

**McMaster Association of Part-Time Students
Board of Directors Meeting – Minutes
Tuesday, July 15, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.
Room 224, MUSC, McMaster University**

PRESENT Jackie Arlen (chair), Emily Cerantola, Caroline Hill-Smith, Cassandra Lo, Erick Merlos, David Moore (corporate secretary)

REGRETS Marijana Govorcin, Jeff Huber

STAFF Kyle Johansen (executive director)

CONSTITUTION OF THE MEETING

The corporate secretary had issued notice in accordance with By-law 2, Section 2 (g & h). A quorum being present, the chair called the meeting to order.

ATTACHMENTS TO THE OFFICIAL COPY OF THE MINUTES

- Agenda
- Draft Open Session Minutes, 3 June 2014
- Policy Report, 8 July 2014
- Executive & Management Report, 8 July 2014
- Cover memo and revised 2014 Budget, 7 July 2014
- Executive Director Job Description
- Information Assistant Job Description
- Insurance Review Proposal, 7 July 2014
- Open Letter from MSU President – Community Matters, 7 June 2014
- Cover memo and draft Operational Plan 2014-2015

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted as presented by general consent.

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

The open session minutes of the meeting of June 3, 2014, were adopted (as circulated) by general consent.

3. POLICY REPORT

A copy of the Policy Report is appended to the master copy of the minutes.

Johansen noted that he has been reviewing the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) data on enrolment history and forecasting. He added this will inform development of a white paper on inter-student government collaboration by highlighting who part-time students are and why they have distinct representation and service needs.

4. EXECUTIVE & MANAGEMENT REPORT

Johansen presented the Executive and Management Report. A copy of the report, together with materials supporting various decision points, is appended to the master copy of the minutes.

Johansen advised that 500 USB flash drives (8GB) have been ordered as promotional item for MAPS. The drives are credit card shaped with a full colour (website banner) logo on the front and contact information and a QR code on the back. 115 of the cards are committed to MAPS' sponsorship of the Faculty of Social Sciences' Career Countdown Conference on November 8, 2014. The cost for the USB keys falls within the budget.

2014 Budget

Johansen presented the revised budget, noting that adjustments have been made to reflect more detailed information about 2014 fee revenue provided by the University over the last week.

On-line meetings – arrangements have been made to employ ADOBE Connect pay per use conference services as a more economical alternative to Cisco WebEx for member engagement.

Education Services – planning is underway to host two educational sessions in September and October: one on funding options for students and the other on skills for on-line access (library, Avenue 2 Learn). A third (topic not yet selected) is slated for November and if the program is successful, more will be held in winter 2015. Sessions will be recorded and posted on the Association's website.

Travel/Expense Reimbursement – The year-to-date is about \$2,600 and the budget line is \$3,000. Much of this reflects board member travel to meetings which is reimbursed at the University rate (54 cents per km) which is also the federal government rate. It was noted that claims are likely to be smaller in the fall term when members may already be coming to campus on days when they also have MAPS-related meetings.

Handbook – revised text has gone to Underground for layout in an on-line version and a limited edition print run (initially 250 copies). Key dates will be placed directly into the calendar. Last year's edition was organized by thematic chapter, but this year's will place MAPS information at the front, then information on CCE and Undergraduate programs, followed by all other services in alphabetical order, with an index at the back that includes phone numbers and web site addresses.

A number of amendments were made:

- University Administrative Fees increased from \$1,320 to \$2,670 to reflect the 1% collection charge by Financial Services on all fee revenue.
- Travel/Expense Reimbursement – increased from \$2,600 to \$4,000 to reflect anticipated actuals.
- Service Coordinators increased from \$6,250 to \$10,000 to provide for a mentorship coordinator and a possible bundling of social media coordination and development on an on-line community for part-time students.
- Corresponding adjustments to Contingency and 2014 Operating Surplus

Motion: Moved by Moore, seconded by Arlen that that the Board approve revised 2014 Budget, as amended.
Carried.

Compensation Schedule

A proposed compensation schedule (salary ranges) for each of the staff categories was presented for consideration. A balance has been sought, that balances a desire to provide a reasonable wage while being mindful of the Association's budgetary constraints.

Arlen noted that Karen Wilkinson accepted a position with the University due primarily to a higher salary level and employee benefits like pension, health & dental.

Johansen noted that a review of the executive director's role and responsibilities and submission of the updated role along with a proposed salary range to the University's Human Resources Department was one of the requirements set out by the Provost in October 2012. In December 2013, Johansen had informed the Dean of Students that in addition to this requirement, MAPS would also conduct its own external evaluation of an appropriate salary range for the position. MAPS submitted the position for reappraisal earlier this year and provided supplemental information in mid-April in response to an inquiry from the Dean of Students. There has been no response from the University since that time.

The proposed range for the executive director position is roughly equivalent to Band J of "The Management Group" (TMG) salary scale.

Johansen has sent a copy of the proposed executive director job description and the compensation schedule to the Dean of Students, noting that with this MAPS considers the Provost's requirement met.

Motion: Moved by Arlen, seconded by Lo that that the Board approve the July 2014 Compensation Schedule.
Carried.

Move to Scotiabank

Motion: Moved by Moore, seconded by Hill-Smith that the Executive Director prepare a cheque from the PACE Credit Union account for deposit to the MAPS Scotiabank account for the purpose of transferring the funds to our new financial institution; not to exceed \$65,000 and providing for any outstanding cheques drawn against the PACE Credit Union account.
Carried.

Job Descriptions

As an employer, it is important that MAPS have up-to-date job descriptions for each of its staff positions (full-time and part-time). The proposed executive director job description was also provided to the Dean of Students to inform the University HR department's assessment of the position's salary band.

The Information Assistant job description was circulated for the information of the board.

Motion: Moved by Arlen, seconded by Cerantola that the Board approve the Executive Director job description, as circulated.
Carried.

Summer Advocacy Program

Motion: Moved by Arlen, seconded by Cerantola that Executive Director work with Summer Advocacy Program proponents to conduct a review the summer session retrospectively in a manner that maximizes the usefulness of the review and provides value to the members.
Carried.

Insurance Review Proposal

The MSU has agreed in principle to allow MAPS members to opt into the MSU’s health and dental insurance plans. The MSU is consulting its insurance provider to obtain individual and dependent premium rates for MAPS members and will provide those to the executive director in the coming weeks. Opt-ins would have to be administered by MAPS and the MSU (the premiums could not be collected by the University for this year as we are too late in the planning cycle; and there are concerns that the University’s new financial software may not be flexible enough to accommodate an opt-in program in any case). The existing rates for 2014-2015 (MSU members and other students groups currently buying into the MSU plans) are as follows:

Health Plan – MSU Members	\$58.08	\$174.23
Dental Plan – MSU Members	\$116.15	

Non-MSU Opt-in for Affiliates (medicine, midwifery, child life studies)	\$196.95
---	----------

To insurance carriers, there isn’t a difference between various categories of McMaster students (undergraduate, graduate, full-time, part-time). There may be opportunities to leverage a combination of lower premiums and improved benefits by enlarging the number of ‘insured lives’ under a single policy (i.e. combining MSU and GSA, and providing for MAPS and other affiliate members to opt-in).

Motion: Moved by Cerantola, seconded by Lo that:

1. That the President and Executive Director be authorized to enter into negotiations with the MSU to establish a part-time student ‘opt in’ for health and dental benefits for implementation as soon as possible.
2. That the Executive Director work with the management of the MSU and GSA to conduct an independent review of the health and dental plans at McMaster University with the objective of creating a streamlined, optimized, less expensive / improved coverage program.
3. That the President and Executive Director report back on progress and provide further recommendations based on the results of negotiations and the results of the independent review.
4. Contingent on the independent review showing a net benefit to proceeding, that the President and Executive Director be authorized to enter into discussions with the MSU and GSA to create a single health and dental plan for McMaster students; subject to Board approval.

Carried.

Johansen proposed that an insurance consultant with specialized skills in insurance plan optimization be engaged to review the existing MSU and GSA plans with a view to developing a unified plan that would be administered by each student government for its own members. This is an area where MAPS may take leadership in developing a value-added proposal where the membership of all participating student organizations would stand to benefit.

Motion: Moved by Cerantola, seconded by Lo that that the Board authorize up to \$5,000 be allocated from Contingency to Consulting to fund an independent review of the MSU and GSA Health and Dental Plans in pursuit of a single, optimized plan for all McMaster students.
Carried.

MSU President's Letter

The Board noted that the MSU president released an open letter to the MSU membership in early June entitled "Community Matters" (copy appended to the master copy of the minutes).

5. OPERATING PLAN FOR 2014-2015

Johansen noted that the Operating Plan represents a compilation of the themes, specific tasks, and broad priorities articulated by members of the Board at the last meeting. Areas highlighted in yellow were decision points. Following discussion, it was agreed that the overarching theme is creating benefits for our members and that for communications purposes, the following would be adopted:

Short tag-line: "Helping you navigate your success"

Longer Purpose Statement:

"MAPS helps you successfully navigate your part-time student experience."

The Board reviewed the balance of the plan and gave direction for minor editorial refinement.

Motion: Moved by Lo, seconded by Merlos to approve the 2014 Operating Plan as amended.
Carried.

6. CLOSED SESSION

The Board moved into closed session by general consent.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Graduations

Arlen and Lo were congratulated on their graduation. Both received their degrees at convocation on June 13.

Courseware and textbooks

Merlos commented that for some courses, students can find much of the courseware material on-line for free. Hill-Smith noted that in some faculties/departments, courseware is more assignment based and/or has a higher degree of content that is proprietary to the instructor. In any case, there are significant copyright issues.

Some instructors have told students to get their materials from Amazon where they are offered at a considerably cheaper price than through the Campus Store.

Johansen will speak with the Campus Store regarding the possibility of having digital versions of Courseware available for online purchase/download.

Recognizing part-time students at graduation

Merlos suggested that MAPS develop some way of recognizing all part-time students at the time of their graduation (i.e. in addition to the Gold Medal and other existing awards). He suggested some sort of keepsake to mark their substantial achievement. Johansen took this under advisement and will report back to the Board.

Arlen noted that many of the gowns provided at convocation are without hooks to close at the front or would otherwise benefit from refurbishment/replacement. Following some discussion, it was agreed to have Johansen:

- Investigate how the existing \$40 Graduation Fee (payable by all graduating students who attend convocation) is apportioned. The original intended purpose of the fee was, in part, to pay for replacement/upkeep of hoods and gowns.
- Investigate the cost of replacing gowns
- Draw the issue to the attention of the MSU and GSA, with a view to a potential joint representation to the University on the matter

Employer reimbursement of course registration costs

Some employers reimburse the cost of “tuition” but not compulsory supplementary fees that are also part of the cost of course registration. While the University is required by the provincial government to maintain “tuition fees” and other required fees separately for transparency purposes, it was suggested that the University introduce a new category of “total course fee” that might be more readily recognized by employer-sponsors.

Johansen noted that MAPS could survey its members about the portion of part-time students may be eligible for employer reimbursement of fees and then follow-up with the University.

8. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

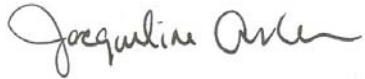
No meetings of the full Board are anticipated before September, when a monthly meeting schedule will resume. The Board agreed that should any business need to be transacted prior to September, it would conduct that business through pass-around motions supported by the SimplyVoting.com platform. Moore will circulate a request in mid-August for members’ availability for the fall term.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Moved by Moore, seconded by Cerantola to adjourn.
Carried.

9:15 p.m.

These minutes were duly approved by the Board at its meeting on September 16, 2014.



Jacqueline Arlen, President



David Moore, Secretary