

Graduate Students Association of McMaster University
Council Meeting

March 22nd 2017
GSA Office, East Tower Refectory
6:00 p.m.

Minutes

Attendees: Tim van Boxtel (GSA President), Sam Peter (FRC Engineering), Simon Mcnamee (FRC Engineering), Rodrigo Narro (BoG), Shawn Hercules (VP External), Aaron Roberts (Senator Humanities), Robert Alex Ballagh (VP Services), Xiaomin Huang (Incoming FRC International).

Call in: Jodie Lobana (VP Administration)

Regrets: Nitika Sanger (FRC Health Science), Anita Acai (Senator Science), Alexander Qian (FRC Health Science), Curran Egan (FRC Humanities), Ashley Ravenscroft (DoO), Sara Oikawa (FRC Science), Kara Tsang (GSA CRO), Tsz Wing Cheng (FRC International), Derek Stouth (FRC Science)

Absent: Sid Nath (Senator Health Science), Mariam Munawar (Senator Business), Nick Yelle (FRC Health Science), Taylor Mackenzie (Senator Social Science), Allison Leange (FRC Social Science),

Call to order 6:13

1. Presidents Remarks

- Tim explained that today's meeting is mainly dealing with the motions of the AGM agenda since the AGM didn't meet quorum. However, election results will not be ratified in this meeting.

Motion to accept the agenda of the meeting moved by Alex, seconded by Sam, all in favour, motion carried.

Motion to accept the minutes of the AGM of the GSA for April 11th 2017 moved by Sam seconded by Alex, 7 in favor, 1 abstention, motion carried.

2. Call for nomination

- Tim mentioned that the GSA received 1 application for community member and 2 applications for internal directors, the applications with short bio were provided on the GSA website.

- Jodie explained that the main reason she applied for internal director, is that she has experience within the GSA, and she believes she can add this experience through her role to the internal director position.
- In replying to Aaron's question, Tim explained that the directors are financially liable as they are the ones who make financially related decision. Therefore, people in that position should have a skill that would be an asset in the position and make well-informed decisions.

Motion to ratify the three nominees David Moore, Avijit Mallick, Jodie Lobana moved by Alex, seconded by Rodrigo, 7 in favour, 1 abstention, motion carried.

Audited financial statements

- Tim mentioned that the audit report provided by KPMG needs to be approved, there are some adjusting entries, which are noted; however, we have taken measures to change how certain things are done within the books and try to avoid them in the future.

Motion to approve the Auditor's report for 2017 fiscal year moved by Alex, seconded by Simon, all in favour, motion carried.

Reappointment of auditor

- Tim explained that KPMG is offering a very competitive price for their standards compared to the other offers received from differed companies. Jodie added that the decision was made to continue with KPMG also weighed heavily on the fact that the GSA changed the accountants this year, and it will take him sometime for the new bookkeeping firm to get familiar with the books, so it is wise to continue with KPMG for another year, however, the decision for changing the auditing firm will be discussed in future meetings.

Motion to approve KPMG as the auditors for 2018 fiscal year and to approve the auditor's fees for the Graduate Students Association of McMaster University for the year ending May 31st 2018. The quote for the fee range is from \$13,500 to \$14,500 (exclusive of HST) and support charges of 5%, if applicable. Moved by Aaron seconded by Alex, all in favour. motion carried.

Approval of the GSA budget 2018-2019

- Tim mentioned that the main comments during the AGM was regarding the drop in sponsorship from 7.5k to 6k, he added if members are comfortable to increase this budget line, the money can be taken from the surplus. The GSA received very few request for sponsorship till Jan.; however, during the past few months their applications for sponsorship that have been received.
- In replying to Sam's question, Tim explained that the FRC fund is in another line for FRC's and for events related to their faculty; however, sponsorship funds go

out to any grad students hosting events, (original receipted, and in some cases EHOSS approval is requested)

- In replying to Xiaomin question regarding International Students Welcome Committee, Tim replied that the details for this committee is still under discussion, the plan is during the last 2 weeks of August, were most of the international students arrive during that time the GSA can send a volunteer present at Pearson Airport, in addition, he is thinking to sponsor the Go bus ticket as a way to welcome them. Currently this just the plan in place, they can have an international student committee for this type of discussion.
- In Replying to Simon question regarding Promotional expense, Tim replied that that the stamps stickers weren't planned for last year budget.

Motion to approve the budget for fiscal 2018/2019 moved by Sam seconded by Alex, motion carried.

Phoenix budget

- Tim suggested that for next year since the Phoenix is a private entity, the Council approval for the Phoenix budget isn't necessary. Sam explained that the Phoenix still owned by the GSA, so it's under the GSA council umbrella, he recommended that council should still have the authorities to approve the Phoenix budget. Tim explained that the board members who voted for the approval for the budget are held liable, however, council motion to approve it will not hold council member liable, from this point, he explained that it's not necessary for council to approve the budget. Rodrigo added that there is a similar situation at the MSU, and they allow their council to approve the budget. The Phoenix is incorporated and a separate entity, nonetheless, owned by the GSA, he recommended that the council continue to vote on the Phoenix budget. Tim added that this point can be furtherly discussed in future meetings.
- Tim mentioned that the Phoenix is in healthy profit, the budget is extremely conservative, in such they are allocating the expenses very carefully. In replying to Sam's question, Tim mentioned that the GSA receives a portion of the Phoenix profit.
- In replying to Sam's question, Tim explained that the actuals from Jun to Dec are represented in the P&L
- Entertainment meals and travel, that line item is no longer used, it used to have free parking and meals for the Phoenix GM, but this is no longer offered.
- Rodrigo highlighted that every department at McMaster is paying into the waste disposal initiatives, he suggested to account for some amount in the Phoenix budget, Tim explained that this point was discussed in previous council meetings, the waste disposal is zero this year, however, for next year it will be little higher.
- In replying to Rodrigo's question, Tim explained that the net income money goes to the Phoenix and the board choose how the money will be allocated. The phoenix still owes the GSA approx. of \$50,000 of inter company loan, this amount shall be paid at first then the rest be allocated to operation of the Phoenix. The Phoenix can operate with 200k in the bank, any amount above that number,

the board can make the decision to allocate it where needed. In replying to Rodrigo's question, Tim explained that in the past the Phoenix never made its target. And what about the Capital loan Amount. Tim noted once the loan is paid off then we can start talking about where this money will be allocated to. The GSA doesn't have a proper deferred capital build amount set up, this need to be accounted for, and the initial surplus will be on that account, e.g., if a roof need replace we have money to do replace it.

Motion to approve the Phoenix budget moved by Aaron seconded by Sam, all in favour. motion carried.

Fee schedule

- Tim explained that there is no real change in the proposed fees compared to last years, the only change is by CPI 1.7% to keep up with the inflation, otherwise, everything else is the same.
- Tim noted that the capital building fee will be paid off this year, the board decided not to change the fee since it is hard to levy a new fee, and since there is a few big ticket projects that need funding that doesn't really have to come from the GSA budget. Jodie added that in the future this fee will help in the Phoenix maintenance. Tim explained that phoenix will be self funding for maintenance, he doesn't recommend to levy a fee from grad students to pay for the Phoenix maintenance, however, this will be discussed further in future meetings. Rodrigo suggested to keep the fee to save some money and get a new space.
- In answering Aaron's question, Tim explained that the referendum question has been reviewed and it doesn't seem that the levy was for a specific building, nothing mentions when the fee expires, so it can continue. We will investigate this further.
- In replying to Sam's question, Tim explained that the GSA potentially will pay for levy in advance of the fees to save interest until we get the fees from the school. He assumes next year by Feb, this fee will be paid off.
- Jodie suggested that by the next AGM, the GSA can ask students what they want to do with this fee.
- In replying to Sam question, Tim mentioned that levying this fee doesn't necessary mean it will go to the building. Rodrigo suggested to check the agreement, as it might make it restricted to the capital buildings, the GSA have to be specific on the wording and try to dig in historical archiving, if it is before 1980 it is properly restricted, and might need to do a new referendum. Tim mentioned that this was already looked into, however, Ashley can double check this.

Motion to accept the fee schedule 2018/2019 moved by Shawn, seconded by Sam, all in favor. motion carried.

FRC update - Engineering:

Sam mentioned the following:

- They are currently re-hauling constitution and by-laws
 - o Aim is to clearly define roles and elections procedures
- Travel awards
 - o Applications are due April 6th
 - o Rejuvenating the rubrics
- METRIC 2018 planning is underway
 - o Booked for Thursday, August 23rd at MIP
- EGS will soon have an office and boardroom
 - o Located just beside the JHE coffee shop
 - o Will have office hours and campus resources on-site
- EGS now has representation from each department.

Senate- Humanities:

Aaron mentioned the following:

- In his opening remarks Dr. Patrick Deane (Chair) noted that the Federal budget had been released. The budget includes \$1.22 billion over the next five years in funding to the federal research councils. It also included a statement that post-secondary educational institutions not enacting ‘best practices’ regarding sexual violence on campus may have their federal funding withdrawn.
- The agreement between McMaster University and the McMaster Divinity College jointly administer the Master of Divinity and Master of Theological Studies degree programs is now defunct. They had an external review done, and they came to the conclusion based on shape and structure of programs, that they don’t fit the requirement that SGS maintain for the graduate programs.
- In replying to Tim’s question Aaron explained that they didn’t meet the criteria in the icap review.

3. New Business

4. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:02 moved by Sam, second by Simon, all in favour, motion carried.

Action Item:

Item	Action by	Due date
Referendum Question on the Capital building fee	Tim and Ashley	ASAP

Shawn Hercules,
VP External

Date

Recorder

Date