

Minutes of TGSA Board Meeting, 04/04/2016

Start: 4:10pm, End: 5:39pm

Location: Scott House 102.1, Trill College, Peterborough, ON

Chair: Laura Thursby

Scribe: David Hollands

Attendance: Laura Thursby, Alison Fraser, Cory Baldwin, Jane Affleck, Avinaash Persaud, Isaac Jianj (in place of Dorothea Hines), David Bak, Philip Abbott, L. Renee Hendricks, Theresa Treasure, Erin Laverty, Brent Whitford, Carolyn Reid, Bafumiki Mocheregwa -**Quorum Rep**

1. Motion to Call Meeting to Order: David Hollands

Second: L. Renee Hendricks

Approve: 12

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 1

2. Motion to Amend to Discuss New Bylaws First: Alison Fraser

Second: Cory Baldwin

Approve: 12

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 1

3. Motion to Approve the Agenda: David Hollands

Second: Alison Fraser

Approve: 12

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 1

4. Motion to Approve the Minutes from the March 23, 2016 Board Meeting, and Addenda to those Minutes: L. Renee Hendricks

Second: David Hollands

Approve: 12

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 1

5. Main Motions

5.1 Thesis Binding Fee (VP Finance) **TABLED TO NEXT BOARD MEETING******

Whereas the TGSA needs to revise its policy on Thesis Binding,

BIRT that the TGSA pursues one of the following options:

- i) Allocate more money from our budget to ensure we continue this program;
- ii) We modify our thesis binding policy (more detail in Justification);
- iii) We discontinue the program.

Justification:

A brief reminder of what our policy on this is (from VP Finance Transition Document):

As recommended by the 2013/2014 executive, the motion was brought to the membership, who agreed in favor to cover the cost of 1 thesis binding per graduating students. This line item isn't written into the constitution so it's up to the discretion of the TGSA (and general assembly) as to which budget it should be put in. However, since the College Budget is co-administered with Graduate Studies, it logically should be put into the College Budget. Currently the cost is \$30.00 per thesis. In future, this amount may need to be adjusted to reflect TGSA's budgetary constraints and rising costs. Invoices from Graduate Studies are charged against TGSA's internal account and such adjustments are reflected on TGSA's monthly statement.

Reviewing last year's invoices reveals that 68 thesis bindings were covered by the TGSA, at a unit cost of \$30.00 (68 x \$30.00 = \$2040). With 3 invoices remaining for this year, we have already covered the cost of 97 thesis bindings (\$2910). As of April 30th, 2015 the balance on our account was \$3618.45. As of January 31st, 2016 (memo Feb.22nd) our balance is \$698.45. In our budget, we had agreed to contribute \$1740 which was based on the incorrectly recorded expense for this line item. Even if we do not cover the cost of any more thesis bindings for the rest of this fiscal year, our contribution would leave \$2438.45 in our internal account -- an insufficient amount IF we have more than 81 thesis bindings next year. One solution would be to reallocate funds within our budget (eliminate Emergency Donations [\$1000/year], for example). Furthermore, an increase in our Levy Fee would additionally help to ensure that we are able to maintain this program. Another option would be to either decrease the amount of bindings, either by units (first come, first serve) or % covered per binding -- an option which I would be opposed to. Finally, there is the option that we discontinue the program altogether and instead departments or students cover the cost of binding fees.

Motion: David Bak

Second:

Approve:

Oppose:

Abstain:

5.2 Increase TGSA College Fee and Levy Fee

Whereas the TGSA Bylaw 8.01.1 states:

*Annual membership fees of full time graduate students are \$40.00 as a TGSA Levy Fee and \$52.60 as a College Fee, **subject to review and change by a subcommittee of the board from time to time,***

Whereas Bylaw 8.01.2 states:

Annual membership fees of part-time graduate students are \$20.00 as a TGSA Levy Fee and \$26.30 as a College Fee subject to review and change by a subcommittee of the board from time to time,

BIRT that an increase to the College and Levy Fees be discussed and agreed upon to be presented and voted upon by the General Membership at the upcoming referendum.

Justification:

The TGSA will continue to struggle meeting its current programs unless it secures external funding (CUPE, donations, etc.), or cuts current programs (Thesis-Binding, Conference & Group Support, etc.). Two other fee adjustments have been proposed for this upcoming referendum:

- i) ~\$75.00 decrease in Health Benefits Plan by joining with the TCSA
- ii) \$15.00 increase in the (Trail)College Fee

Holding all other non-tuition fees constant, graduate students will be paying ~\$60.00 less than last year. A small fee increase will help ensure that the TGSA will be able to maintain its programs that are under threat of being cut.

Motion: David Bak

Second: David Hollands

Minutes

-David B.: to quickly add... These fees are subject to review and change by a subcommittee of the board, and we don't necessarily have time.

-Alison: our recommendation to the board is to forgo the subcommittee review. We're asking the board to approve a fee increase and forgo the review making us the subcommittee review.

-Brent: is the motion about forgoing the subcommittee?

-Alison: the motion is that we forgo the subcommittee review. We're discussing that idea.

Motion to Set the Board as the Subcommittee to Review the Annual Membership Fees:

Alison Fraser

Second: David Hollands

Approve: 12

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 1

-Brent: what kind of an increase are we taking about?

-Renee: we have not had a health care update yet, but before the AGM, we are meeting with everybody and hash that out. Haven't heard anything about their referendum. If we're all meeting, it has, but that will be clarified at the meeting. I don't have a for sure answer.

-Brent: that will be answered for sure before our AGM?

-Renee: yeah. When we go forward, and it passes, we need to draw up a contract.

-Philip: The TCSA is holding a referendum?

-Renee: they did.

-David B.: I'll present further. The assumption is the Health Plan does go through the TCSA and that students vote on it, but the whole rationale of putting this in is as a selling point. This year, we did receive \$2000 in donations, \$500 to BBQs, and the rest to operating costs. The increase would be to make up for that money we wouldn't be receiving in upcoming years. My motion says both fees, but our college fee budget is the critical one.

-David B.: the increases would amount to \$2000.00. \$5 increase for the College Fee for full-time, and \$2.50 for part-time.

-Theresa: I'm confused. What's the \$15 increase?

-David B.: that's the Traill College fee. The college fee is the TGSA one I'm referring to. Traill is separate from our fees

-Theresa: so we're proposing raising two fees?

-Brent: yes. And the \$15 one already passed. If the Symons MOU passes, we're still at liberty to donate money, but if these increases go through, the increase was to fund Symons. If it goes through, would we still need the extra money if we're not funding Symons?

-David B.: that's already in our discussions. This is all taking into consideration that we would continue with Symons and Thesis Binding, and bumping it up slightly. The last assumption is that we have fewer full-time students next year. If we continued with the same amount next year, we'd be \$1000 less

-Brent: you're assuming that we're continuing to donate to Symons the same amount?

-David B.: no. \$1500. We would still need this fee increase if we did that.

-Brent: I agree in principal.

-Cory: I support the motion. We have to keep our services where we're at. And we need money for emergency bursaries and a legal fund. Or if we need to review a contract. We're not going to be lucky all the time having a pro bono corporate lawyer. If anything, I'd increase these fees more to fund these other things.

-Carolyn: I agree. \$10 and \$5 may be even better.

-David B.: Again, this way not binding. If everyone is comfortable with that or a higher amount, that's fine. For background, 2012-2013, that was the last time there were fee adjustments. \$13 for full-time and \$9 for part-time.

-Carolyn: isn't the contingency fund for legal stuff?

-Laura: that would fall under that, but it isn't the hugest fund.

-Coy: I would love to see a dedicated fund. Just my personal opinion.

-Philip: I would definitely say go higher. \$10 and \$5 at least, or even higher. TGSA exec members should be paid more. Just a quick discussion about health benefits, when student VIP became our provider, they did offer out of 7 offers, they offered the best plan, and gave us the option to go with the TCSA. We decided to put the offer forward, and grad students wanted to stay separate. We still had a health plan with the TCSA, and that was a problem. If you go back, the TCSA may turn around and say that grad students would pay more. This is what could happen.

-Laura: can we save this for the separate discussion after?

-Philip: this is part of Dave's proposal.

-Renee: grads would be paying a 3% higher rate. However, if the rates go up 3% in 3 years, everyone will be paying more, not just our rates.

-Laura: and we will draft a contract. Phil, you weren't here last meeting. Student VIP proposed that we raise our fees almost 20%. This was the rationale.

-Philip: as long as you are on top of it!

- Laura: we'll have a contract which details an exit strategy. We'll take everything with caution.
- Brent: if David B. is putting forward this motion, it has to be contingent on us joining the TCSA.
- Laura: we're now discussing increasing the fee to motion on the floor now.
- Cory: we're motioning to present a raise of fees at the AGM. As the board, we can't do that here. We as a board have to agree to bring it to the AGM.
- Brent: Okay, good point.
- Laura: do you want to put forward a fee? Let's vote on the motion now.
- Brent: what I said will be an amendment.

Motion to Amend Motion to Add that Approval of Increasing Annual Membership Fees is Contingent on the TGSA Joining the TCSA: Brent Whitford

Second: Cory Baldwin

Approve: 12

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 1

- Philip: if we're going to have this voted on, I would say \$12 and \$6.
- Alison: what are union dues now?
- Philip: I can't remember at the moment. It's on your paycheque.
- Alison: it's an interesting comparison to make. Would it be on the internet?
- Philip: yeah. It's a percentage of what you make.
- David B.: to play devil's advocate about making this decision contingent on joining the TCSA, what would we lose if this didn't happen?
- Laura: that students would be hesitant to vote on this if the health plan doesn't go through.
- Brent: we are unlikely to succeed if we just ask to raise the fees. It has to be really clearly and well-presented.
- Carolyn: we still need the money even if we don't have health plan savings. You could even stay at \$5 and \$2.50 if we don't join the TCSA.
- Theresa: I think a good way to go would be to keep the higher fees we're discussing now, and if students reject it, at the Fall AGM, we then propose again. We do need the money, and that would be one way to go about it.
- Laura: in our current bylaws, you can only bring an item to referendum in one calendar year. Is the fee increase considered a referendum question?
- Alison: yeah.
- Brent: if we don't merge with the TCSA, our fees are going to go up. And if that happens, and we asked for more money, folks will put their backs up. It's a matter of presentation.
- Cory: where this motion will fall in the agenda will make a huge difference. If the Health Benefits don't get cut, and we have a fee increase, they will continue to be upset and reject us constantly. That's the way people are.
- Alison: so vote on the original motion?
- Philip: are you going to do the AGM and then an online referendum?
- Alison: yes.
- Philip: based on this suggestion, we wait until you find out about the Health Plan stuff signed before the AGM?
- Alison: we're going to run it tandem.

- Philip: that would make a very weird referendum question!
- Brent: what I suggest is that we'll know if the merger can happen. Then we bring the fee increase to the AGM, and if it doesn't, we don't bring the fee increase to the AGM
- Cory: it won't make it on the agenda at all.
- Laura: now I'm confused. Ha ha. We'll know if the TCSA approves, but not if grads approve.
- Brent: at that point, it's in the hands of grads.
- Alison: and then the new fees will happen.
- Brent: I'm saying that if we're bringing our referendum to bring to the TCSA, we can say now we need more money. If we don't merge, then we're ONLY asking for more money.
- Cory: they're getting both questions, and they get the choice.
- Philip: based on that, I would suggest \$12 and \$6.
- Laura: can we amend?
- David B.: I amend motion that we increase specifically the college fee for grads, part-time to increase by \$6 and full-time \$12, contingent on the TCSA's decision to merge their Health Care Plan with us.

Second: Brent Whitford

Approve: 12

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 1

- Brent: I'm thinking we'd be better to risk running a deficit in the Fall, then trying to get it through, fail, and having to wait a year. We'll get the money eventually.
- Cory: the full motion is now on the floor.
- David H.: isn't there language in the new bylaws about not running a deficit?
- Alison: yes. That means that things will get cut. It'll be a tight fiscal year.
- Carolyn: you're talking about smart people. If you haven't increased fees in three years, that's justification.
- Laura: the problem is, there are many people who aren't aware of what they're voting for, and who will vote no. I have reservations that this won't pass.
- Cory: online votes are great, but people who weren't at the meeting will be voting. There never is a good time to ask for more money. If the TCSA thing goes through, it'll let us look better

Approve: 12

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 1

6. Continued Discussion of New TGSA Draft Bylaws from Previous Meeting

Minutes

- Laura: Alison, you'll take the lead?
- Alison: I presented at the last meeting. There have been a few updates. I've received some emails pointing out technical errors in the bylaws, and stuff that don't make sense. I'm counting those as technical amendments. I've been informed of a couple more language things throughout the document that seem pretty nonspecific, Cory can discuss them. CUPE rep is now a voting

member. All updates will be made April 6th. All will be done after I finish marking. For now, they look the same as the last meeting.

-Theresa: I went through them, identified errors.

-Alison: Email me those.

-Theresa: Bylaw 18.4. In that one, there's a reference to follow Bylaw 16.02. I could not find that.

-Alison: Oh, that should be taken out. That's from an older draft. The numbering got crazy because of stuff added in. I'll fix that numbering for that to reflect the vacancy policy.

-Erin: it's 17.09

-Alison: No... it's in there! I need to go through that and fix it. Flag it for me.

-Philip: 17.09 is the only place where vacancy comes up.

-Alison: there's another place where vacancy comes up.

-Philip: but the word vacancy isn't there. It doesn't come up.

-Erin: Oh, it's because it's vacancies!

-Cory: 17 has to be completely renumbered.

-Alison: I blame my Dad for that. I tried to reorder the document.

-Theresa: under bylaw 27.01, it says organizations under TGSA, and it has Symons. Would that be changing because of our proposed MOU

-Laura: we voted to have MOU as the first point of discussion. Bylaws are following that. If MOU is accepted, then we strike Symons from bylaws.

-Cory: I've already flagged the Symons stuff. Bunch of technical stuff. A couple substantive things. Language around CUPE rep. Where we define board member, in definitions, the way it's described doesn't allow for the CUPE rep. Need a brief amendment there. And on page 9...

-Alison: the CUPE rep gets its own definition, though, separate from the board. I don't want to conflate the two. It was lawyer recommended to keep them separate.

-Cory: if the legal counsel advised to keep separate, then sure.

-Alison: the definition specifically says they're on the board

-Philip: I guess I don't see... The CUPE rep is elected by grads, most grads are workers, they still are elected only by grad students. Since CUPE isn't an organization...

-Alison: we just tackled the other issue.

-Cory: that was going to be one of the ways to change the wording. Say a representative is elected by its constituents, being CUPE

-Alison: so do we want a change to this definition? It's right at the end.

-Philip: Ah, I see. Right.

-Cory: I can speak to the order of definitions if you want...

-Alison: it is separate. DO we want to change that?

-Theresa: does it specify Unit 2?

-Alison: so I add that it's a designate of Unit 2?

-Philip: Let me see... Why not just say from CUPE 3908, Unit 2? And you can take out TA union.

-Cory: Yeah. I would also move that definition up to where you define board member.

-Theresa: Alphabetical order?

-Cory: it's organized this way because there is no definition here that has not been defined in the document. Before, they were alphabetical. We specifically organized this so that nothing comes up later that hasn't already been defined. It makes the document easier to understand. So... on page 12, 16.01b, I think it should be amended to be CUPE Unit 2, but also in consultation, not

elected. My reason is so that we aren't making rules for them, and vice versa. This little semantic change fixes this problem. CUPE wouldn't have to follow our rules if they need to make an emergency change. It would just say in consultation with instead of elected by. Frees them up to organize how they want.

-Alison: do I have consensus to make that change? **everyone raises hand** Cory, send me that change?

-Cory: I did.

-Alison: oh, there it is!

-Cory: page 20, 25.01. Should say majority vote or simple majority. Otherwise, it can be interpreted as 2/3, which it isn't. And last one, at least for one, in Policies on page 26, number 1, this can be a title on the top of the page rather than a policy.

-Alison: I would argue that it's functionally different.

-Theresa: what is the issue?

-Cory: go to page 26. Policy of these policies. That shouldn't be a policy.

-Alison: it looks nice!

-Cory: but functionally, it doesn't work.

-Alison: all right!

-Cory: just put that as a statement at the top.

-Alison: fine!

-David H.: lolz.

-Cory: generally, I think it's important to move forward with these bylaws. I wasn't happy that we didn't have time beforehand. But we were waiting for legal counsel to vet these. This has seen a corporate lawyer and has approved these as an organizational structure moving forward. Our changes are good things.

-Brent: I would add slightly that the CCC was composed of an eclectic body of reps with their own perspectives and takes on these. I've been on earlier boards. I can say that these new bylaws are now similar to other bodies similar to our own. They match better than the old bylaws.

-Carolyn: I have a problem with language at 3.03 in policies... racialized persons? What does that mean? I don't think that's proper terminology. I can send you what would be preferred.

-Alison: please!

-Carolyn: I'll check to see what terminology is preferred.

-Erin: in general, these are technical changes, but for anything, persons is the way to go, i.e. persons of LGBT community, etc. For a lot of them, it's just the safe thing to do. So, make it persons of first for anything that refers to a group of people. Make sense?

-Brent: on that note, the word people can change to persons of disability.

-Cory: is there an extra T in LGBTQ?

-Alison: Carolyn? Can I default to you?

-Carolyn: sure, I'll check.

-Cory: you do use a couple different ones in different places. I wasn't sure if that was a typo. I find it so hard to keep up with what letters are supposed to be in the initialism.

-Brent: for these technical amendments, would it be okay to convene one more CCC meetings?

-Alison: for sure. We should convene again to flag grammar and structure.

-Renee: I think it's awesome that you're going to have a meeting over commas.

-Laura: other points on the bylaws?

-Renee: I enjoy how everyone's positions and duties have been clearly spelled out. That makes me so happy. And just on a... page 35, 3.03.06 under policies... the OGSA rep.

- Alison: as far as I'm aware, they would get an honorarium. As far as I know, they don't get paid.
- Brent: I don't want to bring up this discussion again, but Philip, I was wondering if you had any questions or concerns?
- Philip: I think it's good, but to clarify, does it say at any point that the position is a voting position?
- Alison: it will. We're still working with the old version, but that line will be struck.
- Philip: I'm glad that you feel good to keep it on, and that CUPE and GSA have been working well together, so I think it's important to keep that going.
- Carolyn: the rubber stamping? Different vetting?
- Philip: my position is elected by grad students.
- Alison: we voted to keep that language. The motion was to present that language to CUPE and get feedback on it.
- Cory: page 12, number 16.01b. With the language that I proposed earlier in the meeting.
- Alison: sorry, one sec... Okay, I don't have that language anymore.
- Cory: one director to be named by the exec in consultation with CUPE 3908 Unit 2.
- Alison: so the language of appointment still exists.
- Carolyn: so they're saying whoever the TA votes in, the exec has to approve.
- Philip: but it's already established in our CUPE bylaws. There are more people who can vote.
- Carolyn: my problem was that this board would approve who gets voted in.
- Philip: that's the same way a departmental rep gets voted.
- Alison: any objection would be subjected to impeachment. The only language CUPE has is only specified to CUPE, the rep is the only board member who has process of consultation
- Carolyn: is that the intent?
- Brent: my understanding is not that we don't like the rep, but the problem is that, yes, I recognize that grads vote in the rep, but that CUPE as CUPE, not as the GSA, vote for members on OUR board. It's a legal thing. CUPE is a separate organization. They're our members, but voting in a different capacity. That's why the board rubber stamps the CUPE rep to give them the voting power.
- Philip: board also rubber stamps departmental reps
- Brent: they're still voting under the capacity of TGSA reps. They have different concerns and obligations. We recognize the CUPE rep as being elected by grads, but the problem currently is the CUPE rep cannot be impeached in our board.
- Carolyn: I want to clarify that Phil knew what was going on.
- Cory: it's a thorny legal problem. The queen of England and Canada is Elizabeth II. They're separate legal persons. This language gets around the thorny issue of having the power to directly put someone on our board. It frees up this issue so that we have our separate processes.
- Philip: and in theory, they could be kicked out if they mess up
- Erin: so should we address the criteria?
- Alison: we have legally passed the necessity for such language, since we have our procedures in the bylaws.
- Theresa: so Phil, is that okay?
- Philip: Troy told me that this had come up other times. The GSA turns over quite a bit, and there's more institutional memory at CUPE, and that's something that rep can bring to the board. You guys have done a good job.

- Brent: by removing the rep's voting power, it got rid of the legal issues. By doing it this way, the rep has voting power in our good way.
- Carolyn and Cory: lolz. Canadian Constitutional History. Ha ha.
- Avinaash: Different issue. The bylaws keep referring to the list serv.
- Alison: it's contractual that we have it! If grad studies refuse to give it back, and after we sue, THEN we'll take it out. They're contractually obligated to allow us to have this.
- Philip: for clarity, CUPE has the same problem. It's often outdated.
- Laura: you missed an update. A student threatened to sue everyone over survey emails. Grad studies took away our list serv and disabled it. This has been a huge problem for us. We DID sign an agreement with the university that guarantees us access to the list serv.
- Alison: Avi, I'll leave it in for now, but we may have to write some temporary policy.
- Laura: other points?
- Carolyn: I'm happy to print off and distribute poster. Who do I send it too?
- David H.: Me.
- Alison: Carolyn will make a poster, Dave approves it.
- David H.: by tomorrow?
- Carolyn: Sure.
- Renee: I'll also have my poster to you tonight.
- Corny: I had a motion... I move that as a board we approve these bylaws in principal, after sending to the Constitutional Changes Committee for edits, we have a vote on the adoption of these bylaws at the AGM this month.

Second: Brent Whitford

Approve: 12

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 1

7. Other Business

7.1 Brief Review of AGM Letter to Grad Students (VP Operations)

- Brent: maybe not mention Symons. Why make a long email longer?
- Cory: but we shouldn't blindside people.
- Theresa: we can take out prepared by CCC
- Cory: Say pizza instead of food, definitely!

8. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: Alison Fraser

Second: David Hollands

Approve: 12

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 1