

LSS Meeting Minutes – November 20, 2018

Attendance

Laura Edwards	President	X	Julia Genovese	2L Career Options Rep	X
Leyla Salmi	VP Student Affairs	X	Jeeti Bhupal	2L Articling Rep	X
Fabio McLeod	VP Communications		Maeve O'Neill Sanger	Co-Op Rep	X
Kurtas Welch	VP Finance	X	Emily Beggs	Social Coordinator	X
Afsana Allidina	General Secretary	X	Craig McCue	Social Coordinator	X
Marissa Di Lorenzo	Sports and Clubs Rep	X	Mark Finnbogason	Health & Wellness Rep	X
Suzy Flader	Equity and Diversity Rep		Maddie Lusk	1L Rep	X
Maleika Jeewanjee	3L Rep	X	Brendan Noyes	1L Rep	X
Lola Churchman	3L Rep	X	Carolyn Belleau	1L ILSA Rep	
Steve Faryna	ILSA Rep	X	Laura Floyd	Accessibility Rep	X

Absent:

- Suzy Flader (proxy – Laura Edwards)
- Fabio McLeod (proxy – Leyla Salmi)
- Carolyn Belleau (proxy – ?)

I. Call to Order & Acknowledgment

- **Laura:** motion to approve last week's minutes
 - o **Kurt:** seconded
 - o All in favour
- **Laura:** Some thank you's to share
 - o Thank you to social coordinators for successful potluck and rock climbing
 - o 3L reps have put in a lot of work with clothing sales, so great job
- **Laura:** Speakers will be given 2 minutes max to talk; please wait for Laura to call on you
 - o Will prioritize people who haven't had a chance to speak
 - o Please be mindful of your conduct and be respectful
 - o Don't interrupt other people when speaking
- **Leyla:** thanks to everyone for being here, sorry it has been so difficult past couple weeks
 - o Knows that each person cares and that's why you're here
 - o Wants to apologize for not acknowledging hard work people have been doing on the ground (i.e. potluck, clothing sales) – so thank you for this

II. Budget presentation and approval (continued from last week)

- **Leyla:** we've had a lot of changes to deal with this year, so we should anticipate challenges
 - o Thanks to everyone for their patience and balancing this with school/personal life
 - o Hope that we can move on with our roles after this meeting and issue
- **Leyla:** had a phone call with last year's VPSA for clarification about discussions last year
 - o Providing everyone here with hard copies of minutes from last year
 - Nov. 28/17: a motion was passed to provide \$2500 for reorientation events
 - Jan 16/18: breakdown for winter welcome update – total spending was \$4741
 - Money was raised in ticket sales to mitigate costs, but winter welcome went over budget by ~\$400 because there were lower than expected ticket sales
 - Jan 23/18: motion to allot ~\$400 more to top up deficit from winter welcome
 - Dialogue about this money coming from orientation
 - Last year's VPSA said that there was a conversation about the fact that going forward, money raised from orientation should be for LSS overall, not limited to just orientation
 - o Most does get used in first 2 weeks of orientation
 - o This is the only time that LSS gets funding from big firms at the beginning of the year, and it would be unfair to narrowly interpret it to just go to orientation
 - o Orientation packages say that money should be rolled over into LSS budget afterwards, which has happened in the past
 - o Comments from last year's AGM and changes made:
 - Every student pays \$170 in membership fees:
 - \$160 → LCO
 - \$1 → student aid budget
 - \$4.50 → ILSA
 - \$4.50 → LSS
 - Voting for this change @ AGM was all in favour, with 2 abstentions
 - Will and Ian (last year's President and VPSA) sat with Laura and Leyla, and acknowledged that there would be challenges they would have to address in the future around this new structure
- **Laura:** funding change is a positive thing
 - o ILSA is parallel to LSS, and encourages cooperation between both groups
 - o Reflects our commitment to work with ILSA and develop responses to TRC
 - o Not a burden on LSS at all; be mindful to not discuss it this way
- **Laura:** all directors, per our bylaws and Societies Act, have a duty to act in the best interests of the society, and in the best interests of the student body
 - o We are working as a team to make decisions for the good for everyone
 - Shouldn't be animosity or sides

- We all want the best for the student body, and we're mandated to provide this
- **Laura:** VP Finance is responsible for setting LSS budget every year, which he then sends to board for approval, and we vote on it
 - Typically, there would not be so much discussion around this
 - Kurt has done a good job accommodating all talking points into the discussion
 - 1L reps don't have the authority in the bylaws to bind future board allocations of the budget
 - Leyla and Laura did an extensive search for any contracts that may exist, and there are none – there's no mention of winter welcome or reorientation
 - Funds raised for orientation are donations for LSS
 - In the past, any funds that aren't used for orientation become part of LSS budget
 - This was discussed at length with last year's LSS
 - LSS is not permitted to budget for a deficit (s. 88 of the bylaws)
 - We are budgeting for deficit of \$1500, so we do end up having a surplus, but we have to be very careful of this
 - Many things in budget are projections, so surplus is there just in case
 - If we keep dipping into the surplus, that could hurt future years because they might not be able to provide services we can now
- **Laura:** since we voted last meeting that there would be a \$4000 allocation to Winter Welcome, Kurt has made necessary cuts in the budget to accommodate this
 - Completely cutting 1L community conference, coffee locker, food for AGM, funding for year end events, \$600~ from sports (intramurals)
- **Laura:** regarding discussion about personal reputations...
 - As per bylaws, Laura is official representative for LSS, so the use of our budget reflects directly on her
 - She's personally not comfortable having a budget that sets aside \$4000 for one event and results in big cuts to other parts of the budget
 - She believes that the proposed budget is not in best interests of the student body
 - She ran for president on platform of accessibility and inclusivity
 - Heard from many students that large parties are not inclusive of entire student body
 - Why we can't use funds more responsibly and accommodate other people?
 - Reorientation/Winter Welcome hasn't happened every year
 - Happened the past 2 years, but in some years prior, it wasn't held if there was no budget
 - Last year, they allocated \$2500 to it originally because they thought they had a very large surplus
 - We can be very creative with Winter Welcome week
 - 1L reps have really good ideas about a spirit week
 - We can do great things with less money to includes full student body
 - In the spirit of being more open, we can allocate time at next week's meeting to brainstorm more ideas
 - Leyla, Kurt and herself have put in countless hours towards this budget
 - Would appreciate recognition that they do know what they're talking about in what the society can spend
 - Concerned about amount of pushback; feels dismissive of their roles

- Shows that people place little trust on their ability to run the society
- If last week's vote to allocate \$4000 for Winter Welcome means that this is the priority, then other cuts will have to be made
 - Many people have said they aren't comfortable with these new cuts
 - Doesn't think proposed budget reflects best interests of the society
- 2 choices:
 - Either fund Winter Welcome with \$4000 to detriment of other services, or fund otherwise and not as many cuts
- Motion: move the proposed budget, with the following amendments, to set the Winter Welcome to \$2000, set sports budget back to normal with \$600, putting coffee locker back, bringing year end events back to \$200, returning LSS awards to \$100, outline raffle to \$80, and bringing community conference back to \$1000
 - Adding \$100.30 to social coordinators for what has already been spent
 - **Kurt**: seconded

Discussion

- **Marissa**: how was \$636 cut calculated?
 - **Laura**: it was just taken to get to a better deficit
 - **Kurt**: the number wasn't chosen with specifics of what would be cut, it was just a large number that could be cut, since there aren't a lot of large numbers in the budget
 - It brought the budget to an acceptable range
- **Maleika**: didn't we vote last week to take the money from the surplus? How did we go from that point, to dismissing this today?
 - **Laura**: motion was to allocate \$4000 to winter welcome
 - **Maleika**: thought she was voting to allocate a certain amount from the surplus specifically
- **Emily**: wants to go back to original September budget and allocate everything as was originally one, with a larger surplus
- **Mark**: he is fine with pulling funding for coffee locker, but he has already incurred small expenses for it and was going to submit them at the end
- **Leyla**: understood the motion from last week to be raising the Winter Welcome budget to \$4000, rather than taking it from the surplus
 - **Jeeti**: doesn't remember voting last week on where the money would come from, just that we wanted the winter welcome budget to be \$4000
 - Would like to suggest an amendment to Laura's original motion, that instead of making the proposed cuts, we make the winter welcome budget \$3000 by taking the \$1000 from the community conference
 - This is because, while the 1Ls put on the community conference, it is meant to educate the public, so the funds are not being used for the benefit of the student body
- **Lola**: do we have to cut the deficit because we're anticipating less income this year? Or because money was lost last year?
 - **Laura**: anticipating less income is part of it, but it also has to do with changes and money given to ILSA

- **Laura F:** costs have been going up, and income is staying the same or decreasing
 - It's not just one thing
 - **Laura:** funding structures changed, and there was a \$4000 expense from orientation that wasn't captured in budget originally
- **Afsana:** from the last meeting, she remembers voting that the \$4000 allocation for Winter Welcome was not specifically stated from the surplus
 - Also, tries to write down exactly what is said from meeting, where her minutes didn't say "from the surplus"
 - Vote at the end was very rushed and confusing
- **Maddie:** hesitant to touch funding for community conference
 - 1L class is keen, especially because there have been opportunities that people haven't had access to, like PBSC
 - Community conference is a great way for people to get involved
 - 1L reps don't think that having the biggest budget correspond to a bigger party
 - Should be being able to have a party and then other things
 - Less funding means less of other events that also require funding
 - Brendan and Maddie don't want anyone to suffer for this, and feel very guilty asking for funding that was promised to them when they first started in the role
- **Julia:** did not purposefully give misinformation to the board, nor did she lie
 - Stands by everything she presented to the board
 - Contracts were given to firms, she didn't claim that they specifically mentioned winter welcome
 - She had discussions with last year's 1L rep, Debbie, who confirmed that orientation sponsorship has been set aside for winter welcome and is part of orientation traditionally
 - Although she has no say in what winter welcome is this year, it doesn't necessarily have to be a party
 - **Laura:** Debbie was at meetings last year where they talked about where orientation funds go
- **Jeeti:** positive that Julia didn't have intent of misrepresenting, and that Julia believes what she was saying
 - Instead of getting rid of community conference, can we take \$500 from surplus and \$500 from community conference to make \$3000 total winter welcome budget, and \$500 total community conference budget, with no further cuts to anything else
- **Laura:** community conference has been done with less money before
- **Maeve:** community conference was a really good way for students to be involved
 - Can be done with flexible budget
 - Last year's money was mainly spent on food and transportation
- **Maddie:** doesn't know how much community conference costs, but doesn't want it cut entirely
- **Maleika:** respectfully acknowledges the work Laura/Leyla/Kurt have done on the budget, but feels there is pushback on people who are against their position
 - Although Laura stated earlier she is the face of the LSS, it is important to keep in mind that Julia was liaising one on one with firms as well, so her personal reputation should also be a consideration in this situation

- Feels there has been some hostility towards board members who are trying to oppose this
- Can sympathize because it is similar to Grad event, except that money has already been raised for that
 - LSS has previously bailed out grad when there have been issues
 - If money was taken from them when it was fundraised for it, she would not appreciate that
- **Afsana:** remembers from last year that community conference budget was a lot more than needed
- **Kurt:** for coffee locker expenses, Mark's budget still has \$300, so money he already spent will be covered
 - Understands desire for community conference, and he likes Jeeti's compromise for \$500 towards it
 - Also possibility for fundraising to bring more funds to the conference
 - He understands that there has been pushback when mentioning going into the deficit, but wants to clarify that it is not a point of pride
 - More a consideration for future law students and what they'll have to work with
 - If we have a planned \$5000 deficit this year, there will be no safety net and no fall back by the time JID students graduate
 - This is reckless, and deprives future law students
 - If we keep it small, future law students can use it
 - Trying to think longevity wise, to keep it going for a decade, rather than 4-5 years
- **Emily:** valid point for future generations, but to say it is reckless and we're going to drain this account, doesn't take in all of the factors that there were events we could not foresee
 - Sense that she gets is that we we're okay with using the surplus to address commitments we were not predicting
 - In the future we can address how we want to fundraise
 - Maybe make a fundraising team so that grad/1L/2L all fundraise together
 - One person should not be fundraising entirely for the LSS
 - If we want more knowledge on what was said to firms, we should have more involvement
- **Laura:** likes Jeeti's compromise
 - Would like to amend her original motion to put \$500 to community conference, \$3000 to winter welcome, and restore everything else suggested from her original motion (see top of page 4 for Laura's original motion)
 - **Jeeti:** seconded
- **Maeve:** is the deficit amount in the proposed budget arbitrary?
 - Should we have a vote on what deficit number we'd be comfortable with?
- **Laura:** because there are a lot of projections for funds in the budget, we don't know what they will be, so she is weary to agree on a deficit number
- **Maeve:** setting the amount of the deficit hasn't been very transparent
- **Laura:** VP Finance does set the budget
 - A lot of it comes from looking at future budgets and what VP Finance is comfortable with

- **Julia:** thinks that setting a deficit number is a good idea, because it avoids these discussions in the future
 - o **Laura:** it wouldn't avoid it for the future because we can't bind the future board on what to do with the budget
- **Laura:** Would be comfortable with Jeeti's proposal for Winter Welcome budget of \$3000
 - o If projections fall short, this might change
 - o Hesitant to give more
 - o Doesn't think it's a good idea to budget for a larger deficit and future LSS years have nothing to work with
- **Brendan:** can we clarify where the numbers are at?
 - o **Jeeti:** budget as set out from Laura's original motion (see top of page 4), but take \$500 from surplus and \$500 from community conference budget so winter welcome budget is \$3000 total and community conference budget is \$500 total
- **Emily:** would like to amend the motion to add \$26 to social coordinators budget for money already spent
 - o **Laura:** its already covered in Laura's original motion

Vote

- In favour: Emily, Steve, Leyla, Lola, Julia, Brendan, Maddie, Craig, Jeeti, Maeve, Marissa, Maleika, Mark, Afsana
- Opposition: Kurt
- Abstentions: Laura F
- Motion passes

Further Comments/Other Business

- **Jeeti:** grateful we can come to an agreement realistically, we're using the surplus exactly as intended in a difficult situation
- **Brendan:** regarding the previously discussed space in the lounge for mental health awareness;
 - o He has been approached by 1Ls about wanting improvements to lounge space and more of a wellness feeling in it to improve mental health of students
 - o Ex. Clearing up windows so we can see outside, adding plants and greenery, having a community space like in the library for drawing, etc.
 - o **Laura:** problem with moving things off windows is that birds fly through them
- **Mark:** Merissa, Laura F and Mark met to discuss Merissa's proposal about posting of student's experiences with mental health on a wall in law school
 - o Merissa has taken control and done a good job
 - o They've decided to meet with Yvonne Lawson, Gillian Calder and other people to get administration perspective and determine if it's something they should do
- **Maddie:** been privy to emails between people and been shocked by accusatory tone
 - o Think its best if we treat each other with respect, it's been awful for people
 - o Hoping we can right wrongs that have been happening, it's been horrifying coming to meetings
- **Laura F:** we are grown-ups and bound by rules

- All of us should be ensure when we come to meetings that we are prepared, have read rules we are supposed to be bound by, and know our facts
- Being prepared, knowing rules, and knowing the limits of our authority is respectful
- **Laura:** motion to adjourn
- **Kurt:** seconded