DSU Council Meeting Minutes

Note: due to a technical difficulty, specific record of which councillor moved and seconded certain motions during this meeting was lost.

Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, June 18, 2020

Location: Microsoft Teams

Land Acknowledgement

The Dalhousie Student Union acknowledges that Dalhousie University and the Dalhousie Student Union Building are located on traditional, unceded and unsurrendered Mi’kma’ki territory. The Dalhousie Student Union seeks to honour the relational treaty process in its programming, events, and meetings.

Equity Statement

Student union solidarity is based on the principle that all members should be able to participate equally in their union, recognizing that students have diverse experiences of privilege and marginalization. As members of the students’ union, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding are our goals. We should neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

It is our collective responsibility to create an inclusive space for discussion and dialogue. Any form or forms of discrimination and/or harassment will not be tolerated, nor will hate speech rooted in, but not limited to, sexist, racist, classist, ableist, homophobic or transphobic sentiments and/or remarks. We all have an obligation to ensure that an open and inclusive space, free of hate is established. If you violate this understanding, you will be asked to leave.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:07PM by the Chair of Council.

2. Roll Call

Madeleine Stinson – President

Isa Wright - Vice President, Finance and Operations
Erica Seeleman – Vice President, Academic and External
Jad Ghiz - Vice President, Student Life
Claudia Castillo-Prentt - Black Students’ Representative
Drew Guyan - LGBTQ+ Students’ Representative
Nik Isaac-Pictou - Indigenous Students’ Representative
Robert Larsen - Faculty of Agriculture Representative
Zachariah Scinocca - Faculty of Dentistry Representative
Shane Isler - Faculty of Law Representative
Jennifer Dubois - Faculty of Management Representative
Fatima Beydoun - Board of Governors Representative 1
Bakhmala Khan (Interim) - Faculty of Science
Sahl Zahoor - Faculty of Computer Science
Cameron Penny - Faculty of Medicine

Vacant: (Positions not yet appointed)
Board of Governors Representative 2
Faculty of Architecture Representative
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Representative
Faculty of Engineering Representative
Faculty of Graduate Studies Representative
Students with Disabilities Representative
Students Living in Residence Representative
Women Students Representative

Absent with Regrets:

Absent without Regrets:

Non-voting Members: (note: non-voting attendees are listed here only if they contributed during the meeting. DSU members who were present to observe the meeting but did not intervene in discussion are not listed)
3. Approval of the Agenda

MOTION 2020-06-18-3.1

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda for the present meeting be adopted as circulated.

The motion was moved and seconded.

Motion 2020-06-18-3.1 passes.

4. Business Arising Out of the Minutes

None.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

MOTION 2020-06-18-5.1

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the minutes from the DSU Council meeting on May 7, 2020 be adopted as circulated.

Document attached.

The motion was moved and seconded.

Motion 2020-06-18-5.1 passes.

MOTION 2020-06-18-5.2

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the minutes for the DSU Council meeting on May 21, 2020 be adopted as circulated.

Document attached.

The motion was moved and seconded.

Motion 2020-06-18-5.2 passes.

6. Communications Received

No communications received.

7. Appointments by Council
MOTION 2020-06-18-7.1

BE IT RESOLVED THAT __________ and __________ be appointed to the Councillor seats on the Bylaw and Policy Review Committee for the 2020-2021 Academic Year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT __________ be appointed to the general member seat on Bylaw and Policy Review Committee for the 2020-2021 Academic Year.

Moved by the President; the motion was seconded

Nominations for Councillor seats: Robert Larsen and Cameron Penny.

Nominations for General Member seats: Rinad Sharstan.

All nominees were appointed to their respective positions using an online voting process.

Motion 2020-06-18-7.1 passes.

MOTION 2020-06-18-7.2

BE IT RESOLVED THAT __________ and __________ be appointed to the Faculty Representative seats on the Oversight Committee for the 2020-2021 Academic Year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT __________ and __________ be appointed to the Community Representative seats on the Oversight Committee for the 2020-2021 Academic Year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT __________ and __________ be appointed to the general member seats on the Oversight Committee for the 2020-2021 Academic Year.

Moved by the President; the motion was seconded

Nominations for Faculty Representative seats: Bakhmala Khan.

Nominations for Community Representative seats: Nik Isaac-Pictou and Claudia Castillo-Prent.

Nominations for General Member seats: Baraa Fath.

All nominees were appointed to their respective positions using an online voting process.

Motion 2020-06-18-7.2 passes.

MOTION 2020-06-18-7.3

WHEREAS the DSU bylaws mandate that a minimum of two non-executive members of Council and three general members be elected to seats on the Student Life Committee, but do not impose any limit on how many additional councillors and general members may be appointed to the committee;

THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the following individuals be appointed to the councillor seats on the Student Life Committee for the 2020-2021 Academic Year: __________ AND
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the following individuals be appointed to the general member seats on the Student Life Committee for the 2020-2021 Academic Year: __________.

Moved by the President; the motion was seconded

Nominations for Councillor seats: N/A

Nominations for General Member seats: Cody Roy, Ahmad Kammonah, Saiz Charolia, and Alex MacDonald.

Motion 2020-06-18-7.3 passes.

MOTION 2020-06-18-7.4

WHEREAS the DSU bylaws mandate that a minimum of three non-executive members of Council be elected to seats on the External Committee, but do not impose any limit on how many additional councillors may be appointed to the committee;

THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the following individuals be appointed to the councillor seats on the External Committee for the 2020-2021 Academic Year: __________.

Moved by the Vice President, Academic and External; seconded by:

Nominations for Councillor seats: Shane Isler and Nik Isaac-Pictou.

Motion 2020-06-18-7.4 passes.

8. Presentations

8.1 DSU Sustainability Office Report on Food Issues

Presented by the DSUSO Food Commissioner. Documents Attached.

Business arising from 8.1: MOTION 2020-06-18-8.1:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council adopt DSUSO’S Report on Food Issues and the included recommendations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Council strike a Food Collective under the Terms of Reference proposed by DSUSO as an ad hoc committee for the 2020-2021 Academic Year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Food Collective shall submit a report at the end of the academic year including recommendations as to the long-term goals and updated terms of reference for the Collective, based on which Council will consider establishing the Food Collective as a standing committee of the DSU or other recommended actions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the members of the Food Collective appointed by Council shall be appointed at the next regular meeting of Council.

The motion was moved and seconded
Motion 2020-06-18-8.1 passes.

9. Committee Reports

9.1 Report of the Budget and Finance Committee

Presented by the Vice President, Finance and Operations

Business Arising from 9.1: MOTION 2020-06-18-9.1

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the revised budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 be adopted as recommended by the Budget and Finance Committee.

Moved by the Vice President, Finance and Operations; the motion was seconded

Motion 2020-06-18-9.1 passes.

10. Old Business

None.

11. New Business

MOTION 2020-06-18-11.1

WHEREAS COVID-19 has decreased available jobs and increased the financial burden on International Students; and

WHEREAS there is adequate funding available in the DSU International Student Emergency Bursary Reserve Fund; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT $30,000 be allocated from the DSU International Student Emergency Bursary Reserve Fund and used according to the attached proposal.

Moved by: VP Finance and Operations. Document Attached

The motion was seconded

Motion 2020-06-18-11.1 passes.

MOTION 2020-06-18-11.2

WHEREAS Dalhousie’s Board of Governors voted to increase tuition for the 2020-2021 academic year by 3% for all students and an additional $1473 for International students that began their academics at the University in the Fall 2019 semester or later; and

WHEREAS the DSU has written a letter to the Board of Governors informed by data collected from our survey titled COVID, Campus and Costs, which collected data DSU members’ opinions on the price of tuition and campus closures and determined the largest issues impacting its members; and
WHEREAS the COVID, Campus, and Costs Survey showed that financial aids, such as bursaries, offered by the University and government are difficult to access and do not compensate for the increase in tuition; and

WHEREAS DSU members feel that online learning has an inherently lower value than on campus learning;

THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the DSU Council call on Dalhousie University’s Board of Governors to:

1. Rescind the decision to increase tuition for domestic and international students in the 2020-2021 academic year;
2. Decrease tuition and remove ancillary fees connected to on-campus experiential learning, campus infrastructure and department specific resources for the 2020-2021 academic year;
3. Issue partial refunds to students enrolled in the Winter 2020 and Summer 2020 semesters.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Council sign on to the open letter written by the Executive Committee calling for the implementation of these demands

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Councillors be encouraged to send emails in support of these demands using the email templates and mailing list on dsu.ca/rejectthe3 and to call on their constituents to do the same

 Moved by the VPAE. Document Attached

The motion was seconded

Motion 2020-06-18-11.2 passes.

MOTION 2020-06-18-11.3

WHEREAS on June 05, 2020, Council adopted a motion to issue a non-disciplinary suspension to the current Vice President, Student Life, for a period of one week, with the possibility of extending the suspension by an additional week by special resolution of the Executive Committee; AND

WHEREAS on May 11, 2020, the Executive Committee unanimously voted to extend the non-disciplinary suspension by an additional week; AND

WHEREAS the DSU is committed, as per the Equity Policy, to creating equitable and inclusive environments free from harassment and discrimination; AND

WHEREAS the DSU recognizes that sexualized violence and rape culture affect people profoundly and differently, and believes that all students have a right to safer campuses; AND

WHEREAS the DSU has hired a third-party and an investigation into the allegations against the VPSL and breaches of DSU bylaws, policies, and codes is underway but not yet complete;

THEREFORE:
BE IT RESOLVED THAT the current Vice President, Student Life, be suspended with pay, effective immediately, for a period of one (1) week as a non-disciplinary action; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this suspension may be renewed for an additional period of up to one (1) week by a special resolution passed by the Executive Committee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT if said suspension is renewed, this decision will be immediately communicated to Councillors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this non-disciplinary suspension be carried out in order to allow for the investigation to proceed and conclude in an equitable manner.

Moved by the President; the motion was seconded

Motion 2020-06-18-11.3 passes.

MOTION 2020-06-18.11.4
WHEREAS an ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee met over the course of the 2019-2020 year to develop a five-year Strategic Plan for the Union; and

WHEREAS Council ratified the Plan’s strategic priorities on April 8, 2020;
THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council ratify the proposed 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

Document attached.

Moved by the President; the motion was seconded

Motion 2020-06-18.11.4 passes.

MOTION 2020-06-18.11.5
WHEREAS there has been a consistent rise of anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism in Canada, the United States, and across the world; and

WHEREAS Police violence, as well as discrimination within employment, housing and academia, is heavily apparent across the globe; and

WHEREAS the recent killings of Regis Korchinski-Paquet, George Floyd, D’Andre Campbell, Tony McDade, Breonna Taylor, Chantel Moore, and Rodney Levi at the hands of police in Canada and the United States have had immense impacts on Black and Indigenous individuals and communities, and sparked conversation around systemic anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism in Canada; and

WHEREAS systemic racism and the inappropriate use of police force also occurs within Halifax, as evidenced in the 2019 report by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission which found that Black people in Halifax were up to six times more likely to be street checked than white people; and
WHEREAS the DSU, like many organizations in Canada, must continue to address anti-Black racism, and develop programs and policies that will combat the anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism that is within our institution,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the DSU donate to a cause or business that is run by the Black community and/or focused on supporting the Black community after consulting with the Black Student Advising Centre and Black student societies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT all DSU elected representatives and staff take part in an anti-oppression training to ensure we have the skills needed to educate ourselves and address anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT all advocacy campaigns developed by the DSU are reflective of the needs of Black and Indigenous students studying at Dalhousie University; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the DSU work with Black student representatives to develop programming and campaigns that will enrich the academic and social experiences of Black students at Dalhousie.

Moved by the President; the motion was seconded

Motion 2020-06-18.11.5 passes.

12. Executive Reports

12.1 President

12.2 Vice President, Internal

12.3 Vice President, Finance and Operations

12.4 Vice President, Academic and External

12.5 Vice President, Student Life

13. Notice of Motion

13.1 Notice of Motion to Amend Communications Policy

The following motion will be on the agenda at the next meeting of DSU Council:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT amendments to the Communications Policy be adopted as circulated to Council on June 18, 2020; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Social Media Policy be struck, as by this motion its contents have been incorporated into the Communications Policy

Moved by the Vice President, Internal. Document to be circulated June 18 following the meeting.

14. Announcements
The next meeting of Council will be held (tentatively) on July 16, 2020 at 6:00pm, using Microsoft Teams. Confirmation of the meeting date and time will be sent out via email.

15. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Moved by: President; the motion was seconded

Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:37PM.