

Meeting – 4th October 2022

Time – 5:00 PM

Location – Begin Tower, 22nd Floor

Present:

Dawson Thomas	President	Voting Member
Jayden Baldonado	Director	Voting Member
Karanpreet Singh Gill	Director	Voting Member
Ha Phuong Anh Nguyen	Director	Voting Member
Paul John Martinez	Director	Voting Member
Oluwatomisin Aroge	Director (online)	Voting Member
Marc Stromme	Saitsa Executive Director	Non-Voting
Rachel Paris	Director, Student Services	Non-Voting
Rio Valencerina	Manager, Governance & Advocacy	Non-Voting
Sunra Sunra	Administrative Coordinator, G&A	Non-Voting
Christina Matisons	Board Advisor	Non-Voting

Regrets:

Aaron Ramos	Vice President	Voting Member
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Guests:

Khushpreet Kaur	Student	Non-Voting
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Agenda Item

1.0 Call to Order:

D. A. Thomas called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm.

2.0 Acknowledgement of Traditional Indigenous Territories:

C. Matisons gave the Acknowledgement of Traditional Indigenous Territories.

3.0 Conflict of Interest Check:

D. A. Thomas reminded the Board to declare any real or perceived conflict of interest. A conflict of interest is defined as any situation where a director could directly benefit or appear to benefit from business conducted by the Board.

4.0 Approval of the Agenda:

D. A. Thomas called for an approval of the agenda.

Motion:

To approve the agenda as presented.

K.S Gill/J. Baldonado

Motion Carries



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The motion was approved by general consent.

5.0 Adoption of Minutes:

5.1 Regular Meeting of the Board from 12th September 2022

Motion:

To approve the minutes as circulated.

J. Baldonado/ K.S Gill
Motion Carries

The motion was approved by general consent.

P.J Martinez joined the meeting at 5.15pm.

6.0 Presentations

7.0 Items for Decision:

7.1 Ends

7.2 Executive Limitations

a.) Policy Manual Changes EL

R. Valencerina presented the rationale behind the changes that have been made to the wordings of the policy.

D.A Thomas asked about EL-9 that if the words were amended to not wait for authorization, M. Stromme clarified that it is a recommendation from the Governance Coach of the Board due to cause of redundancy.

For EL-6, J. Baldonado asked about the changes made to the policy words, R. Valencerina & M. Stromme explained that this change is to provide you more flexibility and option to add into the policy to direct staff. D.A. Thomas asked if the change is still organization driven, M. Stromme informed them that this way the Board can add investment to sector unless we recommend not to, J. Baldonado said it was better earlier as it was open to interpretation, R. Valencerina clarified to the Board that the policy still does that and that the changes have only been made to provide a logical conclusion.

R. Valencerina & M. Stromme both reiterated to the Board that these changes are recommendations from the Governance Coach, Richard.

D.A. Thomas asked R. Valencerina & M. Stromme as to why when policy was made did we not think of putting Elections to be in a specific section. M. Stromme said when last year's Board approved it and started following this system, we realized it doesn't really work hence we are revising it.

D.A. Thomas expressed that they like the changes made to EL-11 as this one means the Board has more control.



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J. Baldonado inquired what that means, to which R. Valencerina explained that it means that approval for any report or position statement stays with the Board, henceforth.

J. Baldonado and D.A. Thomas applauded the changes made, P. J. Martinez seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors approve the amendments to the Executive Limitations sections of the Board of Directors Policy Manual, as presented.

**J. Baldonado/P. J. Martinez
5-0-2
Motion Carries**

**7.3 Governance Process
a.) Policy Manual Changes GP**

R. Valencerina presented the changes made to this section, he asked the Board if there are any questions as these are solid changes.

J. Baldonado said, he agrees these are sensible changes, from re-organizational point of view and from fairness point of view.

K. S. Gill remarked that he feels there is more coherence in policy now, with these changes.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors approve the amendments to the Governance Processes sections of the Board of Directors Policy Manual, as presented.

**J. Baldonado/K.S. Gill
5-0-2
Motion Carries**

**7.4 Board-Executive Director Delegation
a.) Policy Manual Changes BEDR**

R. Valencerina presented to the Board the changes made to this section.

J. Baldonado remarked that it is most sensible for annual review to be at end of term and that for audit he trusts the Executive Directors judgement. K. S. Gill added that as it is the Board's responsibility to monitor the policy, the changes made to the document make most sense.

P. J. Martinez inquired that if these changes were suggested by N. MacDonald the Controller for Saitsa and M. Stromme & R. Valencerina confirmed, yes.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors approve the amendments to the Board-Executive Director Relationship sections of the Board of Directors Policy Manual, as presented.

R. Valencerina presented the changes again.

**J. Baldonado/K.S. Gill
6-0-1
Motion Carries**



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8.0 Required Approvals

R. Valencerina informed the Board that staff will handle election applications and Board can make recommendations. Therefore, kindly task the ED to initiate the process. We'll have it done by the January Board meeting.

a.) Elections Oversight Panel

Election Oversight Panel Action Item

ACTION ITEM: The Board tasks the Executive Director to present the Board with recommendations for the Elections Oversight Panel for the 2023 Board of Directors election, to be completed by January 9, 2023.

J. Baldonado/K.S. Gill
6-0-1
Motion carries

9.0 Ownership Linkages

D. A. Thomas remarked that with Academic Integrity Week we would want to do classroom interactions, so they urged the director to inform staff and give them time to prepare for it.

R. Paris mentioned that in terms of classroom talks we had the opportunity to ask instructors if they were interested in classroom talks and out of 26, 25 of them said they were interested.

R. Valencerina again mentioned to kindly give staff notice of what the directors plan.

J. Baldonado informed the Board that for Academic Integrity he is planning something with an instructor, they do something on Wednesdays, so collaborating that with them is still in the pipeline. K. S. Gill also seconded what R. Paris mentioned and said it's a good way of interaction with students. He also mentioned that SAIT keeps a record of misconducts for each instructor, and they would want students to be aware & not have misconducts to their credit.

H. P. Anh also mentioned that she has also planned for a couple of talks coming next week. She suggested to the other directors to talk to first year students, as she plans to speak to second year students.

O. Aroge mentioned that in her experience instructors find it valuable to have Saitsa join their students in the classroom to which R. Paris added saying it is to allow for direct student-to-student discussion and the opportunity for students to provide feedback directly to those who can advocate on their behalf.

D. A. Thomas asked staff if they could provide a timeline for Campus Centre?

M. Stromme replied saying, there is a process for this vis-a-viz consultants and architects, the Board will have to tell them to go and talk to students, as students are the stake holders.



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P. J. Martinez expressed that he was thinking about booking townhall for an AGM to tell our stake holders (students) may be notified of what are we are doing as a Board. R. Valencerina requested that kindly let us (staff) know in time, if you want that to be done & we will arrange for it.

M. Stromme remarked that people don't usually come to AGMs & that classroom talks are more effective. R. Paris also mentioned that townhall AGMs are rather successful for clubs.

D. A Thomas commented that we are seeing a lot of engagement from students& that may be doing the Town Hall good idea. J. Baldonado said, he agrees with M. Stromme students are hard to come by to an AGM hence maybe we can incentivize it with food if we want to plan it.

10.0 Advocacy Linkages

R. Valencerina informed the Board that this section for them to discuss what their advocacy projects are and what they are doing currently, and this is another recommendation from Richard, the Governance Coach.

D. A. Thomas applauded the Board that we are doing very well for the Mental Health project, the international quota filled up very soon. K.S. Gill asked R. Valencerina that if OERs fall under this section & that if we can make them available for students to buy or access, in terms of education copyright as other institutes allow for it. R. Valencerina responded that it's totally up to the Board if they want to advocate for it. He also mentioned that we have some information on OERs and can share it to which K.S. Gill said yes.

K.S. Gill asked R. Paris, what purpose does the Advocacy Initiatives folder in Teams serve, to which R. Paris responded saying, responded saying the folder is intended to be used as a 'hub' for all advocacy related information and initiatives for the Board. Prior to SharePoint Saitsa used Executive Council (position-specific) drives that staff did not have access to, therefore challenging the staff's ability to support incoming Board's with context, history, and organizational history. This folder is new for Saitsa and will evolve according to feedback from staff & student leaders.

J. Baldonado shared with the Board that last week he and some other directors were at the G&A table for the Clubs expo and Mental Health project and a lot of students showed interest; Students also showed interest into being on the Board next year.

J. Baldonado also spoke about OERs to work with the library to understand how many instructors are using them. He mentioned that textbooks are very expensive for students as things taught in school are niche and they need textbooks. P. J. Martinez mentioned A. Ramos was working with O. Aroge and himself with classroom talks and that he'll share the data with the Board.

D. A. Thomas expressed that they were looking forward to update on that and that the Board should work together to present it to the Dean.

R. Paris mentioned that, about OERs and affordability ASEC is launching a national campaign and that we have participated in it a couple of years to previously, where she spoke about



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awareness of OERs. It is called the Alberta Textbook Book & that if the Board wants to join it, we can do something like that too.

J. Baldonado asked O. Aroge & A. Ramos about their working on organizing student representative program and mentioned that he was also talking to his dean, and she said she is interested in giving some feedback to them. O. Aroge responded saying she will reach out to them.

11.0 **Board Education** (*Research Refresher*)

R. Valencerina presented the Research Refresher PPT.

Recess at 6.34 pm and meeting re-convened at 6.48 pm.

12.0 **Monitoring Board Performance**

a.) Director Reports & Feedback

D. A. Thomas asked J. Baldonado if he could share about his work with SCM and that what are the factors they consider while recruiting in a more equitable way. J. Baldonado explained that they are still on the research stage and waiting on one person on the subcommittee to come up with a proposal.

D. A. Thomas asked J. Baldonado, what is SCM's policy towards indigenization, to which he responded saying that he asked them to add more teaching which are indigenous said and they said we'll consider doing that.

D. A. Thomas asked K.S. Gill how the Academic Integrity Week preparation going on to which K.S. Gill responded saying that we are hosting Healthy Habits expo and will have a booth over there to answer questions for students. We'll also put posters and ask students to reach out to library for a citation doctor.

D. A. Thomas also asked K.S. Gill about his experience with ASEC, to which K.S. Gill responded saying that he has attended two meeting, it's interesting and a good interactive opportunity, and that he is also finding a learning approach to advocacy and how it's done.

J. Baldonado asked K.S. Gill about Academic Integrity Week, to which he responded that we are looking at talking to students about healthy academic habits.

D. A. Thomas asked R. Paris should we have a PPT for Academic Integrity week, she said it's just information for now from us for the students and that this is our first time; SAIT got in touch with us only one month ago, we are starting slow.

D. A. Thomas asked P. J. Martinez about Global café, he responded saying it's almost done, it happens once every semester for better perspective for international students, to know Saitsa and what we are doing. Therefore, they invited K.S. Gill and himself. K.S. Gill mentioned here, that Bow Valley has done it before & that we are the only two organizations, who have never done it in Alberta.



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H. P. A. Nguyen shared with the Board that Integrity Week is very important & that she met a student, and they blamed the instructor and shared that they did not inform them about it at all.

D. A. Thomas asked H. P. A. Nguyen, how many people applied for the Valedictorian Selection committee, to which she responded saying that she has some interviews & that now she is emailing the unsuccessful candidates. There were 12 candidates in all.

D. A. Thomas highlighted NIAC conference that they went to, for the Board. They mentioned that it was very insightful and a great learning experience; they got an opportunity to share knowledge with indigenous community. They expressed that even though they are indigenous themselves, there is so much that they didn't know. Someone taught them how to pick sweetgrass, they went to UBC for Truth & Reconciliation Day; It was a very powerful experience and that Saitsa should be working with Chinook lodge closely and whether or not someone on the Board is indigenous, Saitsa should help students to attend such conferences not just on the Board but from Chinook Lodge as well.

K.S. Gill asked D. A. Thomas what issues they are facing in restructuring NIAC; to which they responded saying that they are looking at how to allocate resources and are dependent on CASA; that they want more freedom and hence want to change that structure. D. A. Thomas also shared that many elected representatives were there this time, we are hence trying to make it more structured.

13.0 Monitoring CEO Performance

a.) EL-7 Compensation & Benefits to staff

P. J. Martinez asked M. Stromme that he mentioned compensation and benefits for staff is 35 lower on average but still green, M. Stromme said it's within range, it must be plus or minus 10, to not be green & that he and his team made efforts in July to bring it to 35 percent and that this is a HR recommendation.

M. Stromme also mentioned, that it's a recent report and that we have taken inflation into consideration.

J. Baldonado said what's more important is that everyone receives the amount enough to take care of what they need, M. Stromme responded saying that we have had a third-party consultant who gave us this report. She was the first president female, so she knows the workings of Student Associations very closely and she says that we are doing well.

D. A. Thomas asked M. Stromme about EL-7 and that if this policy is for the Board to decide regarding the Executive Director salary, to which M. Stromme responded saying, yes this policy is with regards to the Executive Director.

Motion:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board has assessed the monitoring report for Compensation & Benefits to Staff and finds that the evidence presented demonstrates compliance with a reasonable interpretation of the Board's policies.



J. Baldonado/K.S. Gill
6-0-1
Motion passed

b.) EL-10 Fees

Motion:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board has assessed the monitoring report for Fees and finds that the evidence presented demonstrates compliance with a reasonable interpretation of the Board's policies.

J. Baldonado/P. J. Martinez
6-0-1
Motion passed

J. Baldonado expressed that it's reasonable change and a very small amount of increase, so the Board agrees.

M. Stromme suggested to the Board to kindly look at how well he has followed the Boards order and not how good the policy is; and that It's enough to cover bases as organization and not stepping on students as well. M. Stromme also gave a heads up to the Board to revisit this for December again.

14.0 Information Requested by the Board

15.0 Information for the Board

a.) Operational Enquiries & Staff

b.) Saitsa – Events

S. Sunra presented the events of the month to the Board.

16.0 In-Camera Session

In-Camera session at 7:29 pm with Staff & Board Advisor, guest left.

J. Baldonado/P. J. Martinez
Motion Carries

Out of camera at 7:35pm.

J. Baldonado/P. J. Martinez
Motion Carries

17.0 Self-Evaluation & Governance Processes



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R. Valencerina requested the Board to fill out the self-evaluation form and send to them.

He also requested the Board to kindly answer all questions & send it to them before next Board meeting; and that staff can help them address issues if any.

18.0 Questions/Adjournment

Adjournment of the meeting at 7:40 pm.