

## **MINUTES – 15th UNBSU Council Meeting**

UNB Student Union 2020/21

*March 14, 2021; 7:00 PM via Zoom*

*Regrets: Vishnu Vardhan, Téa Fazio*

*Absent: Katelynn-Pickel MacDonald*



### **1. Call to Order**

*Aodhan Murphy, Council Chair, calls the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.*

#### **1.1 Roll Call**

*Aodhan Murphy performs roll call.*

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

#### **Resolution 101-20**

*That Council adopts the agenda for March 14, 2021.*

Mover: Adriana Lefort, VP Finance & Operations

Seconder: Molly Pittman, Management Councillor

**The motion is carried.**

### **3. Chair's Remarks**

*Aodhan Murphy, Council Chair: "Pretty standard stuff today. The most substantial business will be the Election Report that Jack and Nicole will give."*

### **4. Approval of Previous Minutes**

#### **Resolution 102-20**

*That Council approves the minutes for February 21, 2021, with the amendment of changing the date February 21, 2020, to February 21, 2021.*

Mover: Abhiiraj Nikam, Engineering Councillor

Seconder: Jharana Luitel, Computer Science Councillor

**The motion is carried.**

### **5. Substantive Business**

## **5.1 Faculty Councillor Updates**

*Abhiiraj Nikam shares that he and Jharana have planned a workshop for March 27, 2021, to act as their collaborative councillor project. He and Jharana Luitel contacted the Engineering Co-op Office and secured industry experts to keynote at the workshop they've planned.*

*Anna Lee Leblanc gives an update on the status of her councillor project. She has managed to overcome some barriers and is now finished with the project.*

*Christopher Arisz reports no update.*

*Elizabeth Herbert says that her project (virtual events) is ready to go. She says that she contacted a yoga instructor who will be leading one of the events. She only has promotions left at this stage.*

*Jharana Luitel shares that the video she's been working on for her councillor project is now completed and will be up on the Youtube channel next week. Otherwise, she's collaborating with Abhiiraj on his project (the workshop.)*

*Lidia Shibre reports no update.*

*Matt Douglas says that he and Xiuming wrapped up their councillor project. They only have promotions left at this stage.*

*Molly Pittman says that she was in contact with Meghan Budd, who is coming into her role next year.*

*Xiuming Shi reports that she attended a few meetings and finished her councillor project.*

## **5.2 Election Report**

### **Resolution 103-20**

***That** Council gives Jack Roy speaking rights.*

Mover: Jharana Luitel, Computer Science Councillor

Seconder: Abhiiraj Nikam, Engineering Councillor

**The motion is carried.**

Jack Roy, Chief Returning Officer: “As the CRO of the UNBSU, I’m here today to give a summary of the report made by myself as well as Nicole, the Deputy CRO, regarding the 2021 UNBSU General Election. I’ll go through the sections reasonably quickly.

To summarize, the 2021 UNBSU General Election was held following all UNBSU by-laws. As well, UNBSU followed the election procedures, and the polls opened and closed as they should.

From there, the report goes into the timeline. It goes day-by-day and is quite thorough. I won’t get into every detail. I will highlight some points to be a bit clearer if you choose to go through the report on your own time. From January 24, 2021, to January 31, 2021, all actions taken on the CRO’s part are taken by Grace Pelkey (who was the acting CRO) and come February 1, 2021, Nicole and I take all actions.

Additionally, there were five campaign complaints that I will describe later in the timeline. Two campaigning violations occurred and were resolved with no fines occurred. There was an election expenditure of \$250.00 for the five gift cards awarded by UNBSU as a campaign incentive.

Complaints brought to me or Nicole which warranted a decision on the part of the Office of the CRO and DCRO are summarized below. I will summarize the complaints without names or positions to maintain a balance between transparency and privacy,

The first complaint brought to my attention was surrounding the campaigning material of a particular individual. It was believed to be misleading regarding the role within the student organization. The investigation took place immediately, where I took an independent inquiry into the respondent’s position within the organization in question. A decision was issued to the respondent on February 12, 2021, requesting that the respondent clarify their involvement with the student organization. Further information was provided, so I reopened the investigation to

ensure all data was taken into account. A final decision was issued on February 19, 2021, requesting that the respondent reorganize their campaigning material to reflect a more clear involvement with the organization. No further action was warranted.

Complaint B was regarding a candidate's response to a question asked to them during the executive debate. A complaint was made that the candidate's response could have been misleading to the student body surrounding their previous roles within a student organization. Following an investigation, we determined that the student body could have had multiple interpretations of the respondent's answers to the debate question. Ultimately, we believe their statement to be truthful to their role, so no further action was taken.

Complaint C believed that some material within the platform of a candidate was misleading. An investigation took place where I further informed myself on current Student Union policy information and informed the candidate of the misleading information on their platform. The candidate immediately took steps to reword their platform statement. No further action was taken.

Complaint D was regarding a specific platform statement of a candidate. The complainant believed that the information within the platform was untrue and misleading to voters. The CRO and DCRO conducted an investigation and talked to both parties about the platform material. Upon immediate contact with the candidate, the material was taken down pending the investigation. Following the investigation, our DCRO informed this decision. Still, due to the final decision happening during the polling period, the candidate ensured that the misleading statements were off their social media accounts and could not repost a reworded draft of the material. No further action was taken.

Lastly, Complaint E relates to Bylaw 30-0 and is about the potential of a candidate participating slandering another candidate during the campaign period. Nicole and I issued an investigation, where we met first with the complainant to clarify the complaint's details. After this, we conducted a meeting with the respondent to inform them of the allegations. Following the

investigation, the CRO and DCRO determined that the complainant did not provide sufficient evidence of slander by the respondent. Both the complainant and respondent were notified of this decision seven (7) days after the CRO received the complaint.

After this, we have the results of the 2021 General Election. Highlighted in yellow are the candidates with the most votes. As in par with the bylaws, these individuals will be ratified to take on these positions. In some of them, there are positions with two candidates highlighted in yellow. This is just to say that sometimes there are two, sometimes three seats for that specific position.

I also want to note some things about voter turnout. We had a 7% drop from the previous years' general election with a 13.1% voter turnout. Nicole and I feel it necessary to note the disconnect which has been inevitably caused among students and their university this academic year. This election was the first UNBSU General Election held entirely online, which the CRO and DCRO believe directly affected the voter turnout. The absence of in-person campaigning also could create a barrier between ordinary members of the student body and candidates promoting their campaigns. During the campaigning period, a candidate would usually be active on campus, involved in in-person discussions with the student body, and actively promote themselves, promoting the election. Finally, the only way to encourage the election was via social media (personal and Student Union.) This is standard practice during an election year; however, whereas Student Union social media were the primary method of promotion used, the fact that election-related social media posts could have been, for example, buried within multiple other posts on the UNBSU social media could have affected voter turnout.

To wrap up, as CRO and Nicole as DCRO, will recommend that all results from the UNBSU 2021 General Election be ratified as is following UNBSU bylaws. In completing that, if there are any questions specifically about the document or the layout of the record, I am open to those.”

Aodhan Murphy, Council Chair: “If there are no questions, then I will give a quick summary of the Appeal Board side of things, then we can move to ratify.”

Jack Roy: “Perfect.”

Aodhan Murphy: “For us, we had six complaints come forward. The way it works is to make a threshold case, and then the Board decides whether they want to hear the respondent. Whether or not the complaint is worth notifying the respondent of the complaint. We found that two complaints did not meet the threshold case, two met a threshold, but after hearing the respondent, we dismissed those appeals. There were two complaints left.

Concerning the CRO and some bylaw material, one did not meet a threshold case, and the Board dismissed the other complaint. We did uphold a pretty small one, but it’s mostly just a bylaw issue. I will read from our decision, ‘Where a CRO is guided in any way by a current Executive Councillor while another one is a candidate on issues which result in a substantive exercise of the CRO’s discretion, there exists a reasonable apprehension of bias.’ There was no actual bias in this case. The remedy refers to Policy Committee. If the CRO ever needs help, they should first go to the DCRO and then the Chair. To be fair, Jack did come to me, but I was in the middle of midterms and couldn’t get back to him for a couple of days. Nothing substantive occurred. It was a quick provision we had to make to the bylaws. Otherwise, the election seemed pretty ordinary; correct me if I’m wrong, Jack?”

Jack Roy: “Yep. Pretty ordinary.”

Aodhan Murphy: “Are there any last questions before we make the motion?”

Sean MacKenzie: “Before we go into the motion, I would recommend making three separate motions just due to the number of councillors involved. For example, those who ran for an executive position must abstain from ratifying those positions due to a conflict of interest. My recommendation would be to do executive positions, councillor positions, and board of governors/senators separately. This way, we can ensure enough people motion and are not abstaining.”

Aodhan Murphy, Council Chair: “That’s a good point.”

**Resolution 104-20**

*That Council ratifies the results for all Executive positions for the 2021 General Elections.*

Mover: Sean MacKenzie, President

Seconder: Abhiiraj Nikam, Engineering Councillor

**The motion is carried.**

**Resolution 105-20**

*That Council ratifies the results of all Councillor positions for the 2021 General Elections.*

Mover: Abhiiraj Nikam, Engineering Councillor

Seconder: Adriana Lefort, VP Finance & Operations

**The motion is carried.**

**Resolution 106-20**

*That Council ratifies the results of all Board of Governor and Senator positions for the 2021 General Elections.*

Mover: Xiuming Shi, Renaissance College Councillor

Seconder: Lidia Shibre, Arts Councillor

**The motion is carried.**

**5.3 NBSA Review Extension**

Sean MacKenzie, President: “I was looking to explain this to everyone. We met as a committee; however, we weren’t able to meet as early or frequently as I had hoped. I contacted the ED to receive information on the NBSA in a formal document for us, the Student Union, to review from their perspective. We did not receive that information as soon as we anticipated, so we could not reach a fair set of recommendations for the Council. I’m looking to ask Council for a two-week extension to present this report to Council on March 28, 2021. If anyone has questions regarding this, I’d be happy to answer them to the best of my ability.”

## **Resolution 107-20**

*That Council extends the deadline to March 28, 2021, for the Adhoc Committee on the review of the NBSA.*

Mover: Sean MacKenzie, President

Seconder: Jharana Luitel, Computer Science Councillor

**The motion is carried.**

### **5.4 Councillor of the Month**

Grace Pelkey, VP Internal: "I'll put the link in the chat, and if everyone wants to vote for Councillor of the Month, it's the same process as last time. The winner will receive a gift card of their choice."

*Student Union members vote on Councillor of the Month, and Grace Pelkey tally's the vote.*

Grace Pelkey: "We have a tie! The two Councillors of the Month are Abhiiraj and Matt! Congratulations. I'll send you both an email about it tomorrow."

Aodhan Murphy: "Congratulations, you guys."

## **6. Reports to Council**

### **6.1 Vice President – Communications**

- Deanna Merriam, VP Communications: "The biggest thing that's been going on is the Winter Carnival which ends tonight. Every day over the past week, we've had videos go out. I've had to organize those with Katelynn, our Director of Campus Events and our Student Experience Team. We've also been receiving many questions about the events, which have taken up a lot of our time.
- We had an International Women's Day post go up on our Instagram.
- We've been prepping for International Week next week. The event has been posted on the Multicultural Initiatives page. With this being a newer page that the Student Union has set up, I would greatly appreciate any engagement you can give (like, follow, share.)
- I've been working with Téa a lot for the upcoming contests.



- I met with our Wellness Coordinator, Melissa Ghanem, and Téa to talk about a video series of weekly wellness tips. Once a week, on a Wednesday, a member of the student union will go onto social media and talk about what they've incorporated into their routine to stay physically and mentally well.
- I talked to Brennan and Vishnu to speak about their Cannabis Education page.
- I met with Jharana and Abhiiraj to work with them on their councillor project.
- I sent Matt and Xiuming's project off to Alice, who is our graphic designer.
- The winter carnival giveaway will be announced this week.
- The hiring is now open for VP Communications. I will be posting some reminders on our stories. I will be hosting office hours, so the Global Gala awards. Please tell them not to hesitate to contact me if you know anyone interested. They can reach me by email or Facebook.”

## **6.2 Vice President – Student Life**

- Grace Pelkey, VP Internal: “As Vish isn't here, I will read his update. Firstly, he had his check-in with the Multicultural Coordinator to work on the Taste Breaker Bundles. They are being given away through the Typeform on Facebook. There are three choices: the Caribbean, East Asian, and African bundles. He plans to have these dropped off before the end of the semester.
- He's looking into getting the garden back up and running.
- Over the break, his team was able to purchase a new SafeRide vehicle. It's a very nice SUV. He will be applying for an accessibility grant for the new SUV. Additionally, he wants to decal all of the SafeRide vehicles.
- He is still working on ACE's website and programming.
- He notes that the winter carnival was in full swing and that there was a good turnout. One of the events has been postponed to March 26, 2021.

## **6.2 Vice President – Finance & Operations**

- Adriana Lefort, VP of Finance & Operations: “In terms of Winter Carnival, I met with both Katelynn and Vishnu right before March break and made a budget for the week. Throughout the week, I made a lot of online and in-store purchases.
- I attended two Policy Committee meetings.
- I participated in the Faculty of Management Dean of Research presentation.
- Sean, Vishnu, and I looked for a new SafeRide vehicle and purchased the SUV. We’re looking into decal for the vehicle.
- For orientation hiring, I met with the 2021 Orientation Team and selected Blackshirt candidates for interviews.
- I met with Téa to go over all of the Sex Week prizes and pick winners. We also made sure the financials are looking sound for International Week.
- I looked over our newly ratified clubs from the past month or two. I wanted to have their information ready to go up on the website, which I believe Deanna did this week.
- I have been looking into creative ways we can deliver the NGM. I’ve also been preparing items for the incoming VPFO.
- I had meetings with various clubs to discuss their questions. I’ve been helping some of them plan in-person banquets.
- Finally, I met with Elizabeth to discuss her council project.”

### **6.3 Vice President – Internal**

- Grace Pelkey, VP Internal: “One project I’ve been working on is called Study Packs. So I’ve been making these and placing them in different locations around campus. If you have any in-person classes or labs on campus and have recommendations for where to put these, please let me know.
- I’ve been working on the Executive Description Policy. It is 99% done on my end, so I sent it to the Policy Committee. There’s just one section on the VP Student Life that we didn’t have. We’ll need to write that.

- I've also been working on the team transition report, the Breaking Stereotypes campaign, some ongoing accessibility concerns.
- Three weeks ago, I had a Senate meeting and a Pre-senate meeting. I had an SSNP meeting and a Sexual Assault Review Committee meeting. I met with a group of students who are doing a textbook dropbox as a school project and hope that the Student Union can continue with the project after they graduate.
- Luc and I met with the Student Accessibility Center about some concerns.
- I also met with various councillors about their projects.

#### **6.4 Vice-President – Advocacy**

- Grace Pelkey, VP Internal: “I will read Téa’s update as well. From February 22 - February 26:
  - Téa met with Alisha, the president of the Graduate’s Student Union and a member of the Black Lives Matter group in Fredericton. The two met to discuss ideas to add to the EDI plan.
  - She started putting plans together for International Week with Mehak, the Multicultural Initiatives Coordinator.
  - She put together a plan for weekly wellness updates with Melissa, the Wellness Coordinator.
  - She’s been working on EDI consultation presentations for different campus groups.
  - Téa has also participated in Pink Shirt Day.
- Over March break:
  - Téa attended the Sexual Violence Prevention team meeting. They discussed ongoing work, confidentiality, and promotion of the UNB Safe app.
  - She completed policy statements with the NBSA Accessibility Education committee about OER’s and accessibility to information. She also attended the

NBSA AGM, where they reviewed the work done this year and goals for next year. They decreased the fee from \$7.12 to \$6.45 per student.

- She also ordered the prizes for Sex Week.
- From March 8 - 12:
  - Téa developed a draft for the bay video about consent and sexual violence.
  - She devised plans for International Week, which is this coming week.
  - She participated in the first NBSA Review Committee meeting to discuss concerns and objectives going into the review process.
  - She finalized plans for the weekly wellness tips series with Melissa. This will start on March 24, 2021.
  - She discussed university objectives at the Bi-campus Mental Health Taskforce meeting.
  - She's looking into the idea of a video series of what accessing counselling services is like for students in the experience of group counselling, in collaboration with Matt Maclean.
  - She attended the University's Women's Board meeting to date on upcoming projects and get feedback on the EDI plan.
  - She drafted a structure for the EDI plan and a Typeform to allow all students to provide feedback.”

## **6.5 President**

- Sean Mackenzie, President: “We met as an executive team with the Student Services Leadership team. I also attended two Retail Review Committee meetings over the last few weeks. I participated at an Undergraduate Student Scholarship Committee meeting and the 2021 Student Technology Fee Committee meeting.
- I held a meeting for the NBSA Financial Aid Committee and attended the Transportation Taskforce.

- I had a couple of interviews with CBC and the Daily Gleaner.
- I also attended a few of the Board of Governors Committee meetings and the Student Standing Promotions Committee meetings.
- I also met with the Executive Director of the NBSA to address the NBSA review.
- I helped to purchase the new SafeRide vehicle.
- I attended the CASA Board meeting.
- I attended the NBSA AGM. I want to note that the fee drop is not official yet but will be made official at our next board meeting.
- I co-hosted MLA Mondays with the VP of Education at STUSU. That was our last one. We gave our best wishes to Mr. Coon as he has been accommodating.
- I helped set up the Eventbrite page for the NHL events.
- I attended a meeting with Annaka and a group that she's currently working with for a project and Mark Walma from Student Services.
- I held the NBSA Review Committee, a few Policy Committee meetings, and attended the Health Emergency Bi-campus Steering Committee.
- I also have an update on the RED Awards. We have three people selected for the director positions. I will notify them tomorrow, and we'll be working hard all week to get nominations ready for next week. I'm very excited. We will have a variety of awards different from the past.

## **6.6 Status of Executive Review Recommendations**

Aodhan Murphy: "I'll give a quick update on the status thus far. Last Council Meeting, we heard a lot about EDI. Adriana mentioned that she's allocating more work towards team building. Sean had mentioned that he'd been speaking with Karen and reaching out to our lawyer. Today we've heard a lot about EDI again. The Executive Description Policy and the Virtual Office hours seem to be pretty consistent. I believe the biggest outstanding subject is the review

of our bylaws. Do any of you want to touch on those points, especially that last one? We can also take questions from the Council.”

Sean MacKenzie, President: “Yeah, so for the bylaw review, number two has been thoroughly reviewed with the recommendations that our previous CRO had made. With the help of yourself, Aodhan, and Chloe, we’ve just finished reviewing bylaw three. This bylaw has changed quite a bit. There was a lot there that did not make sense. Next, the Policy Committee will help us shift bylaw one, where the information regarding part-time students will also change. I’ll also give an update on having the policies reviewed. We’ve run into a couple of speed bumps with our lawyer. I don’t want to reveal too many details at the moment. Karen and I are working very hard on this, but there have been some delays, and I apologize for those.

In terms of EDI, Téa and I contacted a consulting firm that will conduct a review of the EDI plan. They just emailed me with the price of this service, so I will discuss the financial aspects with Téa and Adriana to determine whether it’s feasible to follow through with the firm.”

## **7. Announcements**

Nihla Houssain, International Student Councillor: “I’d like to remind everyone that International Week is next week and that we will be having lots of giveaways that revolve around expressing your culture. I know we have a culturally diverse Council, so I encourage you to participate whenever you can. There will also be a form going around to vote for those nominated for the Global Gala awards. I encourage you to check that out as well.”

Deanna Merriam, VP Communications: “Just a note on that point. The form will be uploaded to the homepage of our website. It will work the same way as the form for the RED Awards. If anyone asks where to find it, let them know that it can be found on the homepage.”

## **8. Question Period**

Abhiiraj Nikam, Engineering Councillor: “When are Red Shirts applications going to be open?”

Adriana Lefort, VP Finance & Operations: “Right now, we’re hiring Black Shirts so that it won’t be until around May. It won’t be another couple weeks at least.”

**9. Other Business**

Grace Pelkey, VP Internal: “A reminder that at the end of the year, you will all have to write transition reports for those coming into your role next year. It’s good to get these started ahead of time.”

**10. Adjournment**

**Resolution 108-20**

*That Council adjourns the meeting.*

Mover: Abhiiraj Nikam, Engineering Councillor

Seconder: Brennan Marks, Inclusion Councillor

**The motion is carried.**

**The meeting is adjourned at 8:00 PM.**

**Secretary:** \_\_\_\_\_

**President:** \_\_\_\_\_