



## COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

2013 – 2014

Date: April 01<sup>st</sup> 2014

Time: 5.04 pm

In Attendance:

ERIN BORDEN (Chair)

MARINA BANISTER

TAIMUR MALIK

BRENT KELLY

DUSTIN CHELEN

BASHIR MOHAMED

HARLEY MORRIS

Excused Absence:

DYLAN HANWELL

Others in Attendance:

CRAIG TURNER

SACHITHA KUSALADHARMA

**1. CALL TO  
ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by BORDEN at 5.04 pm.

**2. APPROVAL OF  
AGENDA**

**BORDEN** moved to approve the agenda for *April 01, 2014* as tabled.  
The motion was seconded by **MOHAMED**.  
*Vote 6/0/0*  
**CARRIED**

**3. APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES**

**MOHAMED** moved to approve the minutes for *March 18, 2014* as tabled.  
The motion was seconded by **BANISTER**.  
*Vote 5/0/1 (Abstention by KELLY)*  
**CARRIED**

*None.*

4.  
ANNOUNCEMENTS

5. NEW BUSINESS

Temporary Speaker Appointment

BORDEN: Brent told me something before meeting about a Temporary Speaker for April 8th.

KELLY: I called Rory Tighe, and asked whether he was able to be the acting speaker for the meeting. He said that he could do it.

TURNER: Peter told me that if it's somebody who is expected to be in a meeting, he/she wouldn't get paid. However, if the person is not expected to be there, and we asked him/her to be there, the person would get paid. Essentially, the rules are silent on what to do in a situation like this. As the Council Administration Committee (CAC) has been given a reasonable level of authority regarding council administration, I see no problem with CAC making the decision about the speaker. The council is always able to remove the speaker if it disagrees.

**KELLY moved that Rory Tighe be appointed as the acting speaker for the duration of the council meeting on April 8, 2014, and be compensated accordingly.**

**The motion was seconded by MOHAMED.**

***Vote 5/0/1 (Abstention by BANISTER)***

***CARRIED***

Council Communications Structure

CHELEN: The executive committee is interested in developing an online communications structure for students to communicate with student representatives.

MOHAMED: In the USA, anyone can submit an idea to the government. If it garners more than 100,000 votes, the government has to respond.

CHELEN: We are thinking about something similar. All students would have access to a website, and can post an idea or a petition. Other students can vote on it. It would be the executive committee that would respond to such petitions. If applicable, the executive committee would forward it to another standing committee or a Faculty Association (FA) which is directly relevant to the issue. One concern is on what happens if a petition contravenes a previous directive such as a referendum. My advice is that the executive committee should inform the petitioner that a referendum is a binding decision.

That's the rough idea. I would welcome any comments.

BANISTER: The general idea is good. But, I have questions regarding the implementation such as who administers the page etc. Also, what if there is a radical petition which got a large number of vote/likes? Are we ok with that? Should we have some process to check the idea/petitions before it goes to vote?

CHELEN: Our thinking is that we'll let students decide what the questions are. But, it's ultimately up to the executive committee to make a decision on them.

BANISTER: I would rather see a filtering process, and not let an idea get thousands of votes when we know from the onset that it's not going to be a plausible idea.

TAIMUR: Even if something's not a plausible idea, we would get the opinion of

students from something like that. We would know that students don't like a certain thing, and would be able to make decisions in the future even if it's not possible to change it right now.

Also, with your suggestion, a set of councilors would be going through the student petitions and making decisions on them.

BORDEN: Maybe Discover Governance could maintain it rather than councilors. I believe that would be a much better solution.

BANISTER: I would still rather not let really bad or radical ideas which are hurtful get votes.

BORDEN: They do have to log in with their CCID.

TURNER: There's a difference between logging in with your University of Alberta ID to know that you are a student, and associating your vote. Those are two different things.

CHELEN: It could be moderated for breaking a law of student behavior. However, something which is not feasible will still be allowed as it's a communication tool. We can inform the petitioner that it's not feasible, and why it's not feasible.

BANISTER: That's a good idea. I just don't like having simply anything on it as it would devalue the whole structure.

KELLY: What kind of feedback are you looking for?

CHELEN: I'm looking for feedback on the broad idea and whether council is comfortable with it.

TURNER: I have a few comments. It is important to make it clear what a petition does. It's good to be upfront and inform the students whether a petition would be implemented if it doesn't break the rules, or whether it's only a suggestion.

You may also want to take the approach of only requiring responding to a petition after it gets a certain number of votes rather than a requiring taking action.

To add to councilor Banister's point, you may also want to look at how you deal with things you don't like.

Also, you have to be careful how this relates to our other publicized referendum processes. I wouldn't want someone going to this system thinking that he/she is submitting a formal bylaw 2100 petition. Also, there may be situation where a formal petition receives a lesser number of votes while a petition using this system got a much larger amount. Some people may say that the formal petition is less legitimate. You have to think of how you deal with those scenarios.

MOHAMED: Even if you get a large number of votes, you are only guaranteed to get a response.

KELLY: You can filter out things like hate speech.

BANISTER: Would only University of Alberta students be able to sign a petition?

CHELEN: Yes.

MALIK: They are the only ones who can start it too right?

CHELEN: That's correct.

MALIK: Are you going to use a different website, and how much money are you allocating to this?

CHELEN: This is an operational decision. But my sense is that they are going to buy a plug-in.

The rationale behind the whole thing is that we have 3 types of democracy. There are the referenda where everyone has a legislative voice over a decision. We also have a representative democracy. However, we don't have student initiatives where a normal student becomes a councilor in a sense.

### Additional Council Meeting

CHELEN: The executive committee has scheduled a meeting. I don't know who has the authority to cancel.

TURNER: The same people who have the authority to schedule a meeting except the executives can cancel it.

CHELEN: So, either council or CAC can cancel the April 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. I did not consult CAC or council on whether or not the meeting should occur. Councilor Mohamed and Board of Governors Representative Kelly had valid concerns. If you go ahead and cancel the meeting, I would strongly suggest that you reschedule it to a date of your choosing.

KELLY: The date is not suitable to me because of schoolwork. I was a bit unhappy that I wasn't consulted. But, I'm not opposed to having another meeting as we have a lot to talk about.

MOHAMED: I think we should cancel this meeting based on the sheer amount of miscommunication which happened between last council meeting's debate and now. It's as if this wasn't given enough thought. This meeting is happening mainly because of the second reading of tuition policy.

KELLY: I think that there was a little bit of misunderstanding. Some councilors weren't clear on the need to have another meeting. Meetings aren't scheduled on April 8 by default because councilors will be having exams.

BANISTER: Vice-president Chelen, why do you want to have another meeting?

CHELEN: There are few things which could go to a second meeting. There may be a question about the athletics and recreation fee. The executive committee is interested in council's feedback on its stance. We may want to talk about the international differential fee. There's a change in the PAW (Physical Activity and Wellness) fee which needs to be approved. There's the second reading of the ERC (Elections Review Committee) bylaw change. There's also the potential second reading of the tuition policy.

MOHAMED: It seems as if we are adding stuff. The original reason to hold the additional meeting was the second reading of the tuition policy.

CHELEN: That was the understanding of the intention by council. The intention of the executives was to accommodate these extra things. The PAW and the athletics and recreation fees need to be approved.

BANISTER: So, the April 8 meeting is currently booked. If we were to do anything, we would move to cancel it right?

CHELEN: Yes.

BORDEN: On April 8, school wouldn't have ended. If we schedule it for later, people will have finals, and others will be going for summer jobs. So, I'll be in favor of having it on April 8.

BANISTER: Yes. Also, the conversation will still be fresh in people's minds.

**MOHAMED moved to have the additional council meeting on April 8, 2014 cancelled.**

**The motion was not seconded by anyone.**

**BORDEN moved to have the additional council meeting on April 8th. The motion was seconded by BANISTER.**

*4/2/0*

**CARRIED**

## 6. REPORTS

*None.*

**7. CLOSED SESSION** *NIL*

**8. NEXT MEETING** *None.*

**9. ADJOURNMENT** **BORDEN moved to adjourn the meeting.  
The motion was seconded by MALIK.  
*CARRIED***

The meeting was adjourned at 5.37 pm.