Ambassadors
We need 2 Ambassadors per Post-Graduate Student Association (PGSA) to represent their students during Departmental Orientations this Fall. As ambassadors, you will be giving a short presentation about the Student Services and support offered on campus (Services at the Brown Building, Teaching and Learning Services, and support offered by the PGSS, etc.), allowing new students to access peer support for questions and concerns, and offering a chance to recruit new students to join your PGSAs! We will work together to develop speaking points, locate places on campus important for your students during their time at McGill, and ensure students feel welcomed to the university. Of course, some PGSAs are already involved in their Departmental Orientations, and some PGSAs do their own events. We still need you to identify the two ambassadors from your PGSA (can be executives or active members) that can be our liaisons during our coordination for Departmental Orientation by June 26th, 2015.

Link to form: http://goo.gl/forms/La9T8zawM8

Thank you in advance!

The Internal Affairs Officer introduced the Graduate Orientation Week. He noted that students are needed to help out with this new initiative. PGSS councilors, PGSA members, students, and executives are all encouraged to apply. Two ambassadors will be needed for each department. Those who register today can win a pre-screening ticket to "Max" (a movie about an American marine dog). Tickets to Magic Mike XXL are available also. Those who are interested can find the link to registration here: http://goo.gl/forms/La9T8zawM8

The Speaker also announced that there will be a fundraiser on Friday, June 19 at 5:00 PM in the Ballroom of Thomson House for the Nepal Earthquake.

4 Floor Items

6:44 PM

4.1 May Council Meeting

Speaker called the minutes for approval.
Minutes approved.

5 Reports

6:45 PM

5.1 2015-06-17-External Affairs Officer-Report

2015-06-10 2015-06-17-External Affairs Officer-Report

Bradley introduced himself as the External Affairs Officer. He noted that there has been a meeting with STM and currently there are many student associations on board. He mentioned that there is a possibility of a non-mandatory fee with regards to the STM project. He also mentioned the formation of a new Quebec student federation. He welcomed everyone to email him with comments, ideas, or questions.

6:48 PM

5.2 2015-06-17_Academic_Affairs_Officer_Report_June2015
Devon introduced himself as the new Academic Affairs Officer. He noted that most of his agenda last month involved scheduling meetings. He mentioned that he is currently in the process of recruitment and those who are interested can email academic.pgss@mail.mcgill.ca. He is also recruiting for the Review Committees. He noted that the Review Committee would require a big time commitment, where two consecutive days would be allocated to do interviews with different department heads and approximately another month to produce a lengthy report.

He mentioned the projects that he will continue for next year will include the supervision initiative, divestment, and the Glen move. Enrollment policy is also a new project he will be working on, which will decide what policies will constitute the admission process.

Brightita introduced herself as the continuing Member Services Officer. She mentioned that anyone who would like to know more about the bureaucracy of services can contact her. Budgeting of services will also be a continuing topic this year. She mentioned the mental health online screening tool will be available in September. She also noted that she has been in contact with the new family resource coordinator (a family caucus position that has come into effect after McGill has approved its funding). She encouraged everyone to let student parents on campus know about services that PGSS provides.

Danielle introduced herself as the new Secretary-General. She noted that the MoA and Lease has been officially been approved. This would entail a ten year lease with Thomson House, and the MoA will be in effect for the next five years.

"Note: MoA stands for "Memorandum of Agreement" which defines the University's relationship with PGSS."

She also mentioned that they are working on an information policy which would outline the rights councilors have to the access of documents. More details will be provided. She also noted that a Code of Conduct and Reimbursement Policy are currently in the works and these documents would act as a guide for executives and commissioners.
Behrang introduced himself as the new Financial Affairs Officer. He mentioned that there will be challenges in finances with the half a million deficit in budget line of Special Project Fund. He explained his role as the facilitator between the business and society side. Those who are interested in financial management, he encouraged everyone to email him for further discussion.

R. Bahous (HGSS) asked when the deadline is for the submission of the report regarding the transfer of funds from PGSS to HGSS.

Financial Affairs Officer answered that there is no fixed deadline and to email him regarding this issue. He mentioned that usually it would be submitted before the end of the mandate of the VP Finance of the PGSA.

7:02 PM 5.6 Report: Internal Affairs Officer - June Council Meeting

Graduate Orientation Week
Departmental Orientation Ambassadors
Summer Giveaways! @pgss.mcgill
Dodgeball

2015-06-10 Report: Internal Affairs Officer - June Council Meeting

Sahil introduced himself as the new Internal Affairs Officer. He mentioned that initiatives this year include increasing student awareness with Snapchat stories as one of their new projects. He went through the events for the summer, which includes summer dodgeball, tickets to botanical garden, and movie tickets to give away. There is also a new PGSS Instagram account (@pgss.mcgill) which will provide updates on what the executives are doing throughout the year. He mentioned again the Departmental Orientation where two ambassadors are needed for each department (can volunteer yourself or recruit from department). Those who are interested can email Sahil. He went through the details of the ASEQ meeting, where travel insurance will be included in ASEQ health insurance plan. He mentioned that those who are travelling for school can extend it for 3 months without cost. Student parents can also get a babysitter (a service covered by ASEQ).

H. Aminikafiabad (CAOS) asked whether the travel insurance is only provided for Canadian students or would international students be included as well.

The Internal Affairs Officer answered that ASEQ covers Canadian students but International Students are covered by the Blue Cross.

The Member Services Officer added that Blue Cross covers all travelling insurances including ASEQ. She suggested checking their website for the details or contact PGSS for more details. Email questions to membership.pgss@mail.mcgill.ca

7:10 PM 5.7 Member Support Commissioner Report For June Council 2015-06-17

2015-06-10 Member Support Commissioner Report For June Council 2015-06-17

Not present.
5.8 2015-06-17_SteeringReport_June2015

Minutes for the meeting of the Council Steering Committee

Secretary-General went through the Report of the Steering Committee.
No questions.

6  Question Period

7:11 PM

H. Aminikafiabad (CAOS) mentioned the bias for admitting international students due to the higher costs associated. He asked whether there will be any action taken in the admission process to alleviate this problem.

the Academic Affairs Officer explained that tuition fees for International and Canadian are different, which is one of the reason why professors are not willing to take international students. He noted that some departments have a stipend for international students hence it would not be an extra expense for professors to take on international students. He mentioned that he cannot answer the question fully right now, but it is an issue they will look into.

7  New Business

7.1 Discussion regarding Traditional Territory Acknowledgement

7:15 PM

The attached motion was passed by SSMU, we wish to discuss if such a motion should be passed by PGSS as well.

Discussion regarding Traditional Territory Acknowledgement

External Affairs Officer explained this document. He mentioned that it is important to recognize that McGill is built on the traditional territory of the Mohawk people and feature this on the SSMU website.

F. Voisard (MMGES) asked whether PGSS would adopting the same result of a motion passed by SSMU.

Speaker replied that the purpose of this document would be to provide more context to initiate discussion on this subject during council.

R. La Selva (EMGSS) mentioned that SSMU has already faced these issues and asked why PGSS would have to start over to do something similar.

External Affairs Officer replied that the document cites SSMU's bylaws which is not applicable to PGSS. The details will need to be worked out and he mentioned that they do not want to prssume that SSMU did everything correctly.

Secretary-General mentioned that the purpose of this discussion is to see whether council wants this motion to go through. She asked for a straw poll.
Speaker gave council time to read through this document.

F. Voisard (MMGESA) asked whether the Mohawk Committee revealed how they feel about this decision.

External Affairs Office mentioned that they wanted to talk to someone on the Mohawk Committee about this but generally this action seems to be like a progressive measure for universities.

Granted speaking rights to former VP External of GSAN. She mentioned that she worked for the McGill School of Environment who have been working with the Mohawk community. She explained that Mohawk community identify themselves as Kahniakenhaka when introducing themselves, hence supporting this motion.

Speaker explained the details of the straw poll with the question being "whether council is in favour of the executives moving forward of the research process and bringing forward a motion regarding territorial acknowledgement during the next council meeting."

Informal ad hoc vote: Majority vote.

7:25 PM  7.2 Discussion regarding Council Survey

We sent a survey to all PGSS councillors and PGSA presidents for feedback on council. We would like to discuss the preliminary results of this survey and get further feedback from councillors present.

Academic Affairs Officer explained that they have conducted surveys for PGSS Councillors and PGSA Presidents. The general feedback was that they were seeing issues with funding, health plan and insurance, the way council is structured. A council informative session (Roberts rule 101) was suggested also.

S. Josephy (GSAN) suggested to do another survey halfway through the year in the form of a progress report.

Academic Affairs Officer replied that this was discussed with Member Services and there are plans to draft another survey at around March to address some of the issues discussed.

B. Mindt (MIGSA) suggested to send out another survey that keeps PGSA identities anonymous.

Secretary-General replied that PGSA identification was for the purpose to address PGSA specific problems. She also mentioned that identification of PGSAs is not mandatory.

7:31 PM  7.3 Add Item: Grants Policy

Internal Affairs Officer assessed councilors’ knowledge on the Grant’s Policy. He explained that there are around $30,000 annually that are allocated to give to the membership for those who apply for a grant. He further explained that the rolling system allows for any project to be submitted every month. They are looking at how to encourage people to apply and better distribute the money.

3:28 AM  7.4 Add Item: Polling in Council Meetings.

Internal Affairs Officer noted that the purpose of using electronic devices during council would be to increase efficiency.
F. Voisard (MMGES4) noted that polling right now is efficient due to Madame Speaker. He asked whether this would increase the efficiency significantly.

Internal Affairs Officer replied that usage of electronic devices would allow for more choices, immediate results, and statistics of the votes.

J. Jensen (MGSSA) asked whether this would affect discussions during motions.

The Internal Affairs Officer replied that this would be used mostly during the discussion period for the purpose of knowing how to put forward a motion during the next session.

Academic Affairs Officer noted that when we ask questions that require anonymity, this would be beneficial.

The Health Commissioner noted issues might come up when people forget their phones, charger, and don't have a smartphone. She suggested that a paper option should be provided also.

Academic Affairs Officer replied that PGSS have computers available and this can be provided for those who need it. He also added that it will not be used for motions since it needs to be done publicly.

J. Marton (HGSS) asked whether there would be extra costs.

The Internal Affairs Officer replied that the app would be free.

Speaker noted that next meeting is scheduled for August 17. She encouraged everyone to ask questions. She reminded everyone to RSVP for the August council. Should you miss a meeting, please send in regrets also note who your replacement is.

Academic Affairs Officer explained that the executives are trying to get to know the PGSAs. Should any departments have any upcoming meetings or anything planned, he encouraged councilors to let the executives know so that they can come by and introduce themselves.

Speaker encouraged everyone to ask her questions.

H. Aminikafiabad (CAOS) asked what the best route of action would be should they have a plan for graduate students and want to discuss it with other PGSS representatives.

Speaker explained that they can set a meeting with anyone in council. Should they have a motion, or discussion item it can be sent to either the steering committee or the Speaker herself.

Secretary-General mentioned that the executives are there to help for those who want to bring forward a discussion item or motion. She noted that executive meetings are open to all members. The dates of these meetings will be published. She mentioned that the executives also have a also have a work plan.

Internal Affairs Officer explained that all executives have specific portfolios and those who have ideas can go to the corresponding executive to discuss their plan. He noted that Jacinthe, the PGSS student coordinator can also help. For those who have council specific questions, this can be brought up to executives during council. Networking events are also coming up (presidential, academic meetings) for the purpose of gathering new ideas. He noted that executives will be working on their work plan during the summer where they will be drafting goals for next year (can implement ideas then).

Speaker noted that there is always food and dessert during council. She also noted that August, September, and October (AGM) are great times to come up to council with ideas.

The Internal Affairs Officer announced that there has been one response from the Biology department for departmental ambassador.
Adjourned