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## UNBSU Council Minutes

*Regrets: Tea Fazio, Jonathan Lazarev.*

*Absent: Parker Somerville.*

### 1. Call to Order

*Chair Smith calls meeting to order at 7:06pm.*

#### 1.1 Roll Call

*Secretary Williamson performs roll call.*

### 2. Approval of Agenda

Cormier: Remove item 5.3, Bylaws Second Reading; the Policy and Advancement committee sent around the wrong version of the document, so we will revisit this at another council meeting.

McGinn: My position was referred to as VP Academic in the bylaws document sent around, not VP Internal.

MacIsaac: May we add a chat about the increase in NBSA fees, and do that ahead of the UNB Budget Proposal?

Smith: Yes. Increase in NBSA fees will be item 5.1, UNBSU Budget Proposal will be item 5.2, and the UNB Proposed Tuition Changes will be item 5.3.

Mover: Toner

Second: Wilson

*Vote passes.*

### 3. Chair's Remarks

### 4. Approval of Minutes

Mover: Iyengar

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Second: Dykens

*Vote passes.*

## **5. Substantive Business**

### **5.1 NBSA Fee Increase**

MacIsaac: At our most recent NBSA AGM, we discussed a potential fee increase, as the executive director has explained that the NBSA is not sustainable on their current budget. To address this, we were presented with a couple options: a 50 cent increase in our NBSA fee, a \$1.50 increase, or a \$2.50 increase. No vote was held at the AGM, which allowed us to question the NBSA further on their reasoning and consult with the incoming UNBSU executive team (Who will have to factor this fee increase into their 2018-19 budget). A week later (Two weeks ago), President Bempah and I went into the vote on the fee.

Other schools (Mt. Allison, NBCCD, and STU) were in favour of the \$1.50 fee increase, as that would balance the NBSA budget entirely. However, we were more hesitant, because we currently pay the highest membership fee to be a part of the NBSA. As all schools needed to agree for the vote to pass, we compromised and voted for a \$1 fee increase. We hope this decision honours both the valuable work the NBSA does, and the incoming UNBSU executive team. So for the full 2018-19 year, the UNBSU will be paying \$2 more per student.

Cormier: What are the major discrepancies in the NBSA budget? What did they need the fee increase for?

Bempah: An NBSA fee increase has been discussed for a while now; it's partially to cover their deficit. But the NBSA has also had trouble retaining executive directors because of the non-competitive salary; part of the fee rise will address that. Part of it will also offer a part-time employment opportunity, and will help with things like inflation, office supplies, etc.

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MacIsaac: The executive director is the NBSA's only full-time paid staff member. The executive director is very overworked as a result; it's not a one-person job.

Lutes: By how much is the executive director salary increasing, and how much will the part-time position pay?

MacIsaac: I know that \$300-ish is going towards advertising for those positions, but I don't have the rest of the numbers in front of me.

## **5.2 UNBSU Budget Proposal**

Beairsto: Next year's executive is anticipating a need to raise our UNBSU student levy, and their proposal needs to be heard and approved by council. I'll pass things over to Emily Meagher, the incoming VP Finance & Operations.

Meagher: What MacIsaac covered in item 5.1 is actually what started this discussion about a potential fee increase for students, and is one of several reasons for our proposal. Firstly, the NBSA fee increase is unprecedented and unaccounted for in the 2018-19 preliminary budget; we're estimating it'll cost us around \$6000. Secondly, Saferide insurance will be increasing \$200-\$300 per driver who does not have six years of driving experience; we estimate that will be an additional \$2000. Thirdly, we're facing inflation, which is the general increase in costs for goods and services.

I want to highlight that our student levy is much lower than most SUs across Canada, at \$115 per student per year. St. Thomas' SU (STUSU) has the next lowest student levy in Atlantic Canada, at \$143 per student per year – significantly higher than our own.

We're proposing a levy increase of \$2.50 per semester, to \$120 per year. This will allow us to keep pace with inflation (Because if we're looking at the actual inflation rate over the past

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several years, it has risen to \$8 per student, or \$40 000) and unprecedented costs, and give us room to grow as a UNBSU and fulfill our Action Plan 2020.

Bempah: Do we have questions for our incoming UNBSU executive team?

Beairsto: After questions, we'd like to request that the incoming team could leave the room so our discussion could be unrestricted.

Cormier: Beairsto, weren't all budget changes supposed to be done by February sometime?

Beairsto: It doesn't have to be approved by April 30<sup>th</sup>. We have time to allow for this. Time is a factor here, but we've done our due diligence.

Iyengar: What other options do you have other than the fee raise? Also, say we vote against the fee raise today. What's your action plan?

Meagher: The other option is a \$1.50 increase, which is the bare minimum amount that will cover the unprecedented costs for next year. But we don't feel that would allow for adequate growth or progress towards the Action Plan 2020. We're also looking into acquiring more sponsorships for next year.

Du [Incoming President]: Due to the NBSA fee increase, we can't proceed with the preliminary budget as it stands without taking a massive financial hit. For example, the \$6000 in unprecedented NBSA costs alone would wipe out the Red Awards, which cost around \$3000. One of the Action Plan 2020 goals is to create more opportunities for students, such as more student spaces and student employment. The \$1.50 would be an urgent reaction that we must take to attempt to reach those goals. We don't want to worsen our financial state as a union.

Iyengar: So the \$1.50 is what you need, but the \$2.50 is extra?

Du: Right. We do have other unprecedented costs, such as the Saferide insurance – and on top of that, we have the anticipated inflation. We know the costs of things have been rising.

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Because we haven't had a union fee increase in about 3-4 years, we need to account for all those years of unaccounted for inflation. With our current budget, we're unable to deliver the same quality of UNBSU programs.

Toner: I did some math, and based on enrolment figures, 5505 students would be paying this new fee. You'd be getting \$27 525 next year from that fee increase. Subtracting the \$6000 from the NBSA fee increase, and \$2000 in Saferide insurance, that still leaves nearly \$20 000 for the UNBSU. I don't necessarily think an incredible amount of inflation will happen in the next six months.

My concern about asking for a fee increase is that students don't know where the money is going. In my opinion, we know where the tuition rise money is going: it's going towards the university's deficit, to fuel scholarships, etc. For STUSU's implemented mental health fee of \$33.91 for full time students, it'll go towards building mental health services, and students have been involved in that process. But from my understanding, the UNBSU will just hold onto this money and spend it on events that'll impact maybe 100 students? Each student won't see the return in value that this extra fee might provide.

Du: Another reasoning for our \$2.50 proposal is that the NBSA didn't get the full fee increase they wanted; they wanted \$1.50, but we only gave them \$1. Due to that, they will propose additional fee increases in the years to come. Part of the UNBSU levy increase is in place to anticipate that. We think the NBSA is extremely important, and we want the best for them as much as we want to remain financially sustainable. These discussions have been long and difficult, and we don't want to have this discussion every year.

Palmer [Incoming VP Student Life]: On top of all that, we want to expand and grow. With the exact same budget from year to year it's really hard to do that. We can't keep making cuts; we

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want to increase our entertainment budget. As an example of an actual project, instead of a kick off concert at the end of O-week, we want to expand that to something like a music festival to include older students. Also to expand homecoming. All these events will cost more money, which we need to allow for in our budget so we can make the UNB experience better for all students.

Toner: With the UNBSU, there must be a give and take. You can't build indefinitely, we can't keep growing and growing and growing forever. With that in mind, if you want to plan these amazing events, what will you cut back to allow for that? Also, turnout to various events like the kick-off concert varies. What if the event is a bust even though you invest so much money on it?

Palmer: With all due respect, we don't think it'll be a bust. We'll plan accordingly.

Du: We're hoping to streamline the UNBSU events schedule and space out events throughout the year. We want a steady flow of events that makes sense. Students probably won't want to go to high-energy events in stressful periods of time, and we want to make it easier for event planners.

Qureshi [Incoming VP Advocacy]: Right, and if we approach events with a hit or miss mindset, that's a pessimistic and narrow-minded view. We can't limit ourselves; instead, let's optimize our time and efforts.

Lutes: So you have a general breakdown in the written proposal, but the \$10 000 chunk... Give me the elevator pitch for what specifically the UNBSU will do next year that will be a significant improvement for students.

Du: We want to host larger scale events, such as a music festival at the end of O-week that includes students beyond first year. We want to make sure all students can feel the energy and UNB pride of O-week. Incoming students can be introduced to UNB in O-week, and then join the rest of UNB at the music festival or another large scale event. But, that'll cost money. We will

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pursue scholarships even if we do get the fee increase; we're still going to work hard and create more strategic partnerships.

We also want to offer more employment opportunities for students. We have jobs lined up, but they might not work if we don't have the funding. We're nervous about being able to perform with the current budget. We'll be unable to deliver on our next-level projects, and we'll have to spend our time thinking about how to maintain the UNBSU instead of growing the UNBSU.

Beairsto: I've been talking with the incoming executive about this, and they have a lot of passion. From my POV, the past VP Finance & Operations recommended a fee increase, or internal cutting. If we don't increase fees, we might experience a regression in the UNBSU. We'd have to cut Clubs & Societies funding or programming to amount for this, even though those are the sections of the budget that most directly impact students. Events will get hurt, programming for coordinators will be affected, councillor projects, etc. If we're going to have a fee increase, it makes sense to do it in a way that will allow for growth, not just survival. I do think we should do it all at once – go all for the \$2.50 increase - instead of just revisiting this problem next year.

Hebert: I'm looking forward to more study spaces for students. That needs more UNBSU funding. I don't think is fee increase this an over-the-top ask, because we'll get awesome programming and progress out of it. Why wouldn't we try to improve and grow the UNBSU?

Dykens: If we have 15 Saferide drivers, and insurance increases will cost \$200-\$300 per driver, how does that only amount to \$2000?

Du: We do have some drivers with enough years of experience.

Smith: We're out of time. Councillors, you may motion to extend the discussion period if you choose.

Motion to extend the discussion period for item 5.2 by 10 minutes.

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Mover: Toner

Second: Lutes

*Vote passes.*

Lutes: Will we approve the fee increase as a council? This decision will not be decided by the students via a plebiscite?

Bempah: We will vote on it; it will not be decided by plebiscite.

Toner: [To Beairsto] Have you found our budget has been tight this year, or do we have wiggle room?

Beairsto: Our budget has worked for us this year, but we did save money through Frost week being rushed/not as expansive as usual.

Toner: Qureshi, what do you want to bring to the VP Advocacy role with this fee increase?

Qureshi: Student mental health is important to me, and I think we can use this fee increase to improve our mental health advocacy. There's a lot more work to do in that regard.

Beairsto: It's also election year for New Brunswick, so we typically host events/programs themed around that.

Cormier: Considering that MacIsaac is just interim VP Advocacy, are we paying both her salary and Madi Banks' salary?

Beairsto: No.

Toner: With the tuition hike that's perhaps coming from the UNB administration... Do you think another fee increase on top of that will damage the students' opinion of the UNBSU, the union that's supposed to work for them?

Balcom [Incoming VP Internal]: I think our increase is justifiable and will increase our capacity to stand up for students against such issues.

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Du: I don't think the administration's tuition hike can be compared with our increase.

Lutes: We are ultimately a union, and our membership should be treated as the final decision maker. We should have a plebiscite on this issue.

Bempah: This fee increase is a time sensitive issue; if we want to increase the student levy, we need to vote on it today, so it can go into the budget in time.

*The incoming executive leaves the room to provide room for discussion.*

Motion to extend the discussion period for item 5.2 by 20 minutes.

Mover: McGinn

Second: MacIsaac

*Vote passes.*

Reid: I was on the UNBSU council during the last student levy increase, and we raised it by \$20 per year. It had to be much because previous councils had refused to raise it incrementally. It also did not go to a plebiscite. In comparison to that, \$2.50 is nothing; the longer we delay, the more it will have to be raised eventually. Services will suffer as a result, as they did before we raised the fee a couple years ago. If you don't do an increase, they're going to cut in other areas to continue to grow events. And if your constituents think this is a bad idea, just tell them about what the UNBSU does and what the UNBSU is using the money for. The incoming executive isn't asking for much.

MacIsaac: I was dissatisfied with the way this proposal was brought to us by the incoming executive. A lot of their proposal is because of the NBSA fee increase, but I do feel the NBSA increase is something we can absorb.

I don't think we've been transparent enough with the student body about this increase. I feel uncomfortable raising fees without letting students know. We need student feedback, and it

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would reflect poorly on the UNBSU and make us look shady. It's not in our best interests. I'm not against a fee raise in the future, but I don't think this process has been good enough.

Wilson: I agree with that, but \$2.50 won't break the bank. It'll give the incoming UNBSU council the funds it needs to make great things happen. If we don't have a fee increase, Clubs & Societies funding would bear the consequences.

Iyengar: We're a union first and foremost. It's not our job to make the incoming executive's event plans work; it's our job to represent students' interests. I will vote yes if we agree as a council on something to mitigate the increasing NBSA costs... But if they want extra money on top of that, they can find other solutions. Because not all students go to the events that the UNBSU puts on. The Red Awards, for example, do not present an inclusive environment and are advertised towards a specific set of students.

Toner: I agree with MacIsaac in terms of us seeming shady if we do this. The STUSU is having a public forum on their increase and communicating with their student body well; we need their level of transparency. We need to look better than the UNB administration and their approach to raising fees. I agree with Lutes... But I also agree with Reid.

I think we need to ask for a bigger increase next year with a plebiscite. We can't put another cost on students that was decided by five people alone. The incoming executive can be smart with their money and use their resources – sponsorships, networks, etc – to run events, instead of relying on more money.

Hebert: We were all elected for a reason: to represent our students. We can make this decision on behalf of them. If we must hold a plebiscite for every single issue, then what's the point of us being here? The incoming executive wants to do these exciting things and expand the

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UNBSU; we shouldn't discourage that. Tuition is already going up; what's an extra \$2.50 on top of that?

McMillan: We must let students know about this and not go behind their backs, even if \$2.50 is not a huge fee increase. We must conduct ourselves responsibly. I also can't speak for my entire faculty, even if it's my role; I can't express the opinion of every single Nursing student. But something like a plebiscite can.

The fee increase isn't fair on people who don't go to UNBSU events. If we had money left over from this year, then we were smart with our money, and the incoming executive can do the same.

McGinn: Hebert, you mention that we're elected to represent our students, but we're also elected to go back to our students about these issues and bring their voices forward.

I think if we're going to raise fees at all, we should just go for \$2.50... But I agree with MacIsaac, I don't like this process. The incoming executive will have to bootstrap, but shit happens. If we wanted to raise our fees as an incoming executive, we would have prepped it accordingly, not just dump that decision on an outgoing executive. We can't just quickly push this decision through; if they want to raise fees, they'll have to go through the correct process. I know \$2.50 a semester isn't a massive deal, but that's not the issue: the process and timing is the issue. We're pushing back against the university for trying to rush tuition hikes past us, we can't do the same thing to students!

Bempah: I also agree with MacIsaac that the incoming executive's approach wasn't ideal, and the timing isn't good. But after thinking about this for awhile, they're in a unique position. They were faced with significant unforeseen circumstances and are trying to deal with them as best they can. We do need an fee increase, and I'd entertain one now. Perhaps we should consider

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some sort of compromise to help the incoming executive, such as just approving a \$1.50 increase. It may seem shady to someone who doesn't have all the facts, but we're in a unique situation here.

Jefferies: I don't want to move forward with this. We talk about \$5 per year being a small cost to students, but we're not considering extra costs associated with events like the Red Awards. You must dress formally, which is expensive, and buy tickets on top of that. So some students can't afford to go, and these fee increases will continue to oppress those students. We're approaching this in the wrong way and dividing the student body.

Smith: We've ran out of discussion time again. What does council want to do?

Motion to extend the discussion period for item 5.2 by 5 minutes.

Mover: McGinn

Second: Iyengar

*Vote passes.*

Beairsto: NBCCD also pulled out of the Saferide contract, so funding Saferide might become more expensive for us. But I think everyone has made very valid points; best of luck to Emily Meagher taking on the budget next year.

Cormier: We do have the lowest SU fees in the provinces. Per capita, we're making more with less than STUSU.

Smith [Sardonic]: Is that an Eddy Campbell quote?

Lutes: We're responsible as a union to provide essential services such as Saferide, lobbying, campaigns, etc. We have the finances to do those well, but anything beyond that is 'fun money'. That should not come before accurately representing our students.

Smith: Discussion over. Are we ready to vote?

Bempah: Invite Meagher and Qureshi back in for the motion.

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Motion to raise the UNBSU student levy by \$2.50 per semester.

Mover: Meagher

Second: Hebert

*Votes for: 4*

*Votes opposed: 14*

*Abstentions: 2*

*Vote failed.*

Motion to raise the UNBSU student levy by \$1.50 per semester.

Mover: Bempah

Second: Iyengar

*Votes for: 11*

*Votes opposed: 4*

*Abstentions: 4*

*Vote passes.*

### **5.3 UNB Proposed Tuition Changes**

Bempah: As you all know, a couple council meetings ago, President Campbell and VP George MacLean presented the Tuition Review Task Force Report, which describes their proposed tuition changes. The executive responded with our feedback and disapproval of the report, and we waited to act further because we wanted to see if the administration took our feedback into account and revise their proposal. But, as we saw at the most recent presentation at the Law faculty, they did not. So, it's imperative now that we continue this discussion, gather more student feedback, and fight on behalf of students.

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Additionally, I do sit on the Board of Governors, who will be ultimately voting on this proposal. Student feedback will inform my vote.

Pilgrim: I've got words and numbers. Since President Campbell and VP MacLean presented to us on February 25<sup>th</sup>, I've had further consultations with Law students and VP MacLean. In that consultation, which a third of our faculty attended, VP MacLean announced that the proposed Law tuition has already increased from \$10 000/year to \$10 272. I'd like to relay some of our faculty's most pressing concerns to you all on this issue.

Law students are disproportionately affected by these tuition hikes. The Tuition Task Force is proposing to raise our tuition by 34%, and the Law faculty will receive no benefits from these increases; all this money is paying UNB deficits. Furthermore, the \$1 million total that Law students pay in program fees mostly goes to paying faculty support staff, not to addressing students' needs. Many Law student mentioned to VP MacLean the following flaw in the Tuition Task Force Report: the cited survey that claims many students graduate university debt-free only considers students graduating from their first degree, which does now include Law students. Furthermore, they're comparing us and adjusting our tuition according to Dalhousie university, but Dalhousie is a drastically different school. They have a more national focus and hold on-campus interviews with law firms all across Canada, while UNB focuses on the Atlantic region. This is relevant because of our articling prospects; there are considerably less articling prospects in the Atlantic region, and our articling students get paid half of what other students do across Canada. Dalhousie students also have more opportunities; their Law school has 47 full-time staff members while we have 17 on a good day (4 are currently on Sabbatical), they have more classes available, and they have Marine Law, Environmental Law, Health Law, and Law & Technology

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institutes. UNB has no such law institutes, and classes even remotely similar to those are not taught by full-time faculty. We are not comparable to Dalhousie.

This Tuition Task Force Report also does not consider the broader repercussions these tuition hikes will have on the justice system. They will further limit who is able to attend Law school, which will result in less diversity and less discourse if only upper-middle class students can afford to pay. These hikes will limit individuals who wish to choose a more social justice-focused career path, because those positions pay significantly less than corporate-commercial career paths. The administration responded by saying government and scholarship funding is available, but none of this applies to Law students; Law faculty scholarships come from alumni and law firms who choose to donate, while comparatively little comes from UNB.

Again, the proposed tuition increase for Law is 34%; Nursing and Renaissance College is 22%; Business and Business Administration is 21.74%; Education is 16%; and Computer Science and Kinesiology is 17.3%. These hikes are unheard of. These numbers also do not take into consideration the mountainous other fees students have to pay, such as technology fees, the Brunswickan fee, the UNBSU levy, facility access, additional faculty fees, parking passes, exam software, and mandatory textbooks (First year law textbooks total over \$1000).

I'm worried about how little time we have to act on this unless the Board of Governors vote is delayed. Bempah, why didn't we know about the Tuition Task Force earlier?

Bempah: Most of the Task Force work was done over the summer; I'm sure I would have mentioned it in my summer reports. All information was also confidential; we couldn't tell anyone until the proposal was done. I did express my concerns during our Task Force committee meetings), but my concerns weren't taken into consideration.

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Pilgrim: So we only hear about this proposal a year later, two months before the Board of Governors is due to vote? That doesn't allow enough time for adequate student consultation.

Bempah: We did have two students on the committee, but I agree with you.

Pilgrim: I want to stress again that these tuition increases will not come back to faculties; our money is being used to pay for the institution's mistakes.

Kathleen Adams [Law Student, granted speaking rights by Pilgrim]: I just want to emphasize that a 34% tuition increase is unheard of. When this hits national headlines, you're going to want to be on the right side of this issue.

Cormier: Bempah, did the Task Force consult with faculties at all?

Bempah: They spoke to Deans.

Cormier: Because my student advocate, who essentially runs the Forestry faculty, knew nothing about this and is pissed.

Pilgrim: I had to provide the Task Force report to my faculty.

Dykens: I had to do the same, no one in the faculty was aware. Our biggest concern is the perceived value that this is presenting. Because Arts and Science students now pay the least, does my degree mean nothing to this administration?

McMillan: I'm furious about this. Nursing students are facing a 22% increase, which is absurd, considering none of it goes back to the faculty. I already pay so many costs that aren't included in tuition fees, such as scrubs, equipment, textbooks, and gas to drive myself to clinicals (Which are not co-ops and I do not get paid to do). I'm in such financial need that I wouldn't be attending UNB if I had to pay such an increase. I love my program, but this school simply isn't worth it! Our program will not benefit from these increases, and this will hold students back from pursuing their passions.

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It can be argued that career-oriented degrees like Engineering or Nursing cost more because we're bound to find a job upon graduation. However, that isn't a guarantee; something might happen to me in the future that would render me unable to work and buried in debt.

Lutes: We should not be held responsible for the university's inability to budget. I agree to an extent that the deficit needs to be resolved, but increasing student fees is not the answer. Ask the god damn government for money, or make cuts to things that don't immediately contribute to academics or student life, such as the expensive mansion the university President receives as a 'competitive' job perk. It's bullshit.

Fernandez: Renaissance College is also facing a huge tuition increase, even though we have barely any expenses as a faculty. We have less than half a dozen full-time staff members, and we don't even use books! The reasons for these increases aren't being communicated effectively to faculties, as Deans are technically upper administration. I also want to second Pilgrim's point that these increases are furthering elitism at UNB and in occupations. I'm considering pursuing a second degree in UNB Law, and these increases would mean I'd have to pursue corporate-commercial law to pay my debts.

I want to discuss the actual agency we have as councillors to postpone this Board of Governors vote and ensure sufficient communication with students and faculties.

Iyengar: I agree wholeheartedly with Fernandez, McMillan, and Pilgrim, your passion is essential to this discussion. Dykens, I don't think Arts and Science degrees receiving a lower increase is something we should be concerned about or take personally. But this is all so absurd. The announcement of these increases seems cynically targeted at the weakest time in the school year for student participation; we are at a miserable time to respond. It's exam season, we are an

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outgoing council, and we have very little time before the vote. This is extremely insulting to students.

So, what are our options? I joked about a strike, but I'm kind of scared of strikes. We must think of how we can make the most impact in a very short amount of time; we should focus on getting the vote delayed until October. That way, the administration can't just rush this by students.

Reid: Great points everyone. I'm out of the loop a little bit, but this is the definition of overcharging. Will this kill the Law program? Programs like RC, Nursing, and Kinesiology are already at max capacity, so those programs are easy targets; they know those seats will be filled anyway. Computer Science is proposing an additional program fee out of necessity, which shows how these tuition increases do not trickle down to benefit faculty. I'm also unimpressed by the administration touting that student consultation has already occurred; one or two students on a committee where their voices will be overpowered is not adequate representation.

Toner: It's been proven that LGBTQ+ students statistically do not have as much financial security as heterosexual students, so this tuition hike will significantly burden them. And as a Kinesiology student, I'm in a dead-end degree, and most Kinesiology students must take on additional studies. I'm looking at two master degrees after my undergraduate, so I'll be swimming in debt.

I understand we don't pay a lot compared to other universities, such as St. FX and Acadia... But these increases should not be done in this way. Renaissance College's only expense is having the heat on in their building, but they're facing some of the highest increases? I see how the university will benefit from these increases, but more consultation is needed with students. I don't know how we'll do it, but we need to get this vote delayed until October.

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Jefferies: I've been talking with my fellow Renaissance College students on this. The costs of our international internship aren't considered in this; we pay around \$7000-\$8000 out of pocket at the end of our second year. Because of these summer internships, we have to pay eight semester's worth of tuition in three years. We already pay more money per three years than other students, and we definitely don't have a guaranteed job upon graduation. Keeping all that in mind, these additional tuition increases are not okay, and the administration's justifications for them are not sufficient.

Bempah: In no way do we support these tuition hikes. Fee increases must eventually happen; we just don't agree with the rate at which it's happening. That is why we're in disagreement with the administration. Now, I think we can best spend our time here finding a solution. My Board of Governors vote will definitely be 'No' to these increases, but we need a plan beyond that.

Beriault: As a Business student, the increase isn't going back to faculties. Business is changing their faculty to the Faculty of Management, which will involve a professional development component and additional costs every semester. The Faculty has already proposed doubling our student levy from \$200 to \$400, of which the Business Society will only receive 12%. Students shouldn't have to choose faculties based on what they can afford.

McGinn: I have a lot of respect from VP George MacLean, I don't know how he takes all the harsh criticism and does his job every day... But he and the people behind him are presenting the university as a business and I hate that tone. I don't like when his comparison of UNB to other universities is his central argument, it's not enough. I think it's ridiculous that they're pushing this through at the Board of Governors meeting on April 19<sup>th</sup>, when we're all swamped with exams. Now, something we can do: there is a UNB Senate meeting this coming Tuesday (March 27th @

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4pm, Tilley 303). While the Senate doesn't have a say in financial issues, VP MacLean is presenting the Task Force Report to them. These meetings are open to the public; students should go and demonstrate their dissent through their presence. I want VP MacLean to receive this kind of passionate feedback. We could do the same at the Board of Governors meeting on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

Bempah: I would hold off on that, I don't think...

Reid: We could still show up with picket signs.

Bempah: Oh yes, we can do that.

Smith: We've reached our discussion limit of 30 minutes. Councillors, you may motion to extend the discussion period if you choose.

Motion to extend the discussion period for item 5.3 by 10 minutes.

Mover: Lutes

Second: Pilgrim

*Vote passes.*

Smith: Let's bring forward either opposing ideas or plans of action.

McGinn: I don't have any awesome ideas, but let's roast VP MacLean some more at the Senate meeting.

Wilson: We should be sharing all of this information with our faculty, because not everyone knows these increases are happening and won't benefit faculties. Students will get passionate about this.

Smith: Would anyone like to speak in favour of these tuition changes?

*Laughter ensues.*

Smith: Okay, just making sure!

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Pilgrim: Yes, we must let as many people as possible know about this. The Law faculty also loves a petition, so we're assembling a formal petition to be sent to every member of the Board of Governors with personal stories attached. Our faculty is PISSED!

McMillan: Should we host a public Q and A on this, or a town hall, to reach more students?

Bempah: We're working on it.

Iyengar: I have two suggestions. What's your plan for media outreach?

Bempah: We hope to express our point of view and release a press statement in conjunction with the date of our town hall. We want to make sure we advertise it correctly, using an appropriate time, so as many students can be reached as possible.

Iyengar: With any media outreach: these are historic tuition increases. Can you pin down through research how unprecedented these increases are and publicize that? Secondly, I support Reid's picketing suggestion. Physical protest is the next step. We should consider hosting a protest day in front of Sir Howard Douglas Hall.

Lutes: I echo all of that. We also have the advantage of this being an election year in the province, and university funding does come from the government of NB. If we aim bold in a lobbying plan, targeting Opposition parties especially, we can press for more funding to offset tuition increases.

Toner: To reiterate that, when the last provincial election happened, MLA David Coon won because of UNB and the students' support. Going with that approach is important. However, because we have so little time before the vote, including nearly two weeks of exams, we need to act now. We need to take a stance as a union before we leave council today, so we don't waste the precious time we have. If we don't plan now, it won't happen.

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Reid: The note on elections is good. Nova Scotia got a tuition reset a little while ago, perhaps we could look into how that played out.

Lutes: It's worth noting that Nova Scotia schools were able to raise tuition above their tuition cap because they argued it wasn't an increase that affected all students.

Reid: As far as outreach goes, we could mandate the executive or the marketing manager to make a more legible, student-friendly infographic or video on this.

Cormier: Be careful not to schedule the town hall around Easter. A quick aside: President Campbell makes more money than the leader of our country. Finally, can any regular student attend Senate?

McGinn: Yes.

Lutes: It might be beneficial to say that our objective, as an outgoing council, is to delay this vote. Then the incoming council can tackle the question of lobbying and further opposition in the fall.

Iyengar: Bempah, how well do you know fellow members on the Board of Governors? Can you convince others to vote 'No'?

Bempah: I do know the chair, but I can't guarantee anything.

Iyengar: Could you try? Could you nicely threaten them that the alternative is a noisy protest and media circus? If we get the vote on the proposed increases delayed until October, everything falls into place.

Lutes: We should add the fact that we want the vote to be delayed until October into our position statement.

McGinn: The administration has been taking a lot of flak recently from many sides, so we could gain a lot of traction by exploiting that.

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Motion that the UNBSU adopt the position A) to appose the proposed fee proposal as presented to date; and B) that the Board of Governors vote on the fee proposal must be pushed to a later date.

Mover: Pilgrim

Second: Hebert

*Vote passes unanimously.*

Smith: We've ran out of discussion time again. What does council want to do?

Motion to extend the discussion period for item 5.3 by 10 minutes.

Mover: McGinn

Second: Lutes

*Vote passes.*

Motion that the UNBSU, using its social media outreach, create a Facebook event to notify students about the March 27<sup>th</sup> Senate meeting.

Mover: Lutes

McGinn: I definitely think we should challenge the increases in every way, but Senate doesn't officially hold any voting power over this decision, and they don't meet in a big room. We should spread word of the meeting and our plans for Senate by word of mouth, but we should save the majority of our advocacy for the town hall.

*Motion withdrawn.*

Fahim Rahman [Law Student, granted speaking rights by Pilgrim]: I've previously served on the Board of Governors for my previous institution, so I'm curious if the motion you just proposed passed unanimously. If it did, it's important that the Board of Governors know that. Unanimous motions hold a lot of sway.

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Dykens: How often will Senate and the Board of Governors meet between now and April 19<sup>th</sup>?

McGinn: Good question. I assume not.

Bempah: I think this is the last Board of Governors meeting before the end of the year, but Senate might have one more.

*Student Senator Reid clarifies the BoG and Senate meeting dates on page 25.*

Fernandez: Will students be able to speak at Senate? I question the power of picket signs.

Reid: I think Senate members can lend their speaking rights, but not every student will have time to be heard.

Fernandez: Can we our well-understood concerns voiced through McGinn at the meeting then, if not every student will be able to speak?

McGinn: Yes.

Kathleen Adams [Law Student, granted speaking rights by Pilgrim]: A lot of Senate members will be tied to Board of Governors members, so a presence at Senate is important. I would like to invite all of you, at 11:30am on Tuesday, to meet us in Ludlow hall and make picket signs to bring to Senate. We can further discuss plans for how to address these issues at this time, too.

Toner: As much as I agree with McGinn's point of not mobilizing too soon, a huge student turnout would look good in a small space like Tilley. Picket signs can voice our concerns if we can't speak. If we didn't want to use social media just yet, we can still bring our closest constituents and take up space in the room. We can get our point across and be powerful even if we can't all speak at Senate.

*Chair Smith briefly summarizes everything that has been discussed so far.*

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Reid: To the previous point about dates: the Board of Governors meets in April and May, and Senate doesn't meet during exams. Senate's next meeting after Tuesday is on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

Smith: So, we should aim to delay the Board of Governors vote until October, not until the next BoG meeting. A May vote is just as inaccessible to the majority of students as an April vote.

*Council murmurs assent.*

Smith: We've ran out of discussion time again. Shall we move on, or motion to extend?

Motion to extend the discussion period for item 5.3 by 10 minutes.

Mover: Lutes

Second: Toner

*Vote passes.*

*Opposed: President Bempah and Councillor Iyengar.*

Lutes: Our Board of Governors strategy shouldn't be to politely threaten; a threat must have mettle. We should come out in full force in opposition of the vote and do our best to rally people on social media. Could we also print pamphlets about this issue, and publicize what's happening through the SUB?

Bempah: Let's form an ad hoc committee on this.

*Almost every council member volunteers to be on the ad hoc committee to advocate against tuition hikes.*

Pilgrim: Ordinary members are allowed on ad hoc committees.

Bempah: I'll make a meeting time and let you all know.

Kathleen Adams [Granted speaking rights by McGinn]: Here's a social media hashtag idea for this: #KeepTheDoorOpenUNB. That reflects the fact that we're not advocating against these tuition hikes on our own behalf: many of us will graduate before facing these fees. But we're

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advocating against them to keep the door open for bright, young, incoming students who will be facing these unprecedented hikes. This is about keeping access to justice affordable.

Samar Alam [Law student, granted speaking rights by Pilgrim]: We're here to fight for the future of the legal profession and access to justice, especially in New Brunswick. When we face this kind of unprecedented increase for Law students, we must consider what kind of lawyers this will create, what kind of judges we'll be creating 20 years from now. We'll remember the day that we let tuition increase to a point where a normal, middle class New Brunswickan could no longer access Law school. With the kind of debt load these increases will heap on students, we will not be able to afford to advocate for the issues we care about. You are directed, by default, to corporate law firms and commercial-corporate law. If we want to make sure every voice has equal opportunity to be represented, we must take the stand that law and post-secondary education must be accessible to everyone. Thank you.

MacIsaac: The Tuition Review Task Force Report is the last item on the Senate agenda. I think we should all go regardless, but just so you're aware, we might be there for several hours.

Iyengar: Our discussions are circular at this point. I suggest that planning should now be left to the ad hoc committee.

McGinn: We'll send out an email to figure out a meeting time ASAP for the ad hoc committee. Stay tuned.

Toner: I won't be able to attend the meeting, so can you also email out to everyone how the meeting went and what you decide?

McGinn: Yes.

Motion to move all councillor reports to the next council meeting (April 8<sup>th</sup>).

Mover: McGinn

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Second: Beriault

*Vote passes.*

## **6. Reports to Council**

### **6.1 Vice President Finance & Operations Grayson Beairsto**

- Continuing work on Clubs and Societies funding and events;
- Met with incoming executive to talk about finances and the proposed budget/fee increase;
- Prepared for this meeting.

### **6.2 Vice President Internal Chris McGinn**

- Working on the upcoming SURAs.

### **6.3 Vice President (Interim) Advocacy Haley MacIsaac**

- Working on CASA's AGM.

### **6.4 President Herbert Bempah**

- Red Awards;
- CASA's AGM;
- I had a midterm every day this week!

## **7. Announcements**

### **7.1 Dog Room Volunteers**

McGinn: We need volunteers for a large-scale dog room on Wednesday April 11<sup>th</sup>, in the SUB ballroom, from 10:30am – 1:30pm. Any takers?

*Many councillors indicated interest, so the volunteers will be decided via the council Facebook group.*

### **7.2 Epilepsy 101**

Dykens: Epilepsy 101 is happening tomorrow at 6pm!

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### **7.3 Further Comment on Budget Proposal**

Reid: In case you all weren't aware, as a council, you can propose policies to restrict UNBSU funding to certain types of events. If that was a concern.

Iyengar: I didn't insinuate that we should cancel the Red Awards.

### **8. Question Period**

### **9. Other business arising from this meeting**

### **10. Adjournment**

Mover: MacIsaac

Second: Bempah

*Vote passes. Meeting adjourned at 9:39pm.*