DSU Council Meeting Agenda

Meeting Date and Time: March 11th, 2021 – 7:00pm Atlantic time

Location: Virtual Meeting using 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

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of the Agenda

MOTION 2021-03-11-3.1

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda for the present meeting be adopted as presented.
4. Business Arising Out of the Minutes

5. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

MOTION 2021-03-11-5.1

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the minutes of the Council meeting on February 25, 2021 be adopted as circulated.

6. Communications Received

7. Appointments by Council

8. Presentations

8.1. Anti-Oppression Training for 2021-22 Societies

Presented by the Vice President Internal, for feedback.

Documents attached.

8.2. Update on Dalhousie Accessibility Plan Feedback

Presented by the President, for feedback.

Documents attached.

8.3. Update on BAC Feedback to Dalhousie & DSU Action

Presented by the VPAE, for information.

Documents attached.

8.4. Draft 2021-22 Budget

Presented by the VPFO, for feedback.

Documents attached.

9. Committee Reports

10. Old Business
11. New Business

MOTION 2021-03-11-11.1

WHEREAS the Dalhousie Student Union mitigated the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic by keeping expenses low while maintaining or improving the majority of student supports and services, and;

WHEREAS responsible financial planning and spending has prevented the DSU from incurring significant deficits for the 2020-21 fiscal year, and;

WHEREAS the DSU’s year-end financial review identified that it is highly likely the DSU budget will have a significant surplus at the end of the 2020-21 fiscal year, and;

WHEREAS it is important that revenue is used effectively and efficiently, and that projects identified by the membership are undertaken rather than put to the side or extended over many years, and;

WHEREAS capital projects such as the purchase of furniture for the T-Room, updating SUB signage to include Mi’kmaq language, adding study space, and ensuring the SUB fulfills the Accessibility Act of Nova Scotia have all been requested by the membership, and;

WHEREAS upwards of $100,000.00 in additional funds have recently been allocated to the Mental Health Fund, Student Emergency Fund, and Student Accessibility Bursary;

THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED that any and all remaining budget surplus monies from the 2020-21 fiscal year be moved to the capital projects line instead of retained earnings to allow for projects to be undertaken.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any remaining funds in the capital projects line at the end of the 2021-22 fiscal year be moved to retained earnings, as per usual.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any projects undertaken with a budget of over $10,000.00 be approved by Council before the project begins, as per policy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that councillors and members at large are encouraged to contact the DSU executive with ideas for capital projects in DSU spaces that could be undertaken.

Moved by the President

MOTION 2021-03-11-11.2

WHEREAS there is currently $204,082.00 in the Accessibility Bursary Reserve Fund, and;

WHEREAS the Accessibility Bursary Committee has exhausted all funds collected in the 2020-21 fiscal year, including previous amounts approved for use from the reserve fund, and;

WHEREAS the Fund was created to establish a source of funding for students with accessibility needs, and the COVID-19 pandemic and online learning has created exceptional strain, including financial distress, for many disabled students and students with accessibility needs, and;
WHEREAS the Student Accessibility Fund Committee has requested additional funding totaling $30,000, in order to fulfill all urgent bursary requests received by the committee, and;

WHEREAS $35,675 is estimated to be collected for this fund in the 2021-22 fiscal year, allowing the proposed amount to be replenished relatively quickly if necessary;

THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT $30,000 from the Accessibility Reserve Fund be approved for use by the Accessibility Bursary Committee, at a rate of approximately $10,000 per month for the months of March 2021, April 2021, and May 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT if $10,000 per month is not required to meet demand, the committee may use the remaining amounts in summer 2021.

Moved by Vice-President Finance and Operations

MOTION 2021-03-11-11.3

WHEREAS the DSU Council has already passed a motion to task Faculty Representatives on Council to compile a report on student issues faced within their respective Faculties, and;

WHEREAS students have expressed frustration with 2021-22 academic year tuition and fee increases proposed by the Budget Advisory Committee, and;

WHEREAS it is important all students’ voices are heard and listened to regarding fee increases, and;

WHEREAS fee increases impact students in different ways depending on many factors, including the Faculty they study in, and;

WHEREAS Faculty representatives and societies have the unique ability to connect on a deeper level with students in the Faculty they represent;

THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Faculty Representatives on the DSU Council are to consult with their Faculty Society and as many students as possible to determine the unique impact of tuition and fee increases on students in their Faculty.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT consultation is encouraged to include data collection on the following topics:

- Specific impact of International Student Fees
- Access to scholarships, bursaries, and grants within your Faculty
- Access and ability to find and hold employment, co-ops, and/or work-study programs
- Average course load & length of degree
- Additional Faculty-specific costs required of students
- Reliance on and ability to seek financial assistance from family
- Expected average salary upon graduation
- Food security
- Housing security
- Additional Faculty-specific issues exacerbated by increases in fees

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this consultation may occur in whatever format the Faculty Representative deems most feasible for their Faculty Society and constituents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the results of these consultations be sent to the DSU President no later than April 11th, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Faculty Representatives requiring aid in meeting this deadline reach out to the DSU President for support.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the DSU President must deliver a comprehensive report identifying aggregate and disaggregate results of these consultations no later than the last meeting of the DSU Council, and that the data also be included in communications to the Board of Governors.

Moved by the Board of Governors Representative #2

12. Executive Reports

12.1 Report of the President
12.2 Report of the Vice President, Internal
12.3 Report of the Vice President, Finance and Operations
12.4 Report of the Vice President, Academic and External
12.5 Report of the Vice President, Student Life

13. Notice of Motion

13.1. A motion to approve the 2021-22 budget will be raised at the next meeting of Council, in accordance with the budget process, approved by the Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) and as presented today by the VPFO.

13.2. A motion to approve amendments to the Bursary Policy, as approved by the Bylaw and Policy Review Committee (BPRC), will be raised at the next meeting of Council.

14. Announcements

15. Adjournment