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Attending

Academic Affairs Officer (Nicholas Dunn), Aiden Hallihan, Alexei Kazarine, Amir Nosrat, Angela Tam, Angelica Gopal, Angella Wagner, Billy Liu, Charles Brunette, Dana Pearl, Danni Cai, Emilie Michalovic, Entisar Abdulkader, Emily Moore, Environment Commissioner (Amir Nosrat and Selina Liu), Equity Commissioner (Angela Yu), Erin Sheedy, Erik Larson, Faegheh Ghanbari Divshali, External Affairs Officer (Jacob Lavigne), Financial Affairs Officer (Mina Moradi), Flavie Arseneau, Hsien-Wei Chen, Ian Lorenzo, Internal Affairs Officer (Mina Anadolu), Jaaved Singh, Jenna Giubilaro, John Morris, Liam Murphy, Marcos Rodrigues, Marion Daniel, Matthew Satterthwaite, Matthew Timmermans, Member Support Commissioner (Billy Liu), Nanqing Zhu, Natalia Jaworska, PGSS Council Speaker (Logan Smith), Qian Zhang, Qiushi Cui, Recording Secretary (Connie Luu), Robin Lynch, Rohit Rathi, Sarah Colby, Sarah Gelbard, Secretary-General (Victor Frankel), Selya Amrani, Shrutti Bharder, Sierra Clark, Stephanie Mok, Tareq Hardan, Thomas Colbourne, Yony Bresler, Zoya Dare

Guests

Jonathan Cote (GSAN), Deepak Jain (BMES), Christina Sooklall (GRSS), Sanya Siddiqui (CHEGSS), Stephen Kutcher (EOSS), Mirela Maier (EMGSS), Rola Hamed (EMGSS), Annie Gong (MGSSA)

6:29 PM Call to order

1 Approval of the agenda

The SG moved to rearrange the agenda such that new business is discussed after announcements and before reports.

Motion passed by 2/3 majority (35/36 in favour, 1 opposed).

Motion to approve agenda passed.

8:04 PM 1.1 Add Item: Question

2 Floor Items

6:33 PM 2.1 November 16th Council Meeting

Motion passed unanimously.
3 Announcements

3.1 Election timeline

Post-Graduate Student’s Society
General Elections 2016-2017
Timeline:
December 12, 2016 E-mail notification announcing elections
December 19, 2016 Open of nominations
February 1, 2017 End of nomination period
Feb 1-7, 2017 Withdrawal and extension period
February 17, 2017 Mandatory info session
February 20, 2017 Debates @ Thompson house
March 10, 2017 End of Campaign
March 13-20, 2017 Elections
April 20, 2017 End of contestation period, deposits returned

Deviations from the SAM
1. Instead of opening the nominations on December 1, the email providing the election timetable will be
   sent on December 12, 2016, and nominations will open on December 19 (see SAM Ch. 9, § 2, cl. 2.1).
2. The nomination period ends on February 1, instead of the day on which February council is scheduled.
   (see SAM Ch. 9, § 2, cl. 2.4)
3. The withdrawal of candidature will end on February 7, 2017, and not three days prior to the elections.
   (see Ch. 9 §6, cl. 1.)
4. The contestation period has been increased to one month, from three days. (see SAM Ch. 9, § 6, cl. 2)
5. The deposit if $100 for each candidate will be released at the end of the contestation period, and not
   three days after the elections are over. (see SAM Ch. 9, § 4, cl.10)

Election timeline

The CRO presented the election timeline, which will be sent out to PGSS members on Dec 12. Nom-
inations will open on Dec 19 and end on Feb 1. Nomination forms will also be available on the PGSS
website. He emphasized that the timeline and $100 deposit will be strictly enforced this year. He also
talked about the debate, which they would like to hold at the Law School and Faculty of Political Science
to increase participation. He asked members to let their PGSAs know about the voting period. Results
will be announced on March 20th, followed by a one month contestation period.

Questions:

E. Larson (GSAN): On the timeline, it doesn’t have an official start of the campaign period.
CRO: We missed it but in the email I will send out on the 12th, it will have all those deadlines. Most likely, if I am not mistaken, the campaign period will start after the mandatory info session.

E. Larson (GSAN): Procedural question, are we going to have to approve the changes from the way they are deviating from the SAM?

CRO: We are not doing that because I have the discretion to change the dates. This will make it more effective, and the semester is going to end now, so it doesn’t make sense to start the nomination period now. That is the reason we have moved it to the 19th.

E. Larson (GSAN): I think it makes sense to do that, I’m just wondering procedurally.

CRO: I have the discretion to change the dates. Otherwise, everything is the same, so we don’t have to do it. Secondly, we are in the process of amending the bylaws but I didn’t want to go ahead and it in a hasty manner right now.

6:38 PM 3.2 Adoption of Sexual Violence Policy

Unanimous approval at Senate and BoG of the Sexual Violence Policy. In the policy, it includes provisions for review of the document within the first few months of its implementation.

Adoption of Sexual Violence Policy

The SG spoke on behalf of the EDC about the implementation of the Sexual Violence Policy, which will start early next year. Within the first four months, there will be a review process to see whether the currently proposed resource allocation is working. There will be continuous consultation and they have pushed for a mandatory review every two years.

Questions:

E. Larson (GSAN): You mentioned having an annual review process, is there any metrics that you have in mind for a successful/unsuccessful policy?

SG: That will be part of this review process, and I think it’s Item 22 in the policy. Right now, what that review process will look like will depend on the initial feedback we get from people that are actually responding to this newly implemented plan. The indices of whether or not it is working will largely depend on the people that are receiving this service, or the resources that will be allocated to education, campaign awareness, but most importantly to providing support for survivors. I think as it becomes implemented, we’ll have more data to see what’s working about it and what’s not working. Keep close attention to this.

The Speaker thanked the SG.

6:42 PM 3.3 Governance at the BoG

1) Governance structure at the BoG - some progress made to transparency (will have a question period from community members). Next steps?

2) Investment committee report. Establishes a $5 million “socially responsible investment fund” in the endowment (no mention of free from fossil fuels). Will go back to CAMSR. Will seek to make the 80% of the endowment comply with ESG principles and UNPRI certified by 2020.
Governance at the BoG

The SG provided updates from the recent BoG meeting. He spoke about disconnect between the BoG and the campus community on the Divest campaign. He said one of the main issues is that half of the members of board are external to the university, and there is a lack of accountability. They submitted a motion for the BoG to look into its nominating structures, but it was rejected and they plan to keep pushing on this issue. He also spoke about how, in response to the Divest McGill petition, the committee to advise on matters of social responsibility recommended to the BoG to establish an ethical investment fund.

Questions:

J. Singh (MCGSS): Given that the BoG has nothing really above them, are there any groups at McGill that can give pressure to them?

SG: The Governor General of Canada has ultimate authority over universities under the Royal Charter, which McGill is. Students and other faculty representatives on the board are starting to be aware of these issues. However, the main structural issue is that faculty members cannot provide recommendations to who is elected to be part of the BoG as external members. They’re often lawyers, bankers, philanthropists, who are disconnected from the pulse of the campus community and to the values and issues that we think are important for the university to uphold.

The Speaker thanked the SG.

3.4 Gender Neutral Washrooms in Thomson House

All washrooms in Thomson House are gender neutral. Signs denote whether or not the specific restroom contains a urinal. Urinals were to be removed earlier this year, but there have been delays in renovations.

The Speaker read the announcement and displayed the signs. No questions were asked.

3.5 Ottawa Career and Networking Trip

In Collaboration with Alumni, CaPS, SSMU & PGSS:

Register before December 8, 5:00pm, 2016

Interested in exploring career opportunities within the federal government? Please join us for our third annual federal government career tour, where you will have the opportunity to hear about career paths in the public sector, and network with hiring managers. This will be an exclusive opportunity to network with government officials. Special emphasis will be placed on public service renewal and the programs geared towards student employment.

4 spots have been reserved for Indigenous Students through the First Peoples’ House.

Dates: Wednesday, January 18th - Friday, January 20th, 2017 Destination: Gatineau-Ottawa

Lodging: Crowne Plaza Gatineau-Ottawa
Cost: total cost is covered for Indigenous Students** Departure: from Thomson House Wednesday, January 18th at 6:30pm Return to Montreal, Friday, January 20th at approximately 8:00pm

More information in the PDF!

Ottawa Career and Networking Trip

The Speaker read out the announcement. No questions were asked.

6:49 PM 3.6 Recruitment: Young Quebecers Leading the Way Forum

Alice Lam is a Regional Youth Coordinator with Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) here in Montreal. She is currently recruiting youth Quebecers (between the ages of 15 and 25) to attend our provincial forum, Young Quebecers Leading the Way, which will take place in Gatineau on March 10-12, 2017.

The forum, entitled “A Plan for the Future: Quebec Youth and Canada in 2067,” provides an opportunity for participants to offer their views and reflect on Canada’s future based on six topics (Canadian Identity; Indigenous Peoples; the Economy; Politics and Democracy; Canada in the World; and Social Issues and the Environment). It also enables participants to establish connections with youth in other regions in Quebec, as well as other professionals and government administrators. For more information, please visit our website at http://youthleadingway150.org/.

Please contact (alice.cm.lam@gmail.com) for more information.

Recruitment: Young Quebecers Leading the Way Forum ()

Recruitment: Young Quebecers Leading the Way Forum ()

A. Lam introduced herself and spoke about the Quebec Community Groups Network’s upcoming bilingual youth. It is a three-year project that began in 2015 to commemorate Canada’s 150th anniversary. This year’s forum will take place in Gatineau from March 10-12. There will also be three workshops (Jan 25, Feb 15, and March after the forum). The cost to attend is $25 and includes train ticket to/from Gatineau, hotel for 2 nights, and all meals. She stood for questions.

Questions:

J. Singh (MCGSS): I’m wondering about the role of out-of-province students?

A. Lam: It’s strictly a Quebec thing unfortunately, but if you’re out of province or from elsewhere but still want to start engaging with Canadian or Quebec politics, it’s a great way to do it. There’s really no limitations.

SG: Has this been happening in the past? Is this something you think will be happening in the future too?

A. Lam: What we really hope to do is start engaging more with Quebec youth. We want to start having more forums and more projects in Quebec.

Seeing no further questions, A. Lam was thanked.

6:53 PM 3.7 Holiday Elves for Student Parents’ Children
PGSS is hosting a Secret Santa for the children of student parents (ages ranging from straight out of the oven to 12 years old). Sign up yourself or your lab to contribute a gift (maximum $20) to a child for the holidays.

Sign up at pgss.mcgill.ca/en/event/517

Questions:

S. Kutcher (EBOSS): When would you like them?

SG: The gift exchange is happening on the 12th so anytime before then would be great.

4 New Business

6:55 PM 4.1 Motion to amend SAM: Guidelines on External Referendum(a)

Motion submitted to PGSS Council
Submitted by Victor Frankel, Secretary General
Submitted: November 30th
First reading: December 7th

GUIDELINES FOR EXTERNAL REFERENDUMS

Whereas, the Post Graduate Student Society of McGill (hereinafter “PGSS”) is a corporation duly registered in the province of Quebec and is run in accordance with its bylaws (hereinafter “PGSS bylaws”) and the PGSS Society Activity Manual (hereinafter “the SAM”), which lists the procedures to be followed by the PGSS and its officers in conducting its affairs.

Whereas, both, the PGSS bylaws and the SAM make reference to referendum processes. The PGSS bylaws lay down the procedure for the referenda (PGSS bylaws Section 10 and SAM Section 9)

Whereas there is a need for the Society Activities Manual of the Post Graduate Student Association (PGSS) at McGill to address general and specific issues with external groups running referenda through PGSS,

BIRT the following are adopted and included in the PGSS Society Activities Manual

1. All external organizations intending to run their referendums through PGSS shall fill a prescribed form and submit the same to the PGSS office.

2. A non-refundable fee of CAD $200 will be payable to PGSS by the external organization to cover the election and CRO costs, along with the form. An additional CAD $20 will be billed to the external organization for every hour of the CRO’s time spent on the referendum relevant to that external organization that exceeds $10 hours. If an external organization can not cover the $200 or additional expenses to run the referendum through PGSS, they can petition the PGSS executive for a waiver of these fees with a rationale for the need of a fee waiver. If approved, these fees would be covered by PGSS.

3. Within 3 days of submitting the form, the CRO will schedule a meeting with the representatives of the external organization to discuss the timeline and answer any questions they may have.
4. The external organization will submit their referendum question to the CRO for being put-up before the next scheduled council meeting, where the referendum question shall be considered passed if it receives the assent of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members present.

5. The Board of Directors shall then ratify the passed referendum question.

6. The external organization shall be responsible to inform the McGill University Provost’s office about the referendum question.

7. Upon approval the external organization will then constitute “YES” and “NO” committees that shall comprise of PGSS members only.

8. All members intending to be on either the “YES” or “NO” committee shall complete a form as prescribed by the CRO, and submit the same to the PGSS office on the date notified.

9. The referendum campaign shall run in accordance with the rules as prescribed in the PGSS bylaws and the SAM. (see Ch. 9, § 10)

10. The campaign will last for a minimum of two weeks.

11. The referendum(a) voting period will commence on the date agreed upon and will last for a minimum of five days.

12. Upon the conclusion of the referendum(a), the results will be published by the CRO and an official certified copy of these results will be sent to the external organization.

13. The external organization will be responsible for informing McGill University’s provost’s office of the results.

Motion to amend SAM: Guildines on External Referendum(a)

The Speaker explained that this is the first reading of this motion. It will then go to a committee for detailed analysis, and then come back to Council for a second reading. He invited the SG to motivate the motion.

The SG explained that there are currently no policies specifically addressing referendums happening through PGSS by external groups.

Questions:

M. Satterthwaite (GSAN): In point 2, it says the PGSS executive can waive the fees. By what criteria will the PGSS decide what fees can be waived or not?

SG: I added that as part of the motion because what if there’s an external group that doesn’t have any money to pay for the $200 minimum fee to use our CRO to run a referendum? We wanted to give the opportunity for external groups that don’t have current funds to be able to run a referendum. Right now, if any external group has a referendum going through PGSS, we’re giving them our money through our CRO service ($20/hour) to run their referendum. This allows us more economic accountability for external groups using our services. We don’t have a lot of criteria right now, but if you have suggestions on criteria we could use, I’m all ears.

Debate:

E. Larson (GSAN): I actually really like this motion, I think it is well structured and something that is lacking in the current bylaws. For point 2, what you could do for oversight is, if the fee is waived, just have a report to Council, which should elate any problems people might have. You could also describe where it’s coming
from in the budget. If both of those get in there, it would make this a stronger motion, but I stand by it regardless, I think it’s a good motion.

J. Singh (MCGSS): Could we also have a whereas statement describing what an external organization is? Second, more of personal issue with being able to control a referendum question, because right now we are giving PGSS Council 2/3 majority to pass a referendum question. I feel that’s a dangerous area to go in, because a referendum question is something that comes from the student body in order to make the Council respect their decisions/needs. When it comes into that framework, putting restrictions on a referendum question becomes iffy. I understand this is for external organizations, but I feel in a scenario where PGSS members are part of an external organization have a project that they feel will benefit other PGSS members, they now require 2/3 majority to get it passed, and they also have to go through Council, it doesn’t really seem to start from the student body. Issues with putting restrictions on a referendum in general.

Speaker: Would you like to formally amend this to not be 2/3?

J. Singh (MCGSS): I bring it up, but I don’t have specific ideas for how to amend. I understand this is the first reading, so in my mind, it would go back to the mover and they can revise it if they feel my comments are valid.

SG: I understand that concern of having Council have authority over to approve/not approve a referendum question, but it is one way in which an external group can have a referendum be put to students. The other way is having 535 students sign a petition in favour of it, so it’s not like it’s only one option, it’s one of two. But yes, these comments are valid.

CRO: Just to add on, the majority of referendums coming in from external organizations are for an upkeep fee, such as CKUT, Midnight Kitchen. Reason why we should have Council approve, especially when it comes to matters of money and finance.

M. Satterthwaite (GSAN): Motion to amend item 2 as follows:

2A. (current motion)

2B. If the PGSS executive do decide to waive the fees for the external organization, the executive will report back at the following council with rationale for the waiver of these fees.

SG: Right now, any group that wants to have any referendum can do it external to PGSS and hire their own CRO, or through PGSS and use the services of our CRO. But right now, the use of our CRO comes from the salary budget. So the default right now is that all the services of our CRO are being billed internally. The monies would come from the contract billed every month to the CRO. I don’t see a need for that, it would just simply be absorbing that within the contract of our CRO, but I like the idea of having a rationale for that being reported to Council.

Debate about the amendment:

M. Satterthwaite (GSAN): I would like to speak in favour of the amendment.

CRO: Just want to clarify with regards to the finances, it’s not only the money for the CRO, we are also allowing external organization to use the online voting system and there are other staff members. The $200 includes all those ancilliary services which we as an organization will provide to them.

Y. Bresler (MGAPS): My understanding is that there are several ways to run a referendum, but one is to run a special referenda where they use the dates they want. Isn’t another avenue for them to run through the usual PGSS referendum period and then they don’t pay this fee? If so, why aren’t we encouraging them to use that service?
SG: This is for any referendum where they are using our CRO.

T. Colbourne (PPSMUA): I’m just wondering about this 2b amendment because if the point is to have oversight/accountability, it just says they have to come back with rationale but it doesn’t mean that it’s going to be good rationale. Wouldn’t it make more sense to put it to a vote before waiving the fee?

SG: So what you could do is make a second amendment that says any fee waiver for an external referendum needs to be approved by Council.

Amendment amended to:

2B. If the PGSS executive do decide to waive the fees for the external organization, the executive will report a rationale for the waiver of these fees subject to approval by council.

Motion to approve the amendment passed.

Debate regarding motion:

J. Singh (MCGSS): Just a comment/potential idea for when it leaves Council, the way I view a student society/student union is they have to do everything for members. One of the requirements to go around my issue with restricting referendums is to require any external organization to have PGSS members on it, that way it is related to grad students at PGSS, versus having a completely external organization asking for permission to charge funds to our student body.

Motion passed.

M. Satterthwaite (GSAN): Question for CRO regarding point 7 - how does the CRO intend on implementing this rule?

CRO: The rationale behind having this clause is that since we as an organization are going to vote on this, it has to be targeted to us. In the past, we have been mandating that at least the campaign chair of the yes/no committee has to be a PGSS member.

4.2 Motion to approve the creation of the Innovation Commissioner position and Innovation Committee - Jacob Lavigne

Whereas McGill University is currently creating an innovation strategy, and several programs, activities and resources related to innovation and entrepreneurship;

Whereas the PGSS does not have a mechanism through which concerted representation on committees related to innovation and entrepreneurship can be ensured over the long-term;

Whereas the PGSS does not have policies and/or positions related to the future of innovation and entrepreneurship at McGill University;

Whereas the PGSS has received requests for endorsement from start-ups initiated by students;

Whereas the PGSS does not have policies and positions related to the protocol and criteria for endorsing start-ups;

Whereas the PGSS membership has expressed interest in improving the process of identifying the appropriate resources on campus related to innovation and entrepreneurship;

BIRT that the PGSS Council approve the creation of the Innovation Commissioner position and Innovation Committee, as described in the attached document.
Motion to approve the creation of the Innovation Commissioner position and Innovation Committee - Jacob Lavigne

The EAO presented a summary of the rationale for the creation of the Innovation Commissioner position. Given recent significant changes to the McGill innovation strategy, the purpose of this new position would be to ensure there is communication among individuals representing PGSS on different committees regarding innovation. The position will also be responsible for developing policies around endorsing companies to speak with our membership. He said that a lack of unison in representation may lead to either no innovation and entrepreneurship centre, or our needs not being properly represented. He stood for questions.

Questions:

Y. Bresler (MGAPS): I love the initiative, worthy cause, but there are a lot of other issues that PGSS could tackle and other avenues we could do it other than commissioner. Can you justify why it has to be a commissioner rather than committee, and why it takes higher priority over other issues?

EAO: I really thought that it was important that we have an individual in charge of concerting all of these representatives on all of these committees. Having one person lead the pack and ensuring these position and policies are created is needed, we need one person accountable for this committee’s work. For accountability, it shouldn’t just be a member at large, and not Executive because it simply doesn’t have that amount of work to do; commissioner is the “sweet spot”.

E. Larson (GSAN): How do you plan on funding this position? Commissioners get a stipend of $4000 per year, do you have plans to raise the general fee or take money from another budget line?

EAO: Commissioners are paid $4200 per year. Due to recent austerity cuts, we lost a number of positions and staff. Simply shuffling around some money, I have been notified by the corporate and FAO that this is not a problem. Once it is approved and implemented to SAM, it’s the Council’s voice saying we need this position, and the FAO will be required find those funds and that will be approved by governing bodies, ensuring that it is done in a democratic manner. There are loose funds here and there, I’ve confirmed that by various sources, and that can be put into a $4200 expense for the commissioner.

Debate:

EAO: As we just mentioned, maybe we have to bring this to council and ask if increase fee levies through referendum. The matter is not just about the stipend, the new person may also need funding for new events. I think it should be more explained in detail. If we want to have events for the new position, we have to go for referendum to increase membership fees.

EAO: Right now what I have in mind for the position isn’t holding a bunch of events on campus. If they are, I highly recommend they go through industry sponsorships, a lot of potential to do events for free. As it stands, the only expense proposed is the stipend.

Y. Bresler (MGAPS): I’d like to speak against this motion, and speak for the next motion for a committee. I personally think we should start with a committee and find someone within PGSS to take that responsibility. Given our financial issues, I think that would be a good way to start. I speak against the motion as a whole, but I would speak for the next motion.

Speaker: You can motion to split the question. The first motion would be the creation of a commissioner position, and the second one would be the committee.

Y. Bresler (MGAPS) moved to split the question.

Debate on amendment:
EAO: I’d like to reiterate the importance of having a single individual responsible for this committee. Having one person in charge really ensures that the objectives of committee are pursued. When there is no leadership, it will affect the success of the committee, as well as implementing a future commissioner position. Bundling it as two ensures continuity and accountability.

A. Nosrat (EC): Speak against the amendment. From my experience, committees don’t survive by themselves. We’ve had a very recent experience with this. If you don’t have paid position to manage the committee it’s not going to go anywhere. If we’re going to do this, let’s do it with a commissioner and not split the question.

E. Larson (GSAN): Not sure if I’m for/against the amendment yet, but I suggest that we could put the committee itself under the portfolio of a pre-existing commissioner or executive. I don’t know which portfolio that would be, but there is room in PGSS, maybe someone from the Internal Affairs Committee. It’s an idea that would be voted if we go down the road of splitting the motion.

EAO: With the amount of things that officers are required to do with a 15 hour/week salary, it’s in my opinion unfair to dump this on an officer’s portfolio. It’s also quite specialized, and taps into each officer’s portfolio. I would see it fitting under the AAO portfolio the most, but there is so much to do and it’s too much for an officer to take on for their own, which is why I proposed this.

SG: I would like to support not putting this amendment. As Jacob had said, it’s important for PGSS to have our foot in door in all these things that are happening very quickly on campus, and a point person that university knows that they contact to ensure dissemination of information and opportunities.

Motion to split the amendment failed.

Continued debate regarding motion:

A. Nosrat (EC): Speak in favour. We are in a special time, a lot of movement around creating a culture of innovation. We’ve recently hired a McGill Innovation VP at the senior administration level. Big service to graduate students to have someone at these conversations to make sure our needs are met. I think we would be well served by this position.

AAO: I want to speak in favour and propose an amendment to the BIRT clause: Council conditionally approve changes included in the attached document, thereby recommending a review by the governance committee.

Questions regarding amendment:

E. Larson (GSAN): I’m not entirely sure how we can conditionally approve a change pending a review should we not see the changes or the review from the governance committee. If they come back with changes to any of the clauses, perhaps Council would want to be seeing them before doing a first approval. Shouldn’t it be referred to the governance committee, then come back for first reading?

Speaker: I think the intent was that this is the first reading, then it would go to governance, and come back for next Council. You would see the changes, and then approve them.

E. Larson (GSAN): At second reading, you’re not allowed to amend the document, so if we have any questions/concerns about it, the first reading is the time to do it. Would it not be more appropriate to pass it by the governance committee to come back to council to do a final first approval?

Speaker: So you’re motioning to table it, then it would come back with review?

E. Larson (GSAN): Yes, I would like to propose that as a motion.

Debate regarding amendment:
EAO: This motion has gone through our executive three times. It had already been proposed to Council last meeting, I just don’t know how much more in terms of the document here can be improved. Sending it to the governance committee requires that we approve it for the first reading?

E. Larson (GSAN): I don’t believe so, Council can refer to any body it wants to before it is approved the first time. Has it gone to the governance or the policy & structure advisory committee?

SG: No, it hasn’t.

AAO: Given that it was brought to Council for discussion last month and has been reviewed by the executive, I would want there to be some motivation given the state of the proposed changes now why that would be necessary. I want to highlight that it comes back for second reading with proposed amendments from the governance committee.

A. Nosrat (EC): Isn’t this moot amendment? Wouldn’t it already happen?

Speaker: If the motion passes, it will go to governance committee, then will come back to Council, but the amendments they propose cannot be changed. So the proposal right now is to send the governance, have it come back, then we can amend it, then it would go to governance again, and back to us for final reading.

A. Nosrat (EC): I would like to speak against that as well.

The Speaker called the motion to amend to refer to committee to a vote.

Motion did not pass.

Y. Bresler (MGAPS): Friendly amendment to remove the word “conditionally”, such that:

BIRT Council approve the first reading of the motion attached. BIFRT This motion is sent to governance committee. BIFRT The governance committee submit their report for next Council on second reading.

J. Singh (MCGSS): Point of information, we’re amending BIRT that Council approve the first reading, but isn’t this the first reading?

The AAO proposed the following change:

BIRT council approve the proposed SAM changes in the attached document.

Motion with the new BIRT clause passed.

EAO: Anyone interested in the position, please come speak to me or any commissioner or executive.

4.3 Appointment of Environment Commissioner

Whereas Selina Liu, one of the two Environment Commissioners, has submitted her resignation to the Executive Committee;

Whereas the Appointments Board recommends to Council that Amir Nosrat, the other Environment Commissioner, be appointed to the full position;

BIRT Council appoint Amir Nosrat as the full Environment Commissioner for the remainder of the 2016-17 year.

Questions:

Y. Bresler (MGAPS): So Council is suppose to ratify the actual resignation?
SG: Yes, amendment made as follows: 
BIRT Council ratify the resignation of Selina Liu.

BIFRT Council appoint Amir Nosrat as the full Environment Commissioner for the remainder of the 2016-17 year.

Motion for amendment passed.

Seeing no debate, the Speaker called the motion to a vote.

Motion passed unanimously.

5 Reports

7:38 PM 5.1 SG: Report for December 7th Council

2016-12-02 SG: Report for December 7th Council

The SG stood for questions.

Seeing no questions, the SG was thanked.

7:39 PM 5.2 IAO Report to Council

IAO Report to Council

2016-12-07 IAO Report to Council

The IAO spoke about upcoming events this month: snow globe making, gingerbread decorating, Habs tickets, trivia (Dec 19th). She gave a debrief of the fall orientation, and presented the schedule for winter orientation, which starts on Jan 9th. She said that the snowshoeing date is tentative, and they are in contact with Mac campus about doing something together. First trivia night of the season will be Jan 10th. A new mulled wine and marshmallow roast event will be held for new students to mingle with existing students. There is an IAO committee meeting tomorrow to decide the theme for the winter housewarming (Jan 13th).

She showed the list of Jan/Feb events, and said that they are printing their semester brochures. Send her an email if you have any specific questions or are interested in volunteering for winter orientation.

Seeing no questions, the IAO was thanked.

7:43 PM 5.3 FAO Report to Council

2016-12-07 FAO Report to Council

The FAO presented updates on the budget (attached).

Questions:
E. Larson (GSAN): How does this compare to previous years for all budget lines?

FAO: I haven’t compared the society activities, shared activities, and the rest of the lines. The one we just compared was the business and activities, as I told you, we have lost $31 000. For the rest, I haven’t compared with 2015, because they should be the same as we didn’t have so much stuff to be influenced this year. The main concern was the society, because we were thinking we would be a negative balance, and actually we were.

J. Singh (MCGSS): Is it possible to speak with the city for them to recuperate some of the losses faced because of the construction?

FAO: I have no idea regarding that. The coach house has been rented by people who are working for construction, so we could make some money out of that. It can be something that we can discuss further.

IAO: I personally have not discovered into that territory to see if there is any compensation from the city, but our business manager Andre has worked really hard with the city of Montreal to comply with regular walkways, proper boards and signage, and to let us know beforehand if they change the path to our building. It is an uphill battle and we don’t know how much they will comply, but we can look into that.

The FAO was thanked.

5.4 External Affairs Officer - REPORT

7:49 PM

The EAO presented highlights from his report, including attending FEUQ meetings, progress on the QISS seminar series and QInnovator award, and attending the Conference on Academic Makerspaces. He also attended a forum about issues faced by healthcare professionals with the HC. He said there were a lot of professionals, but no medical researchers at the table. He encouraged PGSAs involved in medical research or healthcare policy to attend meetings, and look into whether or not you want to affiliate to them.

He stood for questions.

Questions:

J. Singh (MCGSS): Was there any discussion on our reciprocal billing project brought up at that meeting?

EAO: No, but it would be a great topic. They hold an annual form that takes one topic at a time, but at these meetings, there are a lot of smaller conversations and it’s a great place to network to get the ball rolling on things like this.

The EAO was thanked.

5.5 Supplementary documents for the External Affairs Officer report - International Symposium on Academic Makerspaces report to the Innovation Steering Committee

7:54 PM

Please see attached report.
5.6 AAO - Report to December Council

2016-11-30 AAO - Report to December Council

The AAO spoke about the open discussion at Senate in November on the future of graduate programs at McGill, and encouraged members to get involved. He noted that in his report, under PGSS committees, it should say Committee on Member Services (new) and the Committee on Member Support. Also need members for the PGSS elections committee that works with CRO to review applications and oversee the election process.

Questions:

J. Singh (MCGSS): For the cyclical review on animal science, our animal science rep tried to join it but were told they weren't allowed, can you just give me the reasoning for it?

AAO: It's an external review process. The committee is composed of two external members from different universities who are specialists in that field, two McGill professors, and a PGSS student. None of the people reviewing the department can be from that department, but they can be from the same faculty. Different interviews with various constituencies, including graduate students, so needs to be someone from outside the department, but at the same time, the closer the better. For example, music research is up for review, and someone from music performance is on the committee.

The AAO was thanked.

5.7 Health Commissioner Report

Please send me an e-mail if you have any questions! Health.pgss@mail.mcgill.ca

2016-11-30 Health Commissioner Report

5.8 Equity and Diversity Commissioner Report to December Council

The EDC spoke about how the sexual violence policy and mental support for racialized and ethnic students are long-term conversations, and invited members to email her feedback. She also clarified the bathroom situation in Thomson House; the signage has been changed to gender neutral, but there have been delays in having the urinals removed. It would help if those who would like to see this moved along faster spoke to her about it. She stood for questions.

M. Satterthwaite (GSAN): Congratulations on your Rhodes scholarship!
The EDC was thanked.

8:00 PM 5.9 Environment Commissioner Report to December Council

2016-11-30 Environment Commissioner Report to December Council

The EC spoke about trying to get PGSS interface with important groups on campus related to sustainability and environment, in particular, the movement on reforming the waste system at McGill, and the sustainability research symposium. Those who would like to become involved with either of these initiatives are invited to let him know by email.

The EC was thanked.

8:02 PM 5.10 Member Support Commissioner Report to December Council

2016-11-30 Member Support Commissioner Report to December Council

The MSC announced that the last Grad Connect Café is happening after trivia night on Dec 13th, and the topic is establishing goals for graduate school. He also talked about an event organized by the Institute for the Public Life of Arts and Ideas (IPLAI) to debrief about the U.S. elections. He will post more info on the Facebook group and in the NewsWire. He then stood for questions.

Seeing no questions, the MSC was thanked.

6 Question Period

8:04 PM 6.1 Questions

E. Larson (GSAN): If anybody has paid expenses out of their own pocket for conferences and noticed it takes 2-3 months to get funding back, do you know how to go about getting it done quicker? In my lab, there is a long process between submitting requests for reimbursement and the actual money being given back to the grad student.

J. Singh (MCGSS): One thing that my department does is travel advance. They process it so you have the money in the account before you make the purchases, and then you provide the receipts afterwards, that way we aren’t carrying a debt with us.

EAO: From the conference that I attended last month, I sat down with the person responsible for funding, and she had me do it in front of her. This ensures that it is done properly, and that it goes right to the person. What office was it?

E. Larson (GSAN): I submit online on Minerva. It always takes a few months, and I know it gets submitted because I sign off. It’s not just me, it’s other people in my lab and department who have complaints as well.

Speaker: Each department has its own person who has to review it and then they send it to the university. Two steps in the pipeline, both probably slower than you want them to be.
EAO: Just sitting down with them really helps to make sure that it is processed.

IAO: Every lab has their one point person. I submit all of my expenses before I go to a conference and ask for the funds in advance. Like Jacob said, if you talk to the person and let them know you really need this, they’ll try to expedite the process for you.

M. Maier (EMGSS): In experimental medicine, there are three semesters when you can get money and everybody gets their money at the end of the fourth month. I went to a conference right at the end, which was great because I got my money one week later, but for someone who went at the beginning of the timeframe, they would have to wait four months. Probably just talking to whoever is in charge of that will fix it for everyone.

Speaker: It is department by department, so you probably need to talk to someone in your department to get it faster.

Y. Bresler (MGAPS): Question to SG – Is the seat of Council Rep to the Board of Directors still vacant?

SG: Yes. I encourage anybody that wants to get involved in decision-making at the corporate level of PGSS to contact me, or just apply.

8:09 PM  Adjourned