once a year, so they have an entire week of lobby meetings in Ottawa, and they lineup a couple hundred meetings for that one week.

- Rodrigo recommended to Luke to prepare a brief documentation for the GSA, as some Council members are not present, then Council members can look it over, review it, and have more discussion around it. Natalie mentioned that Luke offered to come for 3 – 4 hours, to talk about the plan to achieve the priorities of the McMaster GSA, and he will prepare material for dissemination as well.

Discussions after Luke signed off:

- Marguerite commented that she is afraid OGSA might not be able to do anything to help grad students, as Luke already admitted that they weren’t able to advocate before. She doesn’t see the point of giving OGSA more money, since they weren’t able to do anything with the amount of money they had.

- Rodrigo highlighted that every other student organization in Ontario has had a long history of being established. The new OGSA ED came to the GSA with a track record, and pointed out what his plan will be. The Council should look at all the options, and what are the benefits. Arun commented that OGSA have 5 months till the referendum, the council could see during that time what OGSA are able to do for graduate students and based on those results the Council can decide accordingly. Marguerite commented that having a referendum is a waste of the graduate students’ time.

- Arun asked if there is a membership fee? Natalie replied that there is a membership fee paid from the GSA operating account which is $5000, however, the increase they are requesting will be a little over $5 per year per student, in which case grad students will pay this levy.

- Natalie recommended to have this discussion continue at the Academic Affair Committee (AAC), Ashley added since council is not meeting at the same intervals as the sub-committee could, which could be every 2 weeks. So they will be in direct communication with Luke. Marguerite suggested if AAC has specific recommendations they have to get back to Council.

**Motion** to mandate the AAC to discuss with Luke about OGSA first by Firat, seconded by Lucia, 10 in favour, 1 abstention, motion carried.

### 8.0 Ratification of Clubs

- Colette mentioned that she received an application for a club (Computer and Software) to be recognized by the GSA, the application met all the GSA requirements.

**Motion** to ratify that computer and software club is recognized by the GSA first by Marguerite, seconded by Colette, all in favour, motion carried.

- Colette recommended adding the definition of the GSA Club to the GSA club policy. She and the club administrator proposed the following definition: A GSA club’s mandate is to enhance student life at McMaster University by providing a unique meaningful experience, which contributes to Graduate Student Life, McMaster University, and or the broader community. Clubs must have the following characteristics to be considered:
  - Has a membership that is open and inclusive to all GSA members (or interdisciplinary in nature) and not specific to a particular faculty or department;
  - Dedicated to particular interest and activity that contributes to student life.
  - Categories of GSA Clubs are: 1) Recreational 2) Religious 3) Social issues 4) Cultural 5) Academic.
• Ashley explained that next year the university is implementing a new policy on how clubs' association are recognized. In the meantime clubs are recognized under faculty associations. In the meantime, recognized clubs are covered under faculty association. She added when clubs are recognized, they are under the clubs umbrella, if they are under a faculty and not a faculty association e.g. EGS or SAM, technically that is an open space for liability for the GSA if an event is sponsored.

**Motion** to accept the above mentioned definition of GSA Club first by Rodrigo, seconded by Lucia, 9 in favour, 2 abstentions, motion carried.

9.0 **Vacancies and nominations**

• Votes for CRO
  - Alice Zou received 0 votes
  - Kara Tsang received 9 votes
  2 abstention votes

**Motion** to appoint Kara Tsang as the GSA new CRO of the GSA first by Firat, seconded by Lucia, 10 in favour, 1 abstention, motion carried.

• **Humanities nominations**
  - No nominations

10.0 **PACBIC working group – call for nominations**

• Colette mentioned if any member is interested they could send her an email.
• Arun offered to join.

11.0 **Light Up The Night**

• Ashley mentioned that the MSU VP Finance had discussed with the GSA regarding the Light Up The Night event. It is a walk of 15000 people; this is last year's total. As such and since the GSA bought into homecoming this year, they thought the GSA might be interested in making a donation. They suggested $2500 to $3000, however, they do understand that the GSA has a tight budget, so they are open to more options. Ashley added that the uptake for graduate students last year was 11 grad students registered for the lecture as part of LUTN with George Strombo.
• This year the president of MSU, and the President of the University wrote a letter to try and have Justin Trudeau come to the event.
• Rodrigo recommended having some representation from the GSA at the Light Up The Night organization table. Especially since this is one of the biggest campus events.
• Arun highlighted that if the GSA will give this donation, then the GSA need to be included in the communication, e.g. logo, contact information, etc. Natalie confirmed that this would be discussed and is that we always make sure that the GSA is appropriately recognized.
• Marguerite asked how much did we recover from homecoming? Ashley replied the donation was $4000, and SGS donated $2000 of that amount, therefore the GSA's share is $2000. The GSA broke even on the purchased homecoming tickets. However, the comparison between the 2 events is not apples to apples, as Light Up The Night has a bigger platform for a lot of things.
• Ashley mentioned that she would ask SGS to contribute; additionally, the MSU are flexible on the contribution amount.

Motion to approve the contribution in the Light Up The Night event conditional on the GSA being included in all communication strategies to be negotiated, and representation at the event planning table and steering committee, and donate up to $2500 first by Arun, seconded by Sara, 9 in favour, 2 abstentions, motion carried.

12.0 SoBi

• Ashley explained that Sobi referendum for MSU failed, however, since that failed the GSA doesn’t have a majority. Sobi offered the GSA to do per term instead of a full year buy in. Students will be forced to pay the fee, however, anybody can opt out. They will be doing that for $10 per semester, which is $30 a year, and that is 75% off the yearly pass. On top of this they will be giving a $10 credit on the students Sobi account.
• Ashley asked if the council would like to continue this conversation, and bring the proposal to the Council and if Council agrees to take it to a referendum.
• Marguerite mentioned that there is going to be a survey on Athletics, she suggested it is a good idea to put this in the survey, then decide to take this to a referendum or not.
• The Council agreed to table item for next agenda.

13.0 Audit committee

• Marguerite mentioned that she sent some handouts at the last meeting in regards to establishing an audit committee. She looked into some schools across Canada, in which they do have audit committees to evaluate what is been done in the financials. She had a recommendation to establish an audit committee with the following structure - 50% plus 1 FRC member, and the Chair to be elected from those members. Arun added having an audit committee makes sure that the GSA are serving the purpose, as this is a fiduciary responsibility we owe to our constituents, to ensure the money students are giving is spent accordingly. He added the GSA mission states that “we are providing service better” this requires to go back and verify if appropriate funds are being used for appropriate things. For that purpose it is necessary to have an audit committee in place in addition to the financial audit.
• Ashley mentioned that Megan Murphy, the VP Administration and the Finance Committee Chair, sent some comments based on the handouts distributed. Megan said “The GSA already has a Finance Committee that oversees the following: budget, audit, financials, oversight of financial communications, reviews of auditors, oversight of bookkeeper. The audit committee needs to be chaired by an executive, as per the GSA bylaws, so the committee composition isn’t correct as per the bylaws, so it has to map out certain things to be properly considered. In the past it was difficult to get people to attend the Finance Committee, suggesting that the audit committee will also have a similar issue. Also, having an additional committee it is also taxing the executive members who already are taxed.”
• Arun commented that at this point the way Megan notes are phrased it looks like a human resource issue, and it is not a HR problem he is referring to, it is an institutional memory that needs to be in place. Institutionally the GSA needs to have these 2 committees in place, so that the financial security, financial stability, accountability, and transparency, for this issues it is necessary to have an audit committee. If people are not participating, that isn’t a strong reason not to have the audit