

2019-04-17 SC - Audio Recording Transcript

Speaker Key:

CH	Chair
PR	President
VPOF	Vice President, Operations and Finance
VPE	Vice President, External
VPSL	Vice President, Student Life
VPA	Vice President, Academic
CR	Councillor Ruiz
CS	Councillor Stewart
CST	Councillor Strayer
CHS	Councillor Hassan
CB	Councillor Bouwer
CDR	Councillor Drummond
CN	Councillor Newton

00:00:00

CH Order. Item 1 Treaty 6 land recognition. We would like to acknowledge that this meeting of the Students' Association of MacEwan University is taking place on the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 6 region in Central Alberta. The Students' Association of MacEwan University is situated in the centre of what we call the city of Edmonton, which is called Amiskwaciy Waskahikan or Beaver Hill House in Nehiyawewin (Cree). This is the traditional home of the Nehiyaw (Cree) and Michif (Métis), and meeting place for many Indigenous peoples including the Nakawé (Saulteaux), Siksika (Blackfoot), Nakota Sioux (Stoney) and other nations. Adding approvals 2.1. We have a motion. Anyone care to make that motion? Councillor Ruiz.

CR I [unclear] the agenda for April 17th, 2019.

CH Thank you, councillor and a second. VP external. Thank you. It has been moved in seconded to approve the agenda for April 17th, 2019. Is there any debate? President?

PR Thank you, chair. I would like to have motion to amend to remove Item 3.1.

CH We have a motion to amend. Is there a second? VP academic. Thank you. It has been moved and seconded to amend the agenda to remove Item 3.1.

00:01:19

Is there any debate? Question is on the adoption of the motion to amend the agenda to remove Item 3.1. All those in favour? Thank you. Motion carries. Back to the main motion. Noting that we have removed Item 3.1. Is there any debate on the motion? The question is on the adoption of the motion as amended. All those in favour. Thank you, unopposed. Motion carries. Item 2.2, do we have a motion? VP, Operations and Finance.

VPOF Thank you Chair, I move to approve the minutes of March of 20th 2019.

CH Thank you and the second, Vice President Student Life. Thank you. It has been moved and seconded to approve the minutes of March 20th, 2019. Is there any debate? The question is on the adoption of the motion as read. All those in favour. Thank you. Motion carries. So three, there are no presentations today. Item 4 for information, 4.1 reports. 4.1.1 President, any more supplements?

PR No, Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you. 4.1.2 Vice President Academic, any more supplements.

VPA Yes. Thank you Chair. The first one being an opportunity to sit on two adjudicating panels. The first one being USRI Spring Call. For those who don't know USRI stands for Undergraduate Student Research Initiative. And it was really awesome reading so many applications from students from many different faculties about different projects that they want to undertake this summer. We ended up finding a very high majority of them.

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We also funded a few dissemination grant applications which are not to do a project but to go and present their research at a conference or something like that. So really exciting. The second one that I was a part of was the pilot projects for the open textbooks fellowship. And so we chose five projects out of the 10 applications to fund for the initial kickoff of professors developing open resources for their students to using glasses.

That will be free of cost. So that was really awesome. Thank you, Chair.

CH Excellent, thank you. 4.1.3, Vice President External any more supplements.

VPE No. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you. 4.1.4 VP Operations and Finance, any more supplements.

VPOF Yes, Thank you Chair. I attended the [unclear] Advisory Committee yesterday with the city of Edmonton and ETS. It was 15 minutes in like. So nothing really to report. Other than I attended the meeting and ETF is still happening. There are some schedule changes which students can find on the ETS website, as well as updates on the LRT station closing at mid [?] of the summer. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you. 4.1.5 Vice President Student Life, any more supplements.

VPSL No. Thank you, Chair.

00:04:58

CH Thank you. Item 4.1.6, the report from the Chief Returning Officer or Chief Returning Office, pardon me. And 4.1.7, Q3 financial statements are included in your package for your information. 4.2 Executive committee minutes, the minutes of March 13th, 20th, 27th and April 3rd are providing the package for your information. Item 5, question period. 5.1 written questions, no written questions this time around. 5.2 oral questions. We'll take oral questions now. Councilor Stewart.

CS Thank you. I have a question for the President in regards to the building operation and planning [unclear]. I was curious if there any outstanding concerns by staff who attended that workshop in regards to the building, or any concerns that they had. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you, Councillor President.

PR Thank you, Chair. There's no really outstanding concerns. And one of the aspects of the workshop is to anticipate some risks and do what we can to mitigate them. So there was definitely a discussion about things that could go wrong. Today, nothing has really gone wrong. But I'm sure if it's something significant, council will hear about it. The primary goal of this working group or workshop is to get the very nitty gritty details down to, how's key distribution going to work? How are we going to do security details and things like that.

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So it's very much on the ground operational details of the building. So nothing really different from what we're doing below the level. Thank you.

CH Thank you, President. Councillor Stewart, anything further?

CS I have a question for the VP External. I'm just want to be the first one to commend you on your work with they get off the boat campaign and rescues. We know how many students were actually kind of signed up for a part of it. And part of that turn out, we were involved. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you, councillor. Vice President External.

VPE Thank you, Chair. So there's about 800 students that we ended up texting and emailing. We don't know the specific amount in [Unclear] unfortunately but [unclear]. Most of them responded back via text message. [Unclear] so that was nice to see you. The nice thing is that that will continue for the federal elections [unclear] so we'll run the campaign again although [unclear]. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you. Councillor Stewart, anything further?

CS No. That's all. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you councillor. Other questions? Councillor Ruiz.

CR Thank you Chair. My question is for the Vice President External. Can you elaborate more on your supplement about a five out of ten projects were open education resources. Thank you.

00:07:58

CH Thank you, councillor. Vice President.

VPE Sure. Thank you Chair. So the people that have been chosen haven't actually been notified yet. So I can't give specific details.

But two of them will be for courses that are done by a large majority of first year students. So essentially two popular first year classes have been funded. So that's all I can say right now. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you, Vice President. Councillor Ruiz, anything further?

CR That's the only thing, thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you. Other questions. Councillors. Councillor Strayer.

CST Thank you, Chair. Looking at the schedule for revenue and expenses. Under schedule four, it says we generated 90 grand in revenue spend on 198. That's a loss of about \$110,000. It's a substantial amount of money. So my question is for the VP of operations. Is this sustainable? Is there anything that she thinks that we can do better as she's outgoing? Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you, councillor. Perhaps Vice President would like to speak to how this relates to the budget?

VPOF Yes, thank you, Chair. So expenses and revenues scheduled for events are budgeted by [unclear] and then passed by Council. So these are within the budgeted amounts.

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So from my perspective, there isn't any outstanding concern given that this was passed by this body to the specific dollars that were spent and generated, I can get more details to the very specific revenue. And from what I don't have that at this time. And any efforts to adapt or change these numbers are reflected in the upcoming fiscal year that was also passed by this group.

And so questions around that were discussed at that table. So without clarification as to what I'm supposed to answer, I feel that the realm of the budgeting process both last year and this year have addressed that. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you, Vice President. Councillor Stayer, anything further?

CST No. I suppose not. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you, councillor. Councillors, any other questions? Going once, twice, three times. Okay. Item 6, in [unclear] period, no items there. Item 7, motions and business orders of the day, no items there. How to make consultation governance review project. I forgot who... Vice President, Operations and Finance, take it away.

00:11:20

VPOF Thank you, Chair. So I provided a... I felt in-depth brief about the project that we're hoping to undertake. Some of the facets that I felt were important for council's attention. And so I was encouraged by Bylaws and Policy Committee to submit a consultation item for this body at this time. At some of these early stages. So as outlined in my consultation item, attachment.

I'm hoping to hear from council as what they see for priorities of this project, potential issues or concerns that they have, and what kind of reporting they hope to receive throughout other than that which I've outlined in that brief.

So this is an opportunity to get some feedback on those things, so that myself and the incoming Vice President, Operations and Financial will be taking this over. We'll be able to hear that and address that through this process. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you, Vice President. So we'll open the floor for comments. Councillors, do we need five minutes to review the material that was submitted? Am I seeing some nodding? Yes? Maybe? Okay, so unless someone disagrees we recess for five minutes and provide you with an opportunity to review the materials in-depth. Order, please find your seats, please. Okay, now that we've had a chance to review the material or reread the material, we'll open the floor for comments. Councillors. Councillor Newton.

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CN Thank you, Chair. Yes, I think the reason why not many people are saying things because it looks pretty good. And I don't think at least speaking for myself, I don't see any issues. I think that this is such a good. No worries on my end.

CH Thank you, Councillor. Councillor Bouwer.

CB As a sitting member of the Bylaws and Policy Committee, I just wanted to bring special attention to one of the... I think it is things that were brought up in the presentation of the course of our discussion. I think committee structure is really going to be one of the most important things to come out of this. So I'd just like to generally crowd source some ideas for how we can make, I think some of the ideas like basically making some of the committee's that have significant overlap, maybe into slightly larger committees, having a few more students at large on committees. Finding ways to engage a little bit more like that.

Because I feel like committees really are the primary organs through which we get policies down. So that would be... I'll just point you in a particular direction that I found particularly important. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you, Councillor Bouwer. Human body analogy is always apropos the table. Councillor Stewart.

CS Thank you, Chair. I think concerning [inaudible]. It seems like [unclear] and kind of the whole purpose of it is to review some of those issues and come back with better options or whatnot.

00:15:21

But I would say one of the priorities, I would see, when you're looking at streamlining and improving our governance structure could be, again, that includes student engagement that Councillor Bouwer mentioned. And opportunities for students I think, is a big priority that we should consider, especially when it comes to our committee. As well as making sure accountability is still there. While they're still [unclear] essence still gets the information that we're supposed to do that are held accountable within their committees.

When I say that, I also mean in terms of training and information for those committees being I think a bit more than they currently are. To give committees members the opportunity to really fulfil their mandate, because I'll say from experience, or at least on, for example, the audit committee for a few meetings that we had, I think we weren't even given all the information that as per our mandate, we were supposed to have and review.

So I don't know how that works for some of the other committee's but that's definitely I think a concern is something that you should look towards and ensure that there is sufficient training. And as well as including other student leaders that can open the opportunity as talked by councillor Bouwer. that wasn't my original idea. But encouraging other faculties too to get involved.

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As in, for audit or budget and finance committees can make opportunities for the students and other faculties that have more of those skills that can benefit from that experience. Maybe not honest with councils, a whole might not suit their needs. But by participating committees that are relevant to their degrees of separation. But I thought that was really exciting, or something we can look forward to, or even including in inviting different people from campus, because we don't have faculty councils.

I think we lose a lot of engagement from individual students. So I think engagement, and more training, more information for committees so that we are prepared and have that accountability is important.

And priorities, I would say in that effect, accountability also refers to the kind of reporting that we get for committees and from executives, and well. Making sure that we need to gather that information and that it is available, or students can access that. And know that they can access those things. I think is the biggest thing, because unless students really have a particular question, they don't really go and look at those things. But making it so they know that these things are available if they do have questions or concerns and where to find them a lot easier than having to search through themselves and trying to figure that out. Thank you.

CH Thank you, Councillor for your comments. Councillor Ruiz.

CR Thank you, Chair. I will say what has been proposed works really good. However, I do have a question on their proposed changes where it says that looking for operations as structures that should be removed from committees.

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If I go get some examples as to what those operational things are, and how will that affect set committees?

CH Thank you, councillor. Perhaps that is to be considered. But Vice President, do you have any insight into that question?

VPOF Yes, Thank you chair. So a drastic version would be, and this is not where I see this going. But an example that was performed with all subcommittees of executive committee would be turned over to operations, for example.

So that's about seven committees that would be removed and put into operations in a more aggressive capacity. So no longer being chaired by executive committee for an example. That will be an example. I don't foresee that being the case. But that would be where you would see operational activities being taken out and put into operations. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you, Vice President. Would it be fair to say that anything is on the table? And maybe we'll be looking at those structures? And then that would come back to councils for a decision. Councillor Ruiz, did you have anything further on that?

CR Yes. Now do you think... First of all, thanks so much, Madam Vice President for clarifying that. And that will be an issue, at least for myself. As I do think that like certain sub-committees from Executive Committee are pretty important to these values, such as say health.

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And then those subcommittee. And I do think that it will be important for The Council, and students at large, to at least have a voice on said committees. So that will be my only objection to the proposed changes. Unless, of course, we get some more information as to how that structure will work in the future.

But as of right now, that will be my only objection to the proposed changes.

CH Thank you, Councillor. Other comments? Councillor Drummond.

CDR Thank you, Chair. So overall, I see this, from what I've read as something that can be positive if done correctly. My one concern is if we are merging subcommittees as to reduce workload. And the amount of people that are working on those committees, I know a lot of these committees have huge workloads or very important mandates to the Students Association. So I'd hope to see that if mergers are happening, that we're also allocating more spots, along with that. Without just doing a merger and leaving out other people to work on the project. Because I think it can become overwhelming very quickly, if that's not done together. So I hope that the committee would look at making sure that those two steps are happening cohesively and not one is left out.

So that's where my concern comes from. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you, councillor. Other comments. Councillor Hassan.

CHS Mine is a question. I'm having a little bit of trouble understanding this. So new Council, maybe elaborate on what has worked really well, so far.

00:22:08

And what may be initiated distributed process just so I can understand what we're kind of looking at changing.

CH Sure. Councillor, thank you. Vice President.

VPOF Thank you, Chair. So it came about several months ago, through the delegation of authority was the largest concern for operations, specifically the general manager. So there are instances where the general manager has responsibility over components of assembly [?] but not the authority to do those things. That authority sits with students Council, sometimes the executive committee.

So it was a struggle for her to fully understand, if I'm responsible, I should have authority for that, vice versa. And there can often be a grain of area between the GM and the executive in terms of responsibility and authority.

And so that was the discussion that came out of that. And then as that is a governance function of authority and delegation of that, we did some auditing of the government structure as a whole, to see what was the fundamental issues. So during that process, everything was on the table, so to speak, as the chair mentioned. So committee structure was put in just because that is a level of delegated authority that exists within the association. So subcommittees of Students Council have delegated authority from Students Council to do certain work and make certain decisions.

00:23:54

And then from executive committee the same. So it boils down to responsibility, delegation of authority, and as well, some best practice. Based on the proposals that we got, it's unusual for a body of this size, to have as many committees as we do. And some of the functions that you would see in non-for-profit organisations aren't necessarily... They're being done, but not maybe captured in the way that they should be, things like that. So it's more of let's look at this from a holistic perspective, to make sure that the things that need to get done are being done, documented correctly, and that those that are responsible for those functions have the authority to do so. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you, Vice President. Councillor Hassan, anything further on that.

CHS That was the only thing.

CH Thank you. Councillors, any other comments? Vice President?

VPOF I've been consulted.

CH Thank you, Vice President. Moving on to Item 9, evaluation. We'll distribute forms. Order. Nobody else filling out forms. No. Okay, Item 10, Recognition. Any comments for recognition? Councillor Ruiz.

CR As [inaudible] for some of our members, would like both present. And some not present, I would like to say that it's been great serving with all of you. So I have served with some of you for quite a few years. While some of you just a term.

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And I wish you all the best in your future endeavours. And thank you for all of your great work. Thank you, Chairperson.

CH Vice President.

VPOF Thank you, Chair. I would like to recognise the governance assistant, as it is also her last meeting here with us and to recognise her contribution in her work over the last three years. I think it's really impressive. And I would like that to be documented here. Thank you, Chair.

CH For the record Vice President, normally, there would be cake. Or at least that would be my expectation. Someone failed in the procurement of cake. And so here we are. Any other recognition, President.

PR Thank you, Chair. I just want to take this opportunity to recognise all you fine folks around this table. For those of you who are new, you weren't around for the struggle. You've had to make some tough decisions. And we've had to have some tough conversations. And I appreciate that all of you came to the table at least. I think with the intention to solve those problems with best of our abilities.

And if there's anything really that has come forward, you've always been incredibly open to hearing the executive out and working with us. So very thankful for that. It's been a hell of a ride. And this is the end. Thank you, Chair.

00:28:05

CH Thank you, President. Any other recognition? Councillor Stewart.

CS [Inaudible]. I just wanted to give some recognition for the stuff that's happened over the last month.

When it comes to the back history [unclear] because of the last few months or so. And also hearing about the open textbook or open access to the textbook project that the Vice President, Academics was working on and seeing that become a success. And having that, go through to what looks like to be quite a few crashes, and the upcoming years.

And that's like really exciting. And I guess I want to thank all the [unclear], thanks again for their work in all the different projects that they've worked out. And initiatives, as well as for being open to answering my questions and having us just walk into their offices, when they're trying to get work done to talk to them about what's happening or just being open to help us navigate this process together. And learn how to do specific Council stuff. So I want to thank you for that. Thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you, councillor. Is there any other recognition? So Council as my as the traditional with me, I get the last piece of recognition. And so I think that original gangsters do cry. Because I am OG, that's still a thing right? Is that still a thing that people say? But I'm old, what I'm trying to say is that I'm glad some people are laughing. My wife doesn't laugh a lot. I just want to say that, it's always a bit bittersweet when we have new members join and some members leave.

00:30:16

But I want to say that you have conducted yourselves as a council, I think, to the best that I've seen a council here. Or at least to the best that I've seen a council operate here. And I think I've been here for three or four years now.

I'm old again. So I don't remember. But I want to congratulate you on that. I want to say that for those of you that are departing, the experience you gained here will be incredibly valuable to you.

And I say that from experience from sitting on the senate as well as being an executive there for a number of years. So long in fact that the changed the rules to make sure that you could only be there for two years. And so congratulations to you. I know you

will go on to do many good things. And perhaps I will be procuring your management consulting expertise in the future, as the government's got a lot of work to do with very few employees apparently.

So I say that in jest. So, again, thank you, to those of you who are new or remaining. I think we've got a good year ahead. There's a lot of exciting things going on on this council and I'm happy to be here for another year. And so I hope you're excited as well. So with that, we will move on to item, I think it's 11, adjournment. Do we have a motion? President?

PR No, thank you, Chair.

CH Thank you. This motion only requires one mover and is not debatable. All those in favour? Thank you. Motion carries. This meeting is adjourned.

00:32:09