

Minutes of the General Meeting of the SGPS – February 9, 2016

Approval of the Agenda

Christina moves that the financial report goes to the top of the list, and to move Exec reports later in the meeting to allow for Mark to arrive.

Seconded by Chris Cochrane

Motion carries

Motion to approve the Agenda carries.

Section 3: Financial Report

KPMG are here to report on the 2013-2014 audit

- Starting with 2014 high level of the statements
 - o Reports with soft qualification – in the event that cash or fundraising happens it can be hard to verify completeness of the revenue
 - o Financial position – balance delta between 2013 and 2014 owing to deferred revenue
 - o Health and dental provider requested payment – held as an asset
 - o In Trust – specific programs, not societies' funds.
 - o Schedule A and B cover program allocations
 - o Health and dental – no significant change
 - o Expenses – advertising higher in 2014 “grad guide” costs, not repeated in 2015.
 - o Bursaries and grants – dental and emergency student funds mostly responsible for this
 - o Health plan fund surplus – 4% retained. Remaining surplus diverted to health plan fund
- Moving to 2015 statements
 - o No change to audit opinion
 - o New loan receivable (AMS) for renovations
 - o Purchases during the year, money towards renovations increases capital assets about \$44k
 - o Marginl increase to bus-it fee
 - o Health and dental plan – service provider new 2015.
 - o Advertising – no grad guide, so lower expense here
 - o Stiplends increase 3.8%
 - o Various one time payouts changes wages and benefits
 - o General fund surplus used to fund capital asset acquisitions
- Auditor thanks Christina and Pam for cooperation and excellent turn around time. Everyone in the organization was great at getting the information needed to close out the last 2 year audits.

- Statements were audited to 56\$K for 2014, and \$50k for 2015.
- No significant control deficiency noted, recommendations and observations delivered to VPFS.

No questions from the membership

Motion to approve the financial report carries.

Section 4: SGPS & University Committee Reports

Committee reports, nothing to add.

No questions from the membership

Motion to approve reports carries

Section 5: Senator's Report

Motion to accept senator report carries

Section 6: Other Reports

Athletics commissioner Dominic Kucharski introduces himself. athletics@sgps.ca, sport hour events weekly have started. Will be different event each week.

Social commissioner Daniela Oliveira introduces herself. Focus on integration and inclusivity. Planning with everyone involved.

Other reports:

Rector Mike Young: introduces office of the rector – represent and support all students at the university. Can escalate to administration or board of trustees. Successor – Cam Yung. Hopes to continue with lines of communication, advocacy.

Julian Chesterman: BP – are they up to date on the website? Why are 3 motions from last winter meeting missing.

Eric: I will follow up immediately. Updated to best of executive knowledge at the time.

Motion to approve other reports carries

Section 2: Executive Reports

President Chris Cochrane: would like to add some of the things I wanted to do, but haven't been able to. 2 major things – 1) grad departmental societies initiative, urges new exec to consider this going forward. 2) review/study of ways that SGPS can better integrate members from shorter programs.

VP Graduate Mark Kellenberger: highlights in report that the www.sgps.ca domain is doing down over reading week for changeover to office 365. Emails will not likely be received over reading week, but we will set up a temp gmail during this time.

Speaker Eric Rapos: VP Professional Mark Asfar is running behind schedule, but he submitted a written report.

VP Finance and Services Christina Huber: budget actuals – back online as some changes were made. A few things over budget: sgps handbook came back this past year and price was not as expected. Revenue from advertising did not offset the cost. Same provider will not be used next year. A few capital expenditures such as computer which screen broke. Over on advertising but doesn't take into account advertising revenues that have been brought in.

VP Campaigns and Community Affairs Lorne Beswick: SGPS parenting room open. Met with many groups to get the word out about this.

Julian Chesterman: Budget question. Significant excess in revenue from health and dental plan – comments on exec on whether we will increase health and dental plan services or lower fee.

Christina: Expenses are actually going up, we will be meeting with provider to review plan.

Julian: Investments – what's going on with this?

Christina: Just invested 100k last week (TD advisors), unexpected costs meant that we held off on investing. More to be invested later.

One person abstains.

Motion to approve executive reports carries

Section 7: Main Motions

Speaker: We have no Main Motions, so we will move on.

Section 8: New Business

Speaker: Moving into all candidates debate.

Introduce Candidates:

President: Saba Farbodkia

VPG: Sebastian Gorlewski

VPP: Kishan Lakhani

VPFS: Stuart Clark

VPCCA: Jodie Al-MqBali, Anastasiya Boika

Senator: Alexandru Sonoc

Questions will be specific to a position, or all candidates.

Saba Farbodkia: PhD in neuroscience. Asked by international and aboriginal students to improve the welcoming environment. Other items, improving policies around student supervisor relations. Improving environment for physical and mental health.

Sebastian Gorlewski: improve mental health services on campus. Only have 1 embedded councilor and 4500 students. 3 weeks-1month for an appointment for serious mental health concerns. Feel that student advisor program is being underutilized. Networking platform to connect students with young professionals. Emergency bursary/travel fund – increase access. Faculty code of conduct – better mediation.

Kishan Lakhani: Proactive not reactive. Find gov't positions are often reactive.1) inter-professional network including grad students, specific system for jobs actively sought by alumni. Increase inclusivity of SGPS.

Stuart Clark: Running on platform of convenience, spending and accessing money. Grants and bursaries. Focus on communicating rights (ie: health and dental), and how to use resources that are available.

Anastasia Boika: mental health focus, major platform will be on things that can be accomplished within one year. "Achievable goals". Providing opportunity for professional development for grads, no marketable skills. Make students aware of resources on campus to this effect. Interdepartmental community, finally working for international students. Ie; welcome email telling what resources are available on campus. Editing services too.

Jodie Al-MqBali: 3 items 1) outreach and interdepartmental communication. More association between different clubs on campus could be outreach by brochures. Athletics and social commissioner can help here. Mental health – group sessions for people with similar experiences who feel comfortable sharing. Diversity – lgbtq – understanding and awareness.

Senator: alexander: currently health and safety exec on psac901. History of member safety and advocacy. Board of directors of undergrad student government at u of t. financial director at sci 44 coop. been at 3 unis and see how things are done all over the place. History of keeping promises. Thorough in analysis, will ask hard questions of people sitting across from me.

Speaker: Now open to Questions.

Caitlyn McIntyre – law: can we hear more about candidates past experience?

Alexandru: – ideas: problems with outcomes and deliverables changing during courses. People need to graduate/prof needs to close out the course. Want to have deliverables well known ahead of time – instituted at senate.

Jodie: started around 11 with 2005 tsunami, worked with unicef fundraising locally. Involved with student government previously, habitat for humanity, scholarship for students in financial need.

Anastasia: Arts committee rep, curriculum changes for the year. Working with CTL TA/TF mentorship program. Journal as features editor. Been on campus for 7 years for degree so many commotions across campus.

Stewart: provincial party board – facilitating access to bursaries etc. learned that uptaketime needs to be fast. Have discretion and know how.

Kishan; University of Manchester in UK. Social chair at university of Manchester school of pharmacy. Project coordinator for “are you clear” sexual health screening in UK. Project leader for reach out youth mentoring

Sabastian: equity, sexual violence/bystander intervention. Residence don 4y. See VPG as managerial role. Multiple awards recognizing work.

Saba: grad folk in department 2 senate committees. CTL – queens specific learning outcomes. Equity committee working with equity office on policy quality.

Jared Houston – philosophy: Candidate for VPG – peer support center. Student advisor program – will you model this like the peer support program?

Sebastian: focus on directing them to resources instead with specialized resources. Branding improvements would also be good.

Shelby Loft – gender studies: health and sexual assault, systemic barriers? Elaborate.

Anastaysia: grad students don't have that many services available, all of us planning on working for graduate specific voice. Ashley Vanstone is the only specific embedded councilor. Widespread and available.

Jodi: Mental health, increase SGPS specific councilors. Could move some funding around, perhaps changing the student advisor role.

Alexandre: indirect experience about stigma that comes with this. Both severely impact academic ability of the student. Approach would be more towards ensuring no barrier to success, specifically towards appeals.

Stuart: most important thing is gravity of situation. Move as single unit with university partners. Barriers to accessing resources – any response we take must not re-victimize individuals, values to approach.

Kishan: stigma as barrier. Prevents people from approaching services that are there.

Sebastian: important to consult graduate student population to gather input. Mental health – reduce stigma.

Saba: working with health promotion center, recognizing signs of students under stress.

Sarah – international commissioner' – what about international students?

Kishan: using avenue of social events to integrate international students.

Saba: working with international and social commissioner.

Jodi: integration is largest problem. Lumping international students together during events such as orientation is problematic. Good place to start during orientation events. Buddy system may also be considered.

Stuart: Direct outreach is best method to involve people in decision making about new programs and services. Making sure international student perspective is included in policy.

Sebastian: Personal approach. QUIC. Ask what issues they face and what we can do.

Alexandre: policy – spell out obvious things because they are not actually as obvious as we thing. Finishing on time, deliverables up front.

Anastaysia: Welcome packet for international students. Orientation events geared towards resource acquainting. New services such as editing service, language barrier.

Chris – President: other than international students, which group do you think has been least served by SGPS, and how will you address this?

Sebastian: science students. Personal outreach.

Stewart: open the communication lines. Welcome package.

Jodi: aboriginal students. “truth telling process” showcase artwork in coffee house gallery setting.

Saba: aboriginal students.

Kishan: aboriginal students. Faculty – education students. Biweekly west campus visits.

Anastasyia: aboriginal student representation. Research/outreach then work with existing groups to ameliorate that.

Alexander: aboriginal students. Human rights tribunal ruling. \$4000 less spent per child per year in Canada. Big gap from the outset. Policies would be to encourage more to apply and provide more assistance than typical first year student to recognize this.

Scott- Kin/Health Studies. Policies/Institutional pressures that might be negatively contributing to mental health?

Jodi: Aside from living the student life stuck in a race, not sure. That part of education should have focus as we will always have those stresses.

Stuart: Supervisor relationship.

Sebastian: supervisor relationship. No faculty code of conduct exists. Inconsistent decision making.

Alexandre: lack of clarity in work that I do. What is enough for a masters? Told personally 2 years masters work, but no deliverables structure.

Anastasia: TA pressures. Teaching aspect – CTL TA/TF mentorship program. Continuity between previous TA/TF and incoming ones.

Kishan: What will you do after your degree and getting a job. Addressed by networking idea allowing alumni to reach out and seek candidates directly from Queen’s.

Saba: bases mainly covered at this point.

Mike Young – Rector: Public stance on social issues. What would you do?

Saba: No stance on divisive issues. Represent the whole.

Alexandre: Depends on whether something can be done about it. If you can make a difference in favour of that stance then I would take that position. Oppression in other parts of the world – would not comment as there is not something I could do about it.

Sebastian: Need to consult with exec to decide on SGPS position on this one. Personally if basic human rights are being violated then we would need to stand up. Separate professional and personal roles.

Jodi: Agree with Sebastian. If you are on a public body you can't import your own personal beliefs. Need to be united and in agreement on stance.

Kishan: Don't believe with going with majority. Underrepresentation. Deal with on issue by issue basis. Would not avoid it. Best would be to support discussion.

Anastasya: Agrees with Kishan. Consultation with student body. Also that executive stand united on issue.

Stuart: Job is to reflect public opinion. Regardless of the social issue if students want to have a discussion then we should provide a place to have these discussions.

Mark K – Exec – shorter programs paying full student fees. How do you involve these students in the SGPS.

Stuart: Welcome package.

Anastasyia: Welcome package is good, also make sure they are aware of positions that they can fill. Also volunteering opportunities/social events thru commissions.

Kishan: Liaison, working directly with exec to advance their needs.

Jodi: Deal with similar to international students. Making use of social media too.

Sebastian: Ability to attend department and faculty events. Liaison would also be helpful.

Alexandre: Exec at large position. Elected later once the new people have arrived to the university, giving them enough time to acclimate before getting involved.

Saba: Effective ways of communication. Not necessarily newsletters – personal communication is very effective.

Speaker: We will now move to closing statements.

Saba: Thank you.

Sebastian: Most diverse community on campus. Sticking around afterwards please feel free to come and talk to me,

Kishan: Thank you. Hope that you can also act as advocates. My experience is extensive in this area. Proactive and enjoy outreach. Passion for positive change.

Stuart: Thank you. Great to see large turnout. Need to recognize we are not experts and have diverse backgrounds. Need to listen to people and engage in wider consultation.

Anastasyia: Running for this position as I've enjoyed my work with SGPS so far. Want to continue helping students and engaging SGPS reps in the coming year.

Jodi: Thank you. Hope to address concerns raised tonight no matter the version of exec we have. Everyone is well qualified.

Alexandre: Thank you. Passion is in improving academic and research experience at university. Bringing analytical strength to senate – after all I am a scientist. Also following up to see that we achieve the desired results.

Speaker: This brings us to the end of the debate. You will receive emails detailing how to vote online Tomorrow and Thursday.

Section 9: Adjournment

Motion to adjourn

Motion carries.