



Graduate Students Association

Annual General Meeting

April 11th 2017

BSB 137

Attendees: Natalie D'Silva, Megan Murphy, Angela Orasch, Colette Nyirakamana, Lucia Lee, Tim Van boxtel, Larissa Taylor, Liam Midzain-Gobin, Firat Sayin, Naim Tajvarpour, Curran Egan, Ahmed Elsharabasy, Donal Finnerty, Ayman Shaaban, Sara King Dowling, Debra Paige Wilson, Maleeha Qazi, Nicolas Yelle, Jiali Soug, Bianca Waked, Marten Kass, Graham Baker, Samira Farivar, Danielle De Rango, Mohammed Zaher, Sarah Nangle-Smith, Mostafa Yakout Mohamed, Hamed Hassani Saadi, David Bakhshinyan, Avijit Mallick, Elham Bidaki, Saeid Rostami, Lok Shu Hui, Braveenan Nirmalan, Adam Ritzey, Ali Yahyae Soufiani, Liya Niu, Issac Jackiw, Sam Peter, Melih Yayli, Shokoufeh Kazemlou

Regrets: Kara Tuang

Chair: Natalie D'Silva, President, The GSA.

Recording Secretary: Ashley Ravenscroft, Director of Operations, The GSA.

1. Call to Order 4: 54

2. Acceptance of the Agenda

Motion: To accept the agenda for the AGM of the GSA of April 11 2017.

Questions and comments:

- Curran Egan suggested an amendment to the motion on the floor to switch items 10 and 11 and then put them as the first discussion items in the agenda.
- Liam Midzain-Gobin suggested a friendly amendment to the amendment currently being discussed; whereas, the two points are still rearranged so that they

- are at the beginning of the agenda, but we should also move point 5, ratification of CRO results/reports, to the third position in the agenda.
- Amendment suggestion is to switch items 10 and 11 and to bring them to the top of the agenda in positions 1 and 2 and ratify the CRO report before we get the reports from committees and other business such as that.

Amended Motion: To accept the amended AGM agenda; whereas, points 11, 10, and 5 will be discussed first.

First by Firat Sayin, second by David Bahshinyan,
Discussion was open to the floor; however, no further comments were provided.
All in favor- 26, All Against- 0, Abstentions- 1, **motion carries.**

3. Ratification of the minutes of the 2016 AGM

Motion: To accept the minutes of the 2016 AGM.

First by Curran Egan, second by Friat Sayin,
Discussion was open to the floor: however, no comments were provided.
All in Favor 24, All Against- 0, Abstentions- 3, **motion carries.**

4. Approval of GSA Fees for 2017/2018 (15 minutes)

Motion: To accept the proposed GSA fees for 2017-2018

- a. GSA Fee
- b. Health & Dental Fees
- c. HSR Fee

Questions and comments:

- Natalie D'Silva noted that the Council and the Board of the GSA proposed an increase of 4% to the GSA fee as the GSA requires an increase budget so it can expand things such as, but not limited to, travel for advocacy, increased staff hours (increasing the public hours of the GSA office), increased travel grants, etc.
- Natalie D'Silva also advised the attending members that the current fee for Full Time Equivalent (FTE) is \$55.49 and an increase of 4% is \$59.41; whereas, CPI (1.8% this year) would equate to \$58.31; therefore, the difference is \$1.38 for the upcoming year.
- Liam Midzain-Gobin inquired why the membership was only presented financials up until January, when the meeting is in April.
- Ashley Ravenscroft and Megan Murphy noted that since the first meeting, which did not meet quorum, was scheduled for March and the bank reconciled statements (inclusive of MOSAIC, Visa, and Bank Statements) for February would not have been prepared in time; therefore, we presented the numbers which were provided by the bookkeeper and captured the reconciled amounts.

First by Tim van Boxtel, seconded by Friat Sayin,
Discussion was open to the floor:

- Many students had questions around the HSR fee and if we were deciding anything regarding that fee today and in regard to the Health and Dental fee.
- Ashley Ravenscroft and Natalie D'Silva commented that the HSR fee will go to referendum in May (May 8-10, specifically). Moreover, the Health and Dental rates have not been confirmed by the provider, but we are under the impression, after speaking with the provider, that our fees will not increase this year. This fee however is not tied to CPI, but rather claims history. We hope to have a final number shortly.

All in Favor 20, All Against- 4, Abstentions- 4, **motion carries.**

5. Approval of Budget for 2017/2018 (10 minutes)

a. GSA Budget

Motion: To accept the proposed GSA budget for 2017-2018

Question and comments:

- Curran Egan suggested to amend the budget where we adopt the 4% increase for all line items except under the social heading, which then we accept the 1.8% increase for these lines.

Discussion on Amended motion:

- Curran Egan suggested moving the social events from column two (1.8% column) into the (4% column), meaning that social events would have a collective budgeted as \$26 000.00 instead of \$31 500.00, which would provide the GSA a more balanced budget.
- Curran further added he felt it was more responsible to propose a balanced budget and reduce social events in order to do so, as this is discretionary funding; whereas, other line items are fixed expenses like salaries.
- Megan Murphy noted that it was budgeted in such a way as many felt that social events gives back to students in a unique way.
- Liam Midzain-Gobin noted that reducing the social line item was the simplest things to do to take out what is not 100% pivotal.
- Nicolas Yelle asked that the GSA executives again state the rational for increasing the fee by 4% rather than 1.8%
- Natalie D'Silva and Megan Murphy reiterated that the additional funds would be used for increased office hours, increased advocacy efforts (specifically travel), increased funding for travel awards, and payments to CRA for the executives (CPP, EI, etc) as we were advised that this is required by the government as they are paid more than \$500 in honorariums.
- Liam Midzain-Gobin inquired what the line item “McMaster Community Initiatives,” was for. Previously he believed it funded things such as Homecoming and Light up the Night, which he felt might not be an ideal use of money as we do not know if Graduate Students attend these events (further commenting initiatives like Homecoming are geared towards Undergraduates).
- Ashley Ravenscroft noted that council felt that this line item, valued at \$2700 was a way to “buy some goodwill on campus.”

Amended Motion to the floor:

Motion: Accept the amended budget (column 4% for all line items, except for social events, where the 1.8% column will be used) for 2017-2018 budget year.

First by Curran Egan, seconded by Liam Midzain-Gobin,
Discussion was open to the floor; however, no additional comments were
provided.

All in Favor 12, All Against- 9, Abstentions- 15, **motion carries.**

6. CRO Report on 2017 March Election (8 minutes)

a. Election Report

Motion: To ratify the election results of the GSA representation for 2017-2018

Comments and Questions:

- Natalie D'Silva mentioned that the following individuals were elected when the GSA conducted their elections this year:
 - Tim Van Boxtel
 - Robert Ballagh
 - Avijit Mallick
 - Shawn Hercules
- Natalie D'Silva also noted that the Board of Directors appointed Niam Tajvarpour to the position of Vice President Administration, as he applied after the election period occurred
- Liam Midzain-Gobin provided a Point of Information; whereas, the ratification would only be in regards to the elected positions and not any appointed positions.

Motion: To ratify the election results of the GSA representation for 2017-2018

First by Curran Egan, seconded by Frait Sayin,
Discussion was open to the floor; however, no additional comments were
provided.

All in Favor 32, All Against- 0, Abstentions- 2, **motion carries.**

- Natalie D'Silva addressed the membership and noted that several members said they would be unable to stay for the remainder of the AGM and accordingly she would like to have the membership discuss the following options for how to continue:
 - 1) Motion to call another AGM (noting that this was our second AGM this year because the first AGM did not make quorum)
 - 2) Motion to revert the remainder of the agenda items to a council meeting.

Discussion:

- Liam Midzain-Gobin provided a Point of Information; whereas, the items being discussed are item numbers: 3,5,6, 7, 8,9, 12 and 13 on the original agenda (please see Schedule B attached).

- The membership agreed through various informal discussions that it would be agreeable to have the remainder of the items discussed at the next Council meeting.

Motion: To move the outstanding items to the next council meeting and have members included as observers and have speaking rights.

First by Tim van Boxtel, seconded by Frait Sayin,
Discussion was open to the floor; however, no additional comments were provided.

All in Favor 34, All Against- 0, Abstentions- 2, **motion carries.**

Schedule B

3. GSA Year in Review – Report from the Executive and Committees of Council
(10 minutes*)
5. Call for Nominations – Directors of the Association (5 minutes)
6. Ratification – Directors of the Association (5 minutes)
7. Audited Financial Statements 2016 (10 minutes)
 - a. Review of statements
Motion: To approve the Auditors report for the 2016 fiscal year
 - b. Reappointment of Auditor
Motion: To appoint KPMG as the Auditors for 2017 fiscal year and to approve the Auditors fees
8. Review of Financial Statements 2016/2017 (10 minutes)
 - a. Review of YTD income statements for the Phoenix and the GSA
 - b. Review of the Balance Sheet for the Phoenix and the GSA
 - c. Review of the Statement of Owners Equity for the Phoenix and the GSA
9. Approval of Budget for 2017/2018 (10 minutes)
 - a. Phoenix Budget
Motion: To accept the GSA and Phoenix budget for 2017-2018
12. Nomination to GSA Committees (5 minutes)
13. New Business (10 minutes)
14. Adjournment