

## **Minutes – Emergency UNBSU Council Meeting**

UNB Student Union 2021/22

August 11, 2021; 7:00PM via Zoom

Regrets: Ariel Lee, Jillian Carson, Niko Coady, Tea Fazio

Absent: Camryn Smith, Kiannah Bear Heatherington, Vishnu Vardhan



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

UNBSU President, Kordell Walsh, calls the meeting to order at 7:03PM.

#### **1.1 Role Call**

Kordell Walsh performs roll call.

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

#### **Resolution 001-21**

**That** Council adopts the agenda for August 11, 2021, with the amendments to remove item 4: Approval of Previous Minutes, and to include item 5.6: Appointment of Chief Appeals Officer.

Mover: Deanna Merriam

Second: Brennan Marks

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

Kordell Walsh: "I'll try to keep this as brief as possible. I just wanted to say thank you to everybody for making the meeting tonight, we really appreciate it. I also want to say a major welcome to Council tonight, I know this isn't how we expected our first meeting but I just want to say again we really appreciated and we are really excited to be working with you all this year. This is new to everybody, if you don't know what's going on or if you're concerned about anything just feel free to raise your hand or drop a question in the chat and we can address it. We're all learning together, so don't feel nervous or uncomfortable asking a question or for clarity. So yeah, thank you for coming and we're really excited to be working together this year."

### **4. Substantive Business**

#### **4.1 Appointment of Associate Appeals Officers (Kordell Walsh)**

Kordell Walsh, as Acting Chairperson, presents that there is an ongoing appeal, creating a need for Matt Oliver and Abigail Companion as candidates for Associate Appeals Officers.

Kordell presents that both individuals meet the criteria set out in bylaw

#### **Resolution 002-21**

**That** Council appoints Matt Oliver as Associate Appeals Officer.

Mover: Deanna Merriam

Second: Jharana Luitel

#### **Resolution 003-21**

**That** Council appoints Abigail Companion as Associate Appeals Officer.

Mover: Deanna Merriam

Second: Brennan Marks

Matt Oliver and Abigail Companion took the following oath:

*I do swear that I will faithfully, truly and impartially, to the best of my skill and*

*knowledge, fulfill and perform my duties as Associate Appeals Officer of the University of New Brunswick Student Union Incorporated.*

#### **4.2 Ratification of Chief Returning Officer (Kordell Walsh)**

*Kordell Walsh, President, presents that the UNBSU Selections Committee selected Ria Sabitry as the UNBSU 2021-2022 Chief Returning Officer. He notes that the Selections Committee included himself, four councillors, one general member, and the VP Internal as a non-voting member.*

##### **Resolution 004-21**

**That** Council appoint Ria Sabitry as 2021-2022 Chief Returning Officer based on the recommendation of Selections Committee.

Mover: Brennan Marks,

Seconder: Houda El Hajjaoui

*Deanna Merriam, Seth Eichhorst, Jillian Carson, Maya Kors, Abbie Delaney abstain.*

#### **4.3 Ratification of Council Secretary (Kordell Walsh)**

*Kordell Walsh presents that UNBSU Selections Committee selected Ridhi Sharma as the Council Secretary for the UNBSU 2021-2022 term.*

##### **Resolution 005-21**

**That** Council appoint Ridhi Sharma as 2021-2022 Council Secretary based on the recommendation of Selections Committee.

Mover: Jharana Luitel

Seconder: Spencer MacDonald

*Deanna Merriam, Seth Eichhorst, Jillian Carson, Maya Kors, Abbie Delaney abstain.*

#### **4.4 Ratification of Council Chair (Kordell Walsh)**

*Kordell Walsh presents that Selections Committee had two applicants, however was only able to interview one. He notes that the candidate that the Selections Committee had explicitly requested additional time to transition into the role and familiarize himself with the bylaws and Robert's Rules. Therefore, Selections Committee recommends that the position of Council Chair be reopened, and have the Chief Returning Officer move forward as Acting Chairperson in the interim.*

Jharana Luitel: "I think I'm a bit confused, did Yakoub get appointed or not?"

Kordell Walsh: "That's a great question. No. We felt it would be best to leave the position vacant officially, and allow the Chief Returning Officer to fill the position in the interim."

Houda El Hajjaoui: "Did he ask for up until September?"

Kordell: "Yes he did. He asked until September and felt that he needed the rest of the summer to really grasp the roles of the role and the intricacies of the Chair position and be confident in his own abilities and impress confidence on the entire Council."

#### **4.5 Resignation of Vice President – Finance and Operations (Kordell Walsh)**

*Kordell Walsh presents that the Executive Committee had received a letter of resignation from Bhavya Pratap Malhotra, the Vice President Finance and Operations. Kordell presents the letter of resignation and reads it in full.*

Deanna Merriam: "What does the process look like moving forward to fill the vacancy?"

Kordell Walsh: "The application period for the position will be open from Monday until Monday, August 16th at midnight. We'll ask for a resume and cover letter explaining why the applicant feels they are the best fit. Once those applications have been all received, we'll meet as an executive to review the applicants, create a shortlist, and from there we'll conduct interviews and we will bring forth one or multiple candidates to the next meeting of council for them to present why they feel they would be the best fit. From there, Council can either look to appoint them in the interim or if for some reason council really decided that candidate is not the best fit, council could have the chance to say no or make a recommendation for someone else. Then the position would be filled until the fall by-election, which is the first week of November."

Luc Bouvier: "Just in the interim where there's two executives out of the office at the moment, how are you coping and what's your plan to be able to make it through with an understaffed team at the moment?"

Kordell Walsh: "For myself it is a stressful time but on the finance side of things Bhavya and I had worked already worked closely anyways, and we do also have our General Manager who is also a signing authority on our accounts and works to closely monitor our accounts. That side of things isn't too stressful. But obviously it is taking a toll, there is a reason why these are all full-time positions over the summer, so right now it's just been doing whatever we can to get by and making it through without falling too far behind. I will also be taking a few vacation days once we have an interim appointed."

Brennan: "I appreciate the question, it's definitely been a tough few weeks for all of us but I just wanted to bring attention to Council to all the extra work Deanna and Kordell have been doing. For Deanna, I'm sure you've all seen her work into bringing council together because we obviously need your approval in these situations, and Kordell has been handling a lack of a VP Finance with grace and we're working through these things together. We've been dividing the other work up together as well. Thanks for the question."

Deanna: "I think to answer your question Luc, the first question we had was to divide up the responsibilities of each job and try to divide them in a way that is not overburdening on some people and too little on other people. Brennan has been doing a lot of the social planning aspects, the events, the weeks. We also have a lot of hiring right now, so we did have a meeting to sit down and go over every hiring committee for upcoming positions. Kordell and I are on a pretty demanding committee, Student Standings and Promotions, so while we have those meetings Brennan and Niko stepped up and filled those hiring vacancies. It was definitely a process to try and find a way that worked for everyone, but I think right now

especially once the next few weeks are over we'll be back on track. We want to keep it in motion so that the incoming person doesn't get a bunch of dead ends and have to start from scratch."

Luc Bouvier: "Thank you very much, and let me applaud your effort to keep everything upright there and if there's anything that any of the councillors can help out with, I'm sure you have lots of volunteers here to take the smaller stuff of your plate when needed, I'm sure it's a lot to handle so thank you very much."

## **4.6 Appointment of Chief Appeals Officer**

*Kordell Walsh presents that as acting Chairperson, Ria Sabitry would fill the position of Chief Appeals Officer.*

### **Resolution 006-21**

**That** Council appoint Ria Sabitry as Chief Appeals Officer of the UNBSU.

Mover: Brennan Marks

Seconder: Khanh Nguyen

Ria Sabitry took the following oath:

*I do swear that I will faithfully, truly and impartially, to the best of my skill and knowledge, fulfill and perform my duties as Chief Appeals Officer of the University of New Brunswick Student Union Incorporated.*

## **5. Reports to Council**

### **4.1 Executive Reports**

Deanna Merriam: "This may just be a quick section, where I did just send out executive reports earlier in the week. I don't really want to bore anyone. I want to open the floor to Brennan and Kordell just to see if they have any additions to the report sent out on Monday. And if they don't, I still encourage you folks to stop in and say hi and say a little bit about yourself."

Brennan Marks: "I hope you read my executive report last week, a lot of fun stuff going on in student life, but I really just wanted to stop and say hi to all of you. I'm really excited to start working with everyone and everyone on our committees, and I'm really stoked for the fall. Thanks for joining us tonight on such short notice."

Kordell Walsh: "I don't have much more than Brennan to say there. I don't have anything to add to my executive report, but please do read them and if you haven't been reading them, I think it's interesting stuff. I know it can seem pretty boring but there has been a lot of hard work that's gone into this year by everyone, Tea and Bhavya included, so I think it would be appreciated by everybody to have you folks reading them. And I'm really excited to be working with you all this year, please feel free to start by and chat or set up and meet, I'd love to get to know you folks more."

## **6. Question Period**

Mia Scalibrine: "Are the meetings going to be bi-weekly starting now, or starting in September?"

Deanna Merriam: "Where this is an emergency council meeting, it would typically be a one-off. But like Kordell mentioned earlier, we're appointing all these folks to the Appeals

Board because there is an ongoing appeal. There will eventually be a decision of appeal, at which point we would have to meet again. The 22nd of August, we may be here again. It may be a meeting very similar to this. I would try your very best to keep the evening of the 22nd open. You'll get an email from me within the next few days, from there council transition will be September 19th. I want to keep as few council meetings as possible before we have a full transition."

Meghan Budd: "I was assuming that where UNB is operating in person, that Council and transition would be operating in person as well. Was there a plan for this to commence virtually?"

Deanna Merriam: "My plan is to have council meetings in person and transition in person. I really want that to happen, this was more so just circumstance. I believe one third or more of councillors are outside of Fredericton right now so this was more easy for council meetings. But I will try to book a room for council transition, and the room for all of our council meetings is already booked for this year. We will be doing that in one of rooms in Tilley."

Kordell Walsh: "Deanna correct me if I'm wrong on this, but are we going to try to offer it as a blended model for individuals who might not be able to get to Fredericton?"

Deanna Merriam: "Yes, in circumstances where we could not meet in person, such as an outbreak in Fredericton and the university changes their rules with having groups of people together, or if you're in a different province/country, I will do accommodations to the best I can. It would probably be a Zoom call with Council at the time and someone would monitor the screen for questions, but as much in-person as possible."

## **7. Announcements**

Brennan Marks, VP Student Life: "One thing we are hoping to announce next week or the week after is the addition of a Student Assistance Plan to our health and dental coverage. We're going to have all students on our health and dental plan, at no charge to them this year, have access to 24/7 unlimited counselling and crisis counselling. You can request to speak to a councillor as much as you need to, any time of day. We're also adding coverage for licensed counselling therapists up to \$1,000 a year. We're stoked to have some extra good mental health support on campus and if it works good, we'll hopefully be making a long-term partnership with these people. Feel free to tell your friends, I really want people to know about this service and to use it."

Brennan Marks, VP Student Life: "Another thing that is happening next week is we're finally getting one of the Saferide vans retrofitted with a wheelchair lift, so Saferide will be accessible to all students. And we're working really closely with the Student Accessibility Centre to have it operate outside of Saferide hours. We do have grad students and undergraduate students joining us this year with wheelchairs, so we do think it will come in use."

Deanna Merriam: "I just wanted to touch on something from earlier, and something you can do to get involved. As most of you have seen from our social media is the call for the Interim VP Finance and Operations. It would be a great way to spark conversations about the union and great employment opportunities for someone with finance and operations experience or interests. Please try your best to push the word out there as far as you can."

Jharana Luitel: "Can a councillor apply for the interim VP position?"

Kordell Walsh: "Councillors are able to apply for the interim position, however I would have to note that if any councillor was accepted for the position, they would ultimately have to face the bi-election in the fall and would have to resign from their council position. So just a point of consideration in that in order to take on the VP position, a councillor would be choosing to lose their current position."

Deanna Merriam: "One person can only hold one vote on council, so please let us know as soon as possible because we would have to essentially organize for your resignation from your current position, and then my records would have to be adjusted and I'd have to put it in the bi-election. So as soon as that thought comes up, please just email Kordell."

Houda El Hajjaoui: "Is the SU implementing the bus pass as we voted on last year?"

Deanna Merriam, VP Internal: "Last year the bus pass went through on the student vote, that in turn meant we were going to pursue it, not that it would be done 100%. From the conversations we had with the city, the bus pass wasn't the most cost effective possible, so we needed to continue negotiations."

Kordell Walsh, President: "Another issue that arose from the bus pass was that the agreement was made directly between the student union and the city, however financial services collects our student fees, and they felt that they could not implement the opt-out options as they stood in the agreement. Administration of the bus pass would be extremely difficult, time consuming, and not financially feasible for financial services. Our executive team met with the Mayor's office about a week ago and our new Mayor, because again we also had municipal elections in the meantime, our new Mayor also expressed interest in having a meeting to discuss where the bus pass left off, why it might not have been successful and how to move forward. So that is a long way of saying that no, there won't be one for this year, but we're in discussions about what the bus pass might look like in the future. A big thing for us is cost, but we also want to include as many stakeholders as possible in ensuring its success."

## **8. Other Business**

## **9. Adjournment**

### **Resolution 007-21**

*That Council adjourns the meeting.*

Mover: Deanna Merriam

Secunder: Houda El Hajjaoui

Kordell Walsh

Ridhi Sharma

Signature: 

Email: president@unbsu.ca

Signature:   
Ridhi Sharma (Oct 19, 2021 16:11 ADT)

Email: secretary@unbsu.ca