

MINUTES

Concordia Student Union Council Meeting
August 23, 2010 SGW H-771

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Roll call
3. Approval of agenda
4. Presentation on Eco-quartier Peter McGill
 - a. Motion for Eco-quartier Peter McGill
 - b. Motion for approval of agreement with Concordia University
5. Appointment to CVAP Board (Executive and Councilor)
 - a. CVAP Special Project Application
 - b. Loan to CVAP ratification
6. Presentation on CFS
7. Resignation and Appointment
8. Adjournment

Minutes

1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:38pm.

2. Roll call

Councillors:

- Lex Gill
- Alex Gordon
- Asma Omar
- Stephen Brown
- Tomer Shavit
- Alexandra Baptista
- Johnnie Vu
- Heba Abdel-Hamid
- Alison Revine
- David Feldman
- Abdullah Husen
- Michaela Manson
- Carlos Puerta
- Teresa Seminara
- Aaron Green

Executives:

- Prince Ralph Osei
- Heather Lucas
- Morgan Pudwell
- Hassan Abdullahi
- Andres Lopez
- Ramy Khoriaty
- Adrien Severyns

3. Approval of the agenda

Motion to move item 4 to 5, 5 to 6, 6 to 7, 7 to 8, and 8 to 9.
(Osei)

Motion seconded by Gordon.

Motion passed- all in favour.

Motion to approve agenda.

Motion Passed- all in favour.

Seconded by Husen.

4. Presentation on Eco-quartier Peter McGill **a. Motion for Eco-quartier Peter McGill**

Osei explains: Eco-quartier is an environmental group that improves parts of the city. CSU has been working with Eco-quartier for three to four years. The group receives money for its projects such as planting trees downtown.

Osei then went on to read 3.a) Motion on Eco-quartier Peter McGill, which was sent to all councillors.

“Where as Éco-quartier Peter McGill is a downtown environmental education and sensitization program. Its main funding comes from the Ville-Marie Borough of the City of Montreal. It has been under the umbrella of the Concordia Student Union since its beginnings in November of 1997. It has received significant recognition for its accomplishments, including the Prix d’excellence Éco-quartier and the Phénix de l’environnement.

Where as beyond the operating funding given by the Ville-Marie Borough, Éco-quartier Peter-McGill must seek project funding to attain its objectives of improving the quality of life as well as the involvement and consciousness of the neighbourhood it works in: the

Peter-McGill District in the western part of Downtown Montreal.

Where as consequently, an application has been made with the EcoAction Program of the federal government to create two Green Alleys (Ruelles vertes) on either side of Souvenir Street, at the southwestern part of the neighbourhood. These would be the 7th and 8th Green Alley of a growing network.

Where as the grant was approved and an amount of \$ 23 570 was set aside by the federal government as part of Project PQ-2009K031Éco-quartier Peter-McGill is part of (and an active member of) the Montreal-wide network of Éco-quartiers.

Where as to officially accept the agreement, the federal government asks that two persons be designated to act as respondents for this proposal.

BIRT _____ and _____ have been named by Council to both be respondents for this proposal identified as Project **PQ-2009K031 - Ruelles vertes - avenue Hawarden et rue du Souvenir, as part of the federal government's EcoAction Program.**"

Prince would like to nominate Revine and Manson to be the respondents.

Accepted by Revine and Manson.

Motion passed- all in favour.

There are no other nominations.

b. Motion for approval of agreement with Concordia University

c.

Prince reads motion 4.b) Motion for approval of agreement with Concordia University.

“APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT WITH CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY REGARDING FEES FOR STUDENT SERVICES AND RECREATION AND ATHLETICS

WHEREAS the Board of Governors of Concordia University has, on the advice of the Concordia Council on Student Life, approved from time to time the collection of student fees for the purposes of the Student Services and Recreation and Athletics budgets for the academic years spanning from 2006-2007 to 2011-2012;

WHEREAS the University is seeking the agreement of the CSU to those fees for the purposes of and pursuant to the *Règle budgétaire sur l'encadrement des frais institutionnels obligatoires dans les universités*;

WHEREAS a draft “Agreement between Concordia University and the Concordia Student Union Regarding Fees for Student Services and Recreation and Athletics” has been placed before Council for its consideration and approval;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the “Agreement between Concordia University and the Concordia Student Union Regarding Fees for Student Services and Recreation and Athletics” be and is hereby approved and that Prince Ralph Osei, as President, be and is hereby authorized to execute same on behalf of the CSU.”

Prince would like to make an amendment:

“Be it resolved that the “Agreement between Concordia University and the Concordia Student Union Regarding Fees for Student Services and Recreation and Athletics” be and is hereby approved and that Prince Ralph Osei, as President, and Heather Lucas, as VP Services, be and is hereby authorized to execute same on behalf of the CSU.”

Motion seconded by Husen.

Open for discussion.

In 2006, it was decided to increase fees to provide more services to students. It was done. In 2008, 2009, all that was decided was no increase in the amount of money students were paying for services. It was voted on by students at that time and is already decided, but the council must vote on it as well just for bureaucratic purposes.

Discussion on the amendment.

“Be it resolved that the “Agreement between Concordia University and the Concordia Student Union Regarding Fees for Student Services and Recreation and Athletics” be and is hereby approved and that Prince Ralph Osei, as President, and Heather Lucas, as VP Services, be and is hereby authorized to execute same on behalf of the CSU.”

Motion passed- all in favour, none opposed or abstained.
Amendment passed.

Discussion on the amendment.

Gill: asks what would happen if it wasn't approved.

Osei: he refers to conversation with lawyer- it was already binding.

Gill: GSA has been talking about not approving or challenging it. She said we should keep this in mind.

Prince: had any single student been asked to pay, he wouldn't have brought this to council. However, no students are asked to be pay so we are good to go.

Motion passed- many in favour, none opposed, one abstained (Puerta).

5. Appointment to CVAP Board (Executive and Councillor)

Looking for an executive and a councillor to appoint to CVAP board.

Lucas nominates Pudwell for executive position.

No other nominations for executive position.

Accepted by Pudwell.

Seconded by Revine.

Lucas nominates Abdel-Hamid for councillor position.

Accepted by Abdel-Hamid.

Seconded by Husen.

Motion passed for both Pudwell and Abdel-Hamid to be appointed to CVAP.

a. CVAP Special Project Application

Osei: explained that though the VP Finance (Zhuo) and four other councillors could normally take care of this, it has been brought to council.

CVAP is asking for \$2000 for the outreach program at Concordia. This relates to sending students to Uganda. There are two groups of 30 students each- May/June group and June/August group. They need council's approval.

No discussion at this point.

Manson: asks the difference between the special project application and the loan, as well as where the money would be going in each instance.

Osei: the application is for money for outreach in the Concordia community, while the loan is for the actual project that is happening in Uganda.

Stephen: If this is a volunteer program, how will they raise the money to pay us back?

Osei: That is not up to the council.

Heba: wants to confirm that the money is to send the people to Uganda.

Prince: the \$2000 is for outreach in the Concordia community, not the actual sending of students to Uganda.

No more discussion.

Motion passed- 11 in favour, 0 opposed, 3 abstained.

b. Loan to CVAP ratification

Osei reads the Ratification of Presidential Decree Concordia Volunteer Abroad Program Loan, which was distributed to councillors in advance.

“WHEREAS the Concordia Volunteer Abroad Program (the “CVAP”) has requested from the CSU a \$45,000 loan for the purpose of purchasing land in Uganda and the subsequent construction of a lodging facility on such land for student volunteers taking part in the volunteer program put in place by the CVAP; **WHEREAS** has issued on August 12, 2010 a Presidential Decree to the effect that: a) the CVAP’s loan request be and was thereby approved; b) the President and the Finance Vice-President of the CSU be and were thereby authorized to execute on behalf of the CSU a Loan Agreement and a Hypothec on Claims with the CVAP in the form appended to the Decree; c) the disbursement of the loan was authorized forthwith upon execution of the Loan Agreement and Hypothec on Claims. **WHEREAS** the Presidential Decree was tabled at Council; **WHEREAS** the CSU and CVAP entered into a Loan Agreement and a Hypothec of Claims, copied of which have been tabled at Council; **WHEREAS** the loan amount of \$45,000 has been disbursed; **BE IT RESOLVED** to ratify the President Decree issued on August 12, 2010 and approve and ratify the \$45,000 loan to the CVAP, as well as the Loan Agreement and the Hypothec on Claims entered into with the CVAP as of that date.”

Open for discussion.

Osei: The above is from a week and half ago. It was a loan request from CVAP for \$45,000. CVAP has existed for the last four years. A CSU executive sits on its council. Every year, CVAP sends 60 students to Uganda, where there was a war. Every student at Concordia pays 35 cents per credit to CVAP, for a total of \$220,000 every year. For the past 4 years, \$45,000 of this has been spent on facilities for our students while in Uganda. So what we are discussing now is building a multi-facility there. At \$125,000, it could be used by the Concordia students in the summer for housing and by locals the rest of the time for HIV outreach. Because CVAP does not receive money until the end of May every year, it approached banks for a loan but was unsuccessful. The best offer they received was from a private source, at a very high 10% interest. The CSU can offer better than this. CSU has \$55,000 in the budget it has yet to allocate, so why not lend to CVAP at no interest until it receives money from the school on May 20, 2011? CSU spoke to a lawyer and drafted an agreement.

Dachby: speaking in favour of this. He just returned from Uganda to see the land we’d be buying to build the facility. By buying land and building on it, hotel and other facility fees will be saved. This is a sustainable project. Construction will start next month and by next year, CVAP groups will be able to use the facilities. The land is beautiful and is located in the middle of downtown. This project is amazing so let’s not hesitate. CVAP is changing peoples’ lives and we should encourage them!

Vu: Annually, for how long are people sent and how many are sent?

Prince: 30 students, 2 months. That is the first group. Then the second group works the same way, for a total of 60 students and 4 months. It usually costs \$45,000 to house these 60 students.

Gill: CVAP does excellent work but wants to speak against the motion on principle, though she thinks this will pass anyways. We have no CSU by-laws or standing regulations regarding giving out loans. This will set a dangerous precedent. It is a 0% interest loan. We will also not be making the \$1000 interest we could be making. However, not approving this loan would jeopardize their work, and construction has already started.

Osei: Yes, CSU doesn't regularly lend money to organizations or groups. Once, CSU gave \$10,000 to the Concordia co-op bookstore and was unable to get it back. But it was because of lack of due diligence and lack of a contract. We should do this because it will go with Severyn's coming anti-poverty work. Also, for them to have to secure a loan at 10% interest is intense.

Lucas: yes, it may set a precedent but we're going to have two people sitting on their council and this is a good cause so CSU should be a part of this. But, we do need to be careful not to show favouritism towards one group. Overall, I am speaking in support of it!

Dachby: CSU shouldn't charge interest to fee levy groups, that will set precedent too.

Brown: So CSU has \$55,000 in budget available to allocate in however way as long as council approved. Though CSU isn't a money lending business, we do have \$55,000 available. Let's spend it on something good. Not only is it surplus anyways, but we're getting it back!

Abdel-Hamid: how do we guarantee that we won't get in trouble for favouritism?

Gill: I wasn't suggesting that we do or don't give money to student groups or that we do or don't charge interest. Just that before we start lending money we need to think carefully.

Osei: We are not a bank. Sometimes things are thrown our way and we need to use our discretion to seize an opportunity. This project speaks for itself. In terms of other groups that come to CSU for same reason, they'll have to come to council with very good arguments.

Abdel-Hamid: that didn't answer my question regarding being careful about favouritism. Lets say that I am a group. Say I want money to build a school. How would you go about my proposal?

Osei: It would have to come to council with a good argument.

Dachby: (to clarify what Osei was saying): clubs are different from fee levy groups. Clubs already belong to CSU and they have their own budgets set aside at the beginning while fee levy groups do not. And in terms of precedence- think of the co-op bookstore. It already happened so precedence already exists. Any fee levy group that wants money will have to come to council and it will depend on the council's votes and decision.

Khoriarty: Just to clarify, there is also a special project funding for CSU clubs that clubs can apply for.

No more discussion.

Chairperson: Just so everyone is aware, this vote is going to require two-thirds majority to ratify. He then reads "The President and the Loyola & Advocacy Vice-President of the CSU be and are hereby authorized to execute on behalf of the CSU a Loan Agreement and a Hypothec on Claims with the CVAP in the form appended to this decree"

Motion passed- 11 in favour, 1 opposed, 2 abstained.

6. Presentation on CFS

Presented by Severyns: He has studied the CFS and its effects on CSU and its history. Make note on where we are now and where we are going. The CSU joined CFS in 1998. JMSB and engineering joined later in 2008. By October 2009, there was a CSU petition going around to no longer be with CFS. Council ratified it soon after. However in 2010, the general assembly rejected it. So therefore, a motion regarding CFS is being presented.

"WHEREAS by petition duly delivered to the CFS on October 19th 2009, the CSU members clearly expressed their desire that a referendum on continued membership be held in conformity with the CFS By-Laws before the end of the 2009-2010 academic year;

WHEREAS the CFS has refused to comply with its own By-Laws and has tried to delay such a referendum and thus, deny the rights of its individual members to vote by raising last minute allegations that an amount of over 1 million dollars would be owed by the Concordia undergraduate students to itself;

WHEREAS the CSU has denounced these stalling tactics and called repeatedly on the CFS to hold a referendum concurrently with the CSU's 2010 annual general elections;

WHEREAS the CFS has refused to provide CSU with referendum dates during the 2010 winter semester;

WHEREAS it had become necessary, in light of the repeated refusals of the CFS, that the question on continued membership be put to the students, without further delay;

WHEREAS a referendum question on continued membership in the CFS was put to the CSU members concurrently with the CSU 2010 Elections held from March 23rd to 25th, 2010

WHEREAS the results of said referendum were to the question: “Are you in favor of continued membership in the Canadian Federation of Students?”: 931 for the Yes side and 2348 for the No side;

WHEREAS such referendum results are binding upon the CSU regardless of any legal dispute with the CFS;

WHEREAS regardless of the referendum results, the CFS is currently denying the right of the CSU to sever its membership ties with it which is the usual strategy of the CFS across Canada e.g. SFSS, Guelph, PGSS etc.;

WHEREAS the CSU will have no other choice than to ask the courts to determine its current membership status within the CFS;

WHEREAS the costs of this litigation will be substantial;

WHEREAS out of caution, the CSU has put in the trust account of its attorneys the fees collected from its members for the CFS for the 2009-2010 academic year and will be doing the same for the 2010-2011 academic year;

WHEREAS the interests on these amounts belong to the CSU;

BE IT RESOLVED that a legal action be instituted against the CFS to force it to recognize the results of the CSU referendum, and any other claim that could be made against it or any other third parties involved on the advice of Counsel;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the costs of the litigation be covered by the interests on the amounts held in trust;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that reports are made to Council on the progress of the litigation on a regular basis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all political avenues be pursued along side the litigation by the CSU to ensure that the democratic will of CSU members is respected by the CFS.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the CSU will not participate in any meeting and /or organization that could be construed or interpreted as the CSU being part of the CFS.”

Motion seconded by Gill.

Discussion.

Osei: He explained that he has sat down, strategized, and talked to a lawyer. There are four options. First: to play nice with CFS and hope they let us go. Second: do nothing and hope they forget. Third: seek legal action in court. Fourth: attack them politically. The last two are our better options. If we went with the third option, we would pursue an independent judge in Quebec. If we went with the fourth option, we would be hurting them where it could hurt the most. Both these options will cost us money to attack them. We will fund this from interest earned on the \$600,000 that should be in the bank when the CFS battle is over. We can use the interest from this money to pay for our legal costs in fighting CFS. We should submit a motion to judge.

No discussion.

Chairperson reads: “BE IT RESOLVED that a legal action be instituted against the CFS to force it to recognize the results of the CSU referendum, and any other claim that could be made against it or any other third parties involved on the advice of Counsel;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the costs of the litigation be covered by the interests on the amounts held in trust;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that reports are made to Council on the progress of the litigation on a regular basis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all political avenues be pursued along side the litigation by the CSU to ensure that the democratic will of CSU members is respected by the CFS.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the CSU will not participate in any meeting and /or organization that could be construed or interpreted as the CSU being part of the CFS.”

Motion passed- all in favour, none opposed or abstained.

7. Resignation and Appointment

Osei: Due to family pressures and moving to Europe for education, Osei will be resigning as the President of CSU with great regret. He expresses thanks for the opportunity and the times. He will cherish many fond memories. He has high hopes that CSU will prosper. He has full confidence in the CSU and its leaders. He would especially like to thank all the great people he has worked with and believes that he is leaving CSU in great hands.

Khoriarty: confirms that this resignation will be effective as of Wednesday, August 25th, 2010. Resignation has been accepted. Heather Lucas, currently VP Services at CSU, will now serve as the president for the remainder of Osei’s term. The position of VP Services will be filled soon.

Seconded by Husen and Revine.

Discussion.

Revine: has known Lucas for 2 years. The two shared positions on a sorority, and she can speak with confidence that Lucas is good for the job, in aspects of work and in person.

Hassan: Lucas is more than capable of handling this job. The executives are a team and in support of Lucas being president.

Husen: though sad to see Osei leave, as he truly is one of the best, he is happy about Lucas. Lucas is a genuine people person and has the right experience. She is the best candidate at the table right now.

Siriwardhana: Osei is great, and Lucas has big shoes to fill. But, Lucas will make a good president. She puts complete faith in Lucas.

Seminara: though upset to see Osei leave, supports Lucas with confidence.

Severyns: You join an association because you believe in something and you want to be there and create change. By far, Osei and Lucas are here for this.

Dachby: Sad to see Osei leave, as he is perfect and undoubtedly a hardworking and noble leader. Lucas is naturally the person to replace Osei. She puts work before anything.

Brown: This is really tough, but is grateful for everything Osei has done. He is in support of Lucas becoming the new president.

Osei: all seven VPs are committed and dedicated to the students. The President is a leader among equals and though Lucas is stepping into the spotlight, he is thankful towards every VP. It's going to be a great year.

Lopez: There is a special bond and it is a big loss to lose prince. However, he has confidence in Lucas.

Lucas: Osei has contributed a lot to Concordia. He is incredible and inspiring. She is grateful for this opportunity and promises to do her best and keep her promises.

Gill: Happy for both Osei and Lucas.

Vote on motion for appointment of Lucas as President.

Motion passed- all in favour, none opposed or abstained.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.
(Osei)

Seconded by Omar.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53pm.