# Student Union Representative Council Minutes Monday, September 11th, 2017

***Call to order 6:07PM***

**Roll Call**

Present: Jessica Fullerton, Melissa Grant, Emma Crilly, Amy Bobyn, Sasha Paul, Kashya Young, Tanaka Chikwavaire, Pheerawich Chitnelawong, Tiffany MacLennan, Zakariya Chatur, Rebecca Mesay, Annie Sirois, Patrick Panet-Raymond, William Gatchell, Sean Hopkins, Dr. Marcia English

Absent with regrets: Alex Corrigan, Sydney Pagan

Late: Bry Crabbe

Patrick Panet-Raymond moves to approve the agenda, Emma Crilly is the seconder. (9-0-0 Motion Passes)

Bry Crabbe joins council.

**Opening Remarks**

Welcome back, I’m happy to have you back on campus. I’m looking forward to working with you and for training with the councilors.

Acknowledgement of Mi’kmaq Territory

**Constituency Reports**

Equity Student Representative (Sasha Paul): Attended the permanent M’ikmaq flag raising on campus. Very exciting time as it shows the reconciliation between M’ikmaq and Canadians. Attended the LGBTQ BBQ and got to learn a lot of great things.

African Descent Student Representative (Tanaka Chikwavaire): Notice of hurricane Irma, many students of the constituency may have been affected. Jacqueline De Leebeck contacted students who may have been affected, as well Tanaka reached out these constituency members. Sat on the hiring panel for the Students of African Descent Advisor - hopefully they will be hired in October.

Aboriginal Student Representative (Kashya Young): Was the Master of Ceremony for the the mi’Kmaq flag raising. Truly a day in history, and was very proud to be a part of it.

International Student Representative (Pheerawich Chitnelawong): Approximately 80 international students, which is less than last year. However, there is more diversity within the group of international students this year. Notices new International Student advisor this year. Orientation week gets better and better each year, helped students to transition into residents and activities. This orientation week aimed to get students involved in Canadian culture. Worked with the International Student Society to host more events.

Education Student Representative (Melissa Grant): Education orientation week happened; a team building day happened, societies night, LGBTQ BBQ, had their own BBQ - big success overall.

Graduate Student Representative (Bry Crabbe): Not much to report. In the midst of organizing a fall orientation day. Went to many events for frosh week.

Business Student Representative (Emma Crilly): Reached out via Facebook to reach the constituency as their councillor. Invited many to the faculty social and there was a good turn out. Meeting with Brad Long about the advisory board to talk about the direction for the year. Talked to SBS Ryan Finn and how to build collaborative events. Talked at academic Day.

Science Student Representative (Amy Bobyn): Hectic Week. Reached out to presidents of the various science societies and many of which came to the faculty social to talk to potential students. Participated O-Crew and got to talk to many students about their academics during this time.

**Executive Reports:**

President (Annie Sirois): Thank you for coming out, welcome to the new faculty advisor. SO much work has happened for orientation week and thank you to Sean for all of the work. Also to everyone else involved, it is a collaborative event. Have been spending a lot of time speech writing for many events. Annual Plan - revisiting the 3 year strategic plan. However, also recreating the annual plan. Will open this up for about a month to students to determine the direction of the U for the year. This will be open during the AGM, students will be able to put in their input. X-Ring Eligibility came out today. If there are any concerns, please reach out to Annie so that their eligibility - **82 Days until X-Ring!**

Q: Is there an appeal process for students who were not eligible for their X-Ring?

A: There is not currently an appeal process. The eligibility is determined in the summer and prior to the forms actually going out. If students are currently ineligible, they will likely still be ineligible during this convocation. The X-Ring Committee will continue to look into this.

Vice President Academic (Patrick Panet-Raymond): Welcome back! Attended M’ikmaq flag raising. Attended International and LGBTQ BBQ. Faculty Social happened recently, had a lot of positive feedback and equal constructive feedback. Sat with Senate Steering Committee for the Senate meeting orientation. The first Senate meeting will happened on October 2nd at 3:45pm.

Vice President Finance and Operations (William Gatchell): Welcome everyone! Busy last week, helped out with many events. Good job to Sean and all other participants. Round of applause.

Faculty Social had a good turn out and students were very engaged. Was able to give own experiences and input to the incoming business students. Many questions towards opting out of the Health and Dental Plan. Students can opt out until Tuesday night because of unclear messaging and problems within the system. Met with Student Group about council initiatives fund, hopefully this will be in an upcoming meeting. Heard many great things about the Mi’Kmaq flag raising but was unable to attend. LGBTQ bbq was great, happy to see a panel for students to be involved with. Met with all four sub-executives and introduced them to their positions.

Vice President Activities and Events (Sean Hopkins): Welcome back everyone, feel free to ask questions about what was written in executive report. Last week was orientation week. Heard a lot of positive feedback. There was concerns at the beginning because of the diversity of programming being offered however many people seemed to enjoy it. Commends team for all of their help throughout the week. Weekly ERC meetings have begun and have been busy already. In the midst of planning Smart StFX and XTalks which will be happening throughout the year.

Vice President Residence Affairs (Rebecca Mesay): Hectic few weeks. Training for house presidents and vice presidents started on August 24th and the training was integrated with ResLife. Received positive feedback about this years training by many. Commends Sean for equity with orientation week, it showed a more equitable campus than previous years. Met the Coady Chair of Social Justice. Many meetings have happened over the last few weeks with sub executives, the HP/VPs, also with Jaqueline De Leebeck, Shannon Travers and the REC Kerri Arthurs. There has been a big turnover in terms of the RLC team. Currently debriefing the last few weeks including training.

Vice President External Affairs (Zakaryia Chataur): CASA (federal lobbying organization) and StudentsNS (provincial lobbying organization) have both been quiet due to orientation weeks. Looking for another Student to sit on StudentsNS on behalf of StFX as Annie is the chair this year and cannot be a voting member. Meeting with Sean Day to get more information with Campus Planning. Feel free to ask questions about report.

**Faculty Representative Remarks** (Marcia English)

Welcome. No remarks. Happy to be a part of the team and is learning about the U as well. Happy to see students in the leadership roles within the university and is looking forward to what will be accomplished!

**Student Union General Manager Remarks** (Sean Ryan)

Not much to add. Thank you to everyone who helped out with Orientation week; it’s great to see the Students’ Union getting involved with O-Week! Health Plan opt out is open for 2 more days. Looking forward to seeing many committees start up. If you need help or have questions throughout the year, office is downstairs behind the info desk and happy to meet with anyone at any time.

**Committee Reports**

By-Law and Policy: Met over the summer. Tried to pass the new policies for the Student Union, some were passed and some are to be discussed. For example, the equity policy is new this year and needs more revision before coming to council.

Pre-Strategic Planning Committee: Happening because it is a year to make a strategic plan.The president of the SU, Chair of SU, GM of SU met to discuss the previous strategic plan. Proposing to all students a survey to talk about services. The survey outlook is made and are just waiting to get it to university administration. The information collected will be shared with everyone around the council table.

**Special Reports to Council**

*William Gatchell/Julieanne Mattie: Review of health and Dental Plan*

William: This is a review of the health and dental plan. Will go through the current plan, a proposed solution, RFP process, timeline, summary, questions and motion.

Currently a part of Campus Trust. StFX SU runs with Campus Trust under a self-funded model. The money generated will go DIRECTLY to the claims. The goal is to break even therefore the money going in is also going out. There are 13 students’ unions across Canada in the campus trust. Each school runs each plan individually even though they are a part of one group. Cooperative model that has people to buy providers to get the lowest possible price. Campus trust happens within the schools but uses a different organization (PBAS) to manage the plan, solicit new providers and pay out claims. They are the people who actually administer the plans. Here we work with eligibility and enrolment, PBAS looks after actually paying out claims.

Benefits and Challenges to the current plan

Benefits:

- Flexible, individually tailored plans

- Pooled plan allowing for maximized coverage and reduces risk. Allows us to access benefits that we may not have been able to otherwise.

- Support network with other Campus Trust schools. Is a committee that meets.

Challenges:

- Rate increases

- Recommended by PBAS to insured model

- Haven’t gone to tender on its own for these services since joining Campus Trust.

Proposition: Move to issue RFP (Request for Proposal) which means that we (as the SU) will send proposals to external companies and they will come back to us with offers they think will suit us (StFX University Students) in the best way possible.

Why? Health and Dental uses over 600k of our budget a year and deserves our attention. The Students’ Union wants to give students the best care and coverage as possible. Since we joined 11 years ago, the market has changed and so have our needs.

Q (Marcia): What do students have to pay for Health and Dental?

A: Health Plan: $220 includes prescription, counselling, emergency tutorials, eye ware, travel insurance.

Q (Kaysha): Do students pay up front of this?

A: It is charged to your student account.

This is going to be a lengthy process so we want to hire a third party organization with money allocated from the SU budget. We have a quote from Grant Johnston, the approximate cost was $23,000 and was broken down into phases allowing us to see what the SU needed help with and what did not need help. The SU does need all of their services and therefore need only approximately $13,000 for the services that we would need.

RFP is only as good as how it is presented. We need to be able to provide the feedback and have a fair judgement of what is being presented to us. A third party would add complete transparency and add additional expertise and would free up many hours for Annie, Will, Julianne and Sean.

Asking for adjustments. Cancellation of the Ohlala app opened $7000 in the SU budget. As well within the Capital Investment $6000 would be taken away form 15000. A portion of this money was intended to help CFXU, however the project was deemed too large. The SU will still be helping CFXU.

Our members from PBAS will be here on Wednesday to discuss how we plan on moving along

Timeline: September: Presentation of Motion to Council for Budget re-allocation for RFP expenses. October: working with Grant Johnston to create RFP requirements and creating the details of the plans. Nov/Dec: Allowing proposals for submission to StFX. January: looking over applicants. Late January-Early February: Will meet with many of the potential providers and selecting one and contacting whom we select. March: Begin working for the 2018/19 year.

Summary: Moving to an RFP and our H&D plan would like the Council support in amending the budget to hire Grant Thornton as a third party consultant. Allowing for continual transparent, uniform structure

Sean Ryan: Once you move into an RFP, you are legally engaged to followed it through which is why we want to hire a third party. We have RFP’d every other service that we use that is external to the SU. It is tricky with this one because of how expensive it is, because it is approximately 1/3 of the SU annual budget.

Annie Sirois: Benefit of third party, increases transparency and also allows for the third party to come back to us with the best option.

Q (Kayasha): What is an RFP?

A: Allowing others to submit proposals to us. Essentially saying: This is what we need, who can provide it. It needs to be a transparent and fair process when we are working with companies to do RFPs.

We have worked with Grant Johnston before and are familiar with their process. They have experts who can clearly see what we are/are not looking for. It is not just about price but about the quality to the students. They will go through the submissions and talk about who is or isn’t the best people to go through for our Health and Dental committee. There may be something out there that we have not heard of as an organization and could be the best plan for our students. We could have the best plan, however, there are ones that could be better.

Q (EMMA): Does Grant Johnston go back and look at what StFX Students use most?

A: Yes. We will be sending them our claim history for the past approximately 5 years so that they can send out exactly what we need. They will also look at things like if they have sued a students union or vice versa. Look also towards ethical investments. Not all about the money but there is a lot of other elements which is why we need a third party.

Q (TANAKA): Will this have an affect on students this year?

A: No. This will be happening for September 2018. However, we don’t know what the change would be. This would also cover international student health plan. All three plans will go as one. This would be an admen tend to the budget, meaning no new money is being spent but is being redistributed from other sections of the budget because last year it was not taken into consideration after last year but since the summer it was determined that it was necessary.

End of first special presentation.

*Alternative Vote on behalf of Annie Sirois*

Preface: was approved by council in the summer (June 16th) on the condition that it was re-looked at before the first election.

Pilot Project

Alternative Vote, sometimes known as ranked ballot. Where each voter RANKS the candidates. Students are not obligated to rank ALL members. Ballots can still be spoiled.

Why? It’s in an effort to show that students are getting in on the MAJORITY vote. Ensures that however wins will actually receive 50% of the vote. This would not work if only one or two people would be winning. But would work for higher groups. This would continue until someone reaches 50%.

Measurables: We will be able to know if the system was successful if there is an increase in students running as students may feel like they have a larger voice on the impact on who is elected into the positions. Candidates are elected with the majority of the constituents.

Pre-election: the union will exercise a media campaign to inform students of the pilot project. Benefit because many first year students may never have voted. Older students may not be as receptive but we are working to ensure that all students understand what the ranked ballot system is and why it’s being taken into consideration for the SU.

Post-election: the union will conduct and review a feedback survey and present the findings to council. This is a pilot project not an amendment to the by-laws because we don’t know if it will work yet.

Summary: Not looking to change anything except for how votes are made and counted. Pilot Project is for First Year and Arts ONLY; if successful, amendments to the by-laws will be brought to council. Overall goals: more candidates running for elected positions and students feeling like they have a larger voice when it comes to who is representing them.

The by-laws for the Pilot Project were reviewed at this time.

Q: What are the chances that someone with the lowest amount of votes happens to win?

A: Very slim but its better to be prepared for this situation which is why it is addressed in the by-laws.

Q: Is there a scoring system? Would you get a point for a first place?

A: No, It’s one vote for one. The amount of votes will never change but will be redistributed to other students.

Comments regarding section 3.4.1

Emma: Taking the person with the fewest number of votes would be better than taking off two people.

Q: Is this the first round or the second round?

A: Any Round

Zak: I think we need both of them. If it was the first would, we would both be knocked out and in the second round, the second option would be looked at.

Q: In the case of three people, would you not want to go to the second option rather than knocking two people out?

No answer was provided at this time.

Q: Would this have to be written into the computer program?

A: Yes. The computer will do this math for us.

We have been using FPP because it is the easiest mode of voting to understand. We are using a more difficult voting system but we will be teaching students about what they need to know. Just because it’s hard, isn’t a reason that we shouldn’t do it. However, this is the first time that we will be using a voter software.

Q: Should a time zone be added to the by-law?

A: A time zone has not been indicated within the rest of the Students Union by-laws.

Q: In terms of the three candidates situation, wouldn’t the second clause cover that situation?

A: The issue that Emma is foreseeing is that getting rid of two people, automatically makes the first person have 100% of the votes.

This is a pilot project and with the additions made above, it is good.

End of Special Presentation

*Students at Large Application*

Annie: Campaign promise was to have students at large on each constituency. Want to put students at large so that all ideas were taken into consideration.

In reference to form outline projected for council: this is not an amendment to the by-laws however an overview of what the form will look like.

Q: What do you mean that the demographic is visible/non-visible?

A: Visible references to age, race, ethnicity and non-visible relates to sexual orientation, etc.

Q: How many applications will be allowed?

A: As many applicants as possible, however aiming for two students at large on each committee.

Q: Did you mention what happens after the submission of the forms?

A: It would be selected by the chairs of the committees.

End of Special Presentation

**Business Arising**

Annie Sirois moves approve the suggested by-laws for the pilot project, alternative vote. This motion is seconded by Emma Crilly.

Q: Is what was on the screen finalized?

A: It was finalized. However, it is only finalized for this election and can be revisited.

Bry calls the motion to question. Seconded by Emma. (10-0-0 Motion passes).

Tanaka moved to have council endorse Student at Large committee applications. Seconded by Emma.

Tanaka: Thinks it’s a great thing and would like to see it implemented.

Pheerawich: Gives the Students’ Union more perspective to work with to ensure inclusivity.

Bry calls to question. Seconded by Patrick. (10-0-0 Motion passes).

**Old Business**

None.

**New Business**

*Ratification of the MacDonald House President*

Tanaka moves to ratify Jonah Williams as the MacDonald House President. Seconded by Annie Sirois.

Tanaka yields time to Rebecca: Vote for Jonah during hiring was unanimous. Jonah had strong characteristics and wanted to build community and enforce positive rivalry. Was easy to speak to equity and was impressive.

Annie: Jonah has been doing a great job as incoming house president during orientation week.

Bry calls to question (10-0-0 Motion passes).

*Health and Dental Plan Motion*

Melissa moves to reallocate funds within the current budget to provide funding for hiring a third party consultant to assist with our tender for the Health and Dental Plan and International Plan later this year. Seconded by Emma Crilly.

Emma: sounds like a great idea to the StFX community as a whole.

Pheerawich: It’s another option to change what we’ve had fro a long time. We have to try something new. There does not look like there is a bad outcome that could happen.

Annie calls to question (10-0-0 Motion passes).

*Activities Policy*

Activities Policy was read by Chair.

Any one that requests on their ERC if they want non-stfx students to come, will be vetted by the ERC. Students will be signed into the events just like the inn. Section 2.2 ensures that there are events provided to students that are not based around substance use.

Changes were made to grammar throughout the policy and deemed friendly.

Q: Question around the wording of condemn?

A: There is no measurable consequence by the students union. It is simply showing the Students’ Union stance on violations of the equity policy.

Q: What happens if students feel as if events are inequitable?

A: Important to note that this is stance based policy.

Emma moves to approve the activities policy as presented. Seconded by Patrick.

Emma: Looks like a good policy to put in place by the U.

Bry calls to question. Seconded by Tanaka. (10-0-0 Motion passes).

**Closing Remarks of the Chair**

Thank you all for coming to this council meeting. Congratulations to those for their first council meeting. Welcome to the new faculty advisor and also to the two new positions on council.

**Adjournment**

Emma moves to adjourn meeting. Seconded by Bry. (10-0-0 motion passes).

***Meeting adjourned at 8:13PM.***