



## VUSAC Meeting Agenda

**Call to order:** 5:35 pm EST, November 17th, 2023

### **Land Acknowledgement:**

*Medha Barath*

**Official Regrets:** Juhjung Yun (Leave at 6:50PM | Proxy: Aimee Surendra); Freddy Sulwoski (Proxy: Amoly Agarwal); Yuna Lee

### **Absent:**

**Approval of minutes:** –

**Additions to the agenda:** Sustainability Report (3 minutes)

### **Approval of the agenda:**

*Motion by Shane Joy to approve the agenda for Month Day, Seconded by Lara Athena Reyes.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

## EX-OFFICIO REPORTS:

**Campus Life Coordinator (Ali):** 3 minutes

*Motion: Lara Athena Reyes motions to grant Ali Kehl speaking rights, seconded by Diana Vink.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

Ali: Hi everyone, things have been quite busy in our office. We had the Vic ready boot camp during reading week. We've been finishing up our programming for the semester, including holding our second to last Slice of Vic this week. Our very first slice of the 6 on Thursday hosted by the STM. So thank you to everyone who came out. We were really happy. Our catering was canceled day of, but we were able to get some local catering, which was really great. We also have orientation Co-Chair applications currently open. And I do encourage everyone to spread the news to everyone. These will be open until December 1st, so folks still have a lot of time. We're also excitedly supporting Home for the Holidays and Gardner Gala and High Ball and Life After Vic all coming up. And finally, all others student leader applications including leader, TM, STM, IM, SAM, so that is transition mentor, senior transition mentor, international member, and senior international mentor and exec will all open on December 11th along with residents and commuter donship. And finally, I do know it is midterm season for everyone and exams are upon us. So I do continue to encourage you to reach out to support and make sure you get any help if you need it.

## Governing Bodies:

**Board of Regents (Amy):** 7 minutes



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Amy: So firstly, very excited to be back in a VUSAC meeting. For those of you that don't know me, I was the sustainability commissioner last year and this year I've retired and I'm now on the Board of Regents. And as the Board of Regents, we do a lot less work than you guys. And so we've had one meeting so far this year. So I was gonna give a quick update on what went down on that. And then also extend the invitation to come talk to me. I want to hear from people! Also, I guess my goal for this year is hopefully to be able to bridge the communication and to make sure that as many people as possible to know what's happening on the board. Then hopefully, everyone can feel comfortable coming and talking to me. If you have something that you want to discuss on the board or you just have questions I'm here and I really want to hear from you so I'm really excited to see people again that I haven't seen in a while and for new people, hopefully we will get to know each other. So, getting into it, meeting minutes are now available on the Vic website allegedly, but not actually yet, I don't think. But, but in the future they will be this year. However, the the kicker is that they have to be approved at the next meeting which means that there's going to be a several month delay, which means that there's going to be a several month delay and so if you want to know what happened the last meeting probably better to go talk to me or Shane or someone else on the board. So the big thing this year is that the board is planning to renovate Birge Carnegie building, which for those of you that don't know, it's not open to students and all my information I'm caught on that is from Callan, but it has a nice library I've heard and it used to be available to students. And so the plan is to renovate the Birge Carnegie building and move the administrative offices there. And the current administrative offices, which are on Northrop Frye Hall, which would be turned down and converted into a new teaching and learning center that they would build. And then in addition, the Dean's office would move from the first floor of Goldring. However, the registers office would be on the second floor and they would be doing a renovation where they're going to add offices. So they kind of said that this will be like net neutral – we'll have about the same amount of student space. However, this is kind of suspect. And it's also part of, I'd say, a larger historical trend of encroaching on student spaces because after all, we used to be in the Birge Carnegie building, right? And so, even if this particular action is like neutral, it is part of like entrenching this community where we have much less student space and it's going to continue to be an issue. For all VUSAC members, I just wanted to kind of put your mind on making sure that we are kind of watching out for any encroachment..

Then the last thing I'll say is that the proposed renovations are very expensive. So the goals bringing renovations to approved last meeting will be about 1.5 million dollars. Which is to say, I don't know if anyone remembers from last year, but apparently they needed to raise student fees and they were in a really tight budgetary situation. And so it does at least seem like perhaps affordability is not their biggest priority. And so if we want them to take affordability and the



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financial burden on students that these decisions over the past few years have had seriously, then that's something that we need to fight for. It is always a reminder that the admin are always gonna say that they need to raise to fees, but they also clearly make decisions that they don't really need, for example, they don't need to add a bunch of offices to Goldring. Just before I get the next part of my report that was kind of a reminder is I want to hear from you, please come talk to me. The Board of Regents spends your money, your tuition dollars, so they work for you in a sense. Again, I'm not on the VUSAC council this year and I'm not involved in anything, but I did want to close by talking a bit about myself and how I got involved in VUSAC as a reminder to you all, the importance that you play and your role in the Vic community. So when I came to Vic, I didn't know anyone and I was extremely nervous. I was stressed. I felt really isolated. I felt alone. I missed Winnipeg. I felt like a lot like an outsider. Everyone had really nice hair and I didn't understand it and it was really upsetting. The first time I ever met felt like a little bit welcome at U of T as when I was picking my orientation kit. I gave someone my ID and they were like, oh my god, you're Manitoban, I'm Manitoban. So I called my parents at night and I was like, oh my god, I met some from Steinbach, isn't that crazy? And that person, for those of you who know this person, was Jericho. And I actually didn't know, Jericho. I don't think Jericho knows this happened. But I remember this very distinctly. It was a really important moment for me when I came to Vic. I want to remind you all, as a VUSAC members, that a lot of people look up to you and we play a big role in the community as student leaders in ways that we might never know. There might be a lot of students that we've affected and that are affected by our programming in ways that we don't necessarily see. I think sometimes, when I was on council we can get really caught up in a lot of debates, rules, and argue with each other. But we also have to like stay grounded in the people that we help and the people that are affected by that decisions that we made make. Our value as a body comes from the way that we engage with students in the community. We provide support. We advocate administration. That's also where our powers come from because we only have power insofar as we have the respect to the community. People look back to us and that's something that we need to maintain. We cannot make any decisions half heartedly. If we weaken VUSAC now, which I'm not saying we, well, if we do, we give the VUSAC now, then VUSAC is weakened for years to come. I just would remind everyone about like David Gilmore and the students that we fought for and the students that I know personally who've had police called on them during mental health crises and how those students would have been all alone except for the fact that we are the only ones left that are fighting. So the work that we do is really important and if we lose the confidence of students there's no walking back. So thank you so much and I'm so excited to be back.

### STAFF REPORTS:



**Communications (Tanya): 1 minute**

Tanya: Hi, everyone. Just wanted to give you all a quick reminder regarding semi-annual reports. As you know, twice a year, VUSAC publishes a report that updates the VCU on what you've been working on and your applause for the rest of the semester. Please remember to include a picture if possible and feel free to include anything you'd like in your report. The deadline is 5 days away, so please make sure you submit your reports by Wednesday, November 22nd at 11:59 PM, as I want to have it published as soon as possible since the caucus meeting has already passed. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me.

**COMMISSION REPORTS:**

**Equity (Diana & Caitriona): 5 minutes**

Diana: Thanks so much, Jackie, and thanks everyone for being here. I want to talk about 2 events that we did this week. First of all, we had an event today with VOCA that was amazing! We had some brunch in the Wendy Cecil Atrium. If you didn't have the chance to stop by, I'm really sorry we had a lot of good brunch. So special shout out to our event planning executives, they're superstars! They put a lot of effort into this and we're really grateful to have had the chance to do something with VOCA, hang out, and eat brunch. And the bigger event that we want to talk about is on Monday, we did a Diwali dinner with St. Mike's Student Union and I want to talk a little bit about that. It's going to come up later because we're talking about it when it comes to budgeting but I want to talk about the event itself. It was a massive massive success! We had 80 people come through and have dinner, which was amazing and it was so much fun – it's just genuinely representative of some of the work that I feel the proudest of doing and I think that VUSAC as a whole, should feel the proudest doing. Students are feeling like their culture isn't being represented or heard and they're not being given the opportunities to learn about new cultures and it was really exciting to be able to help provide that to people. Someone remarked to me on the way out that the event made their Diwali and I think that that's just really special to be able to provide a home away from home for people who maybe couldn't go home to their families and celebrate Diwali. I think that really that should be the goal of every student union. I really think that making the college a welcoming space is super important. So I want to give a really big shout out to everyone who worked on this. Obviously the folks on the St Mike's Student Union and especially their VP spiritual life, Lydia. Lydia did so much of the work before VUSAC was even involved. But to talk about like the VUSAC members specifically, Krystyn sat there for 2 and a half hours or so doing henna for people and henna wasn't even originally one of the things we were planning to do. But she's sat there until her little hand was cramping and it was extremely impressive. Amoly was literally like the life of the party on the dance floor having



the time of her life. Sophie, Liz who are my execs and Aaron showed up early to decorate and then went around taking pictures and we only gave them like 2 days notice of the event. Kate took time from reading week to look into budgeting and spaces for the most ridiculous things. Callan, Lara, and Shane tolerated so many back and forth emails trying to make it work. Liz was promoting on social media last minute, Krystyn and Emily were really dedicated to trying to make the event more Diwali. It was just really, really amazing. Y'all are great. It was a great example of what teamwork can do in our own team and beyond it because we had the privilege of working with Snake Zoo. But it was also a wonderful reminder of the reason that I think a lot of us are here, to kind of make these spaces a home and comfort for people, at least part of the reason of why I'm here. To talk a little bit about the things we're doing coming up. I'm gonna pass it off to Caitriona.

Caitriona: Yeah, we're really excited about the events that we have had going on the last couple of weeks. Next week, we're running an inclusive swimming lessons at the athletic center on campus. So this will be a free 1 hour swimming lesson and water safety event. And it's inclusive to any Vic student who wants to be there. We've heard a lot from students that, wherever they came from growing up, swimming lessons were not accessible to them for whatever reason. And on campus, they cost about \$150 for a session. So we're trying to make them a little bit more accessible to students, give them kind of a preliminary and basic water safety lesson so that they can enjoy swimming. We're also hoping to get one more cultural event in coming up. So if anybody has any feedback on what they would like to see, we're asking our exec members. We're also holding our first general meeting next Friday, so we're going to be getting some feedback on that but we're hoping to do some a multicultural kind of winter holiday event in the future.

**Scarlet & Gold (Krystyn): 2.5 minutes**

Krystyn: Yeah, this is Krystyn. Scarlett and Gold Commissioner. So I was gonna give my High Ball short summary first but since we already talked about Diwali, I'll go with that first. Yeah, I did bring henna and my wrist started hurting after 2 hours, but it was really really fun! I wanted to thank everybody who worked really hard on this, especially Diana, because Di spent a lot of reading week on video calls with us and helping us out. Yeah, I wanted to thank everyone who came out to High Ball, especially those who sold tickets through office hours, special shoutouts to Shane, Ali, Laura, Emily, Isha, and thank you to the catering team. There are also 4 ways of food instead of 3, I don't know if you guys know this. Nobody was seriously injured and the person who was, was taken care of by Ju so shoutout to her. Thank you for going to first aid



training, you saved us. And so thank you to everybody who showed up to volunteer because even those who weren't directly associated with my team or who weren't on VUSAC in previous years who still came, helped, and floated around even though they didn't need to, so thank you. You should be getting personalized emails from me in the next while. It's been kind of hectic so I did not get a chance to do that yet. But thank you! That's it.

**Sustainability (Atlas & Leah): 3 minutes**

Atlas: I can say with confidence that the sustainability commission has been the most active, engaging, and consistently been a meaningful body within VUSAC thus far. Those of you who have seen the appendix, that should've been attached and sent to you in email this morning, know that we have the data to back this up. We have consistently run dozens of meetings, organized protest groups that have enabled many people to engage in advocacy for the first time in their lives, created spaces performing lasting friendships and we've been the only part of VUSAC to take a principled and meaningful stance on Palestine. Not even the equity commission has done that despite this literally being their job. We've been engaging with multiple other groups on campus for advocacy in Palestine, doing postering, taking part in rallies together, doing a lot of things that I believe all of VUSAC should also be taking part in actively. I would once again remind people that there's a genocide going on. But we have done it and I hope VUSAC also does that. The community that we have built in the past 3 months alone has, speaks for itself essentially. It speaks through the petitions that you all have probably seen, speaks with the numerous people that you can notice attending the meeting despite honestly wanting nothing to do with VUSAC, despite the body claiming to represent them. I think that the basis of all advocacy is relationships, this is why I thought to not create formal structures within the commission but instead create friendships and lasting bonds, bonds that enable people to stand up for each other. And I'm glad to see that I have actually succeeded in doing so within just 3 months just by having spent so much of my time in those 3 months struggling heavily with mental health. Members of sustainability commission work and organize together not because we want these students to look good on our resume, but because we actually care. We don't rely on blind to beat is the formal documents or constitutions, but instead on our values and friendships, the fact that the overwhelming majority of members including Leia, she has gone on record and you can see this in the email that she may have sent to you this morning, stating that they will resign if I am removed is proof that whatever we have built together is far more meaningful and genuine than the weak foundations of bureaucratic formality VUSAC currently stands on. The fact that I have received such overwhelming support from outside the commission is proof that the advocacy I have done so far has had an incredibly positive impact on the VCU as a whole,



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including the advocacy I have done on Palestine. I have received multiple people, some of whom I never even spoken to, show up, come to me, and random places and they can tell me how inspiring they thought my entire land acknowledgement was. This is meaningful advocacy and I hope that the VUSAC actually does that. And the fact that the rest of us have not been doing so is honestly rather shameful. I can say with pride that I have been doing that I can say with unflinching confidence and the dozens of people including multiple student leaders backing me up that the work I've done is meaningful. Can the rest of you say the same?

Cam: I think, correct me if I'm wrong, most of the non-VUSAC folks who have joined us have done so for either Palestine or Atlas, or both. I'm wondering if we could move the budgeting to after those items so that they don't have to sit through 40 minutes of this.

Lara: I think it's just that we should be tackling all of the things first so that we can move onto the heavy things last. No to discredit people's time but more of just like, it's gonna be really weird if we, end the meeting like that – you know what I mean?

Callan: I think the budget is so exciting! And we should get through it. This is how we've done our amendments all these years so I don't find it necessary to change the order.

Cam: I totally agree, regardless of whether we do the budget now or later, please stay for the budget but I think in the past, we have moved things around based on the situation.

Michael: Actually, last year, we did the action items before discussion items so this is a change from previous procedures. I'd be happy to go back to past procedures for things as urgent as this.

*Motion by Cameron Miranda-Radbord to move the budget amendments to the of the meeting agenda, seconded by Erin Timur.*

*Some in favour. Most opposed. None abstaining. Motion failed.*

### DISCUSSION ITEMS:

*Amendments to the 2023 Fall Budget (Appendix A), put forth by Callan Murphy (40 minutes)*

### **GLAM**

Callan: There are 23 lines in total. We'll just tackle them in the order that, they're sorted here in the budget. We have a few from clubs and a few from commissions. This is linked in the appendix as well if anyone wants to follow along on their own screen. But we'll start with



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GLAM. GLAM submitted 4 lines and they have mostly reallocations due to an event that got canceled for reasons beyond their control. I just wanted to check first if there was a GLAM representative here that wanted to speak on these lines.

GLAM (Xinyu): Hi, I'm the Vice President. So basically, what we are asking is that, since our events got canceled, it was the wrong trip and it was the biggest events of GLAM typically open to the public every year. So with decided to, reallocate that budget to something different. We decided to do a painting night and then make it like an end of the year social and ordering pizza and stuff.

Callan: So just to summarize the changes here, which are outlined in the notes columns, you'll see some, like this line here was reduced to \$0, the idea being, as was said, this amount wasn't able to be spent currently in the budget. It was budgeted for \$385. And so the proposal here is to reduce the total amount since the event couldn't happen. And then also to take some of those remaining funds, use them for a future event here in November. At the same time there is an amendment to reduce the amount on this line. So the note section here, hopefully, outlines those changes, but we're voting on ratifying the changes and some of these are new lines to GLAM, lines CGLAM-001, CGLAM-010, CGLAM-011, and CGLAM-012.

Lara: Just to ask, if you have any more details on CGLAM-011? I was just wondering if how many people you're kind of expecting because \$300 for pizza is a lot. I know that for the executive retreat I was budgeting for 30 people and I only ended up spending like a little under \$200.

GLAM (Xinyu): I think in our first event, we believe we had budget for around like 200 people, but then were more people that came than we expected. So the pizza went out super fast and there were a lot of people who didn't have a chance to have a slice. So I think this is a reasonable price because it's not only pizza we're providing, we are also going to order other snacks and stuff. Also, this just kind of to serve as a retreat for some people who expected the ROM trip for a whole year but didn't get to go.

Callan: I don't think this is the case here, but I just want to mention which might kind of build off with Lara's mentioning too. One thing we want to make sure when we're doing budgeting for lines like this (CGLAM-011) for \$385, which I think was mostly due to the ticket costs for the ROM. Just because those \$385 weren't spent, we shouldn't be like, "let's, you know, get a whole pizza for every single person". It sounds like that's not the case because there are so many people attending the event, but I think the one thing to be careful about is just to make sure that we're like purposely spending, because there are other clubs who would love to have more funding but





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can't have it. So yes, this amount was allocated, but it was allocated for the tickets because they were more expensive. It's okay to use those funds or to request to use those funds for other purposes, but we want to make sure that those purposes are justified externally to what they were originally proposed for. I just want to make that clear if that makes sense.

*Motion to ratify the amendments to CGLAM-001 and CGLAM-010 to CGLAM-012 by Shane Joy, seconded by Lara Athena Reyes.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

### Academic Commission

Callan: I'll just summarize very quickly. There is mostly just reallocations happening here where some events they spent less than they intended to. And so they're moving some of those funds to a later event, which again is highlighted in the notes here, but I'll hand it off to the Academic Commission if they want to speak on this.

Academic Commission (Medha): Hello. Yeah, so we are spending less on some of our events because we budgeted too much for refreshments. But we have our big alumni dinner next semester, so we wanted to conduct a survey to actually understand like what career paths that students are interested in learning more about and what fields they want their alumni from. So as an incentive to fill out the form and give us feedback, we're going to offer 4 \$15 second cup gift cards.

*Motion to ratify the amendments to VCACA-001 and VCACA-004 and the new line VCACA-008 by Lara Athena Reyes, seconded by Amoly Agarwal.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

### Arts & Culture

Callan: This is a very small thing. If Kate wants to speak on it, she certainly can. This is just the fact that this line for Arts and Culture was related to the Diwali event but those lines were then proposed separately by the Equity Commission which we'll also be voting on shortly after this. So Kate is proposing to reduce the amount on this line to \$0 because this particular budgeting for the Diwali event didn't occur, but instead, there was other spending on the event. But I'll let Kate speak on that if she wants to.



Kate: Yeah, you basically said it all. I just wanted to reallocate it to other lines, just because we didn't end up having a Diwali event for Vic, but we had one for St. Mikes and that was really great. So yeah, that's all.

Callan: And just to clarify too, the lines by Diana are brand new lines. So the reason here that we're not immediately also approving like the \$160 increase to the other line like correspondingly is because we're just sort of saying that like a portion of the amount is potentially going towards those lines, but we'll talk about those after.

*Motion to ratify the amended cost of VCART-005 to \$0 by Amoly Agarwal, seconded by Juhyung Yun.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

### **Commuter's Commission**

Callan: To my understanding there was an event. This was the one, where I think it cost more than they intended. So they are taking an amount from another line to help cover the cost because they were under-spending on that other line.

Juhyung: Yeah, that's pretty much correct. I think our exec member kind of got confused because it's just one event so they didn't know that there were 2 separate budget lines but the amount in itself is the same. We're just reallocating some money from one line to another.

Callan: Right, so it's the same line item title, like the same overall event, but it's like the breakdown within that event, right? Where the amounts are being changed within? Okay.

*Motion to ratify the amendments to VCCOM-014 and VCCOM-015 by Diana Vink, seconded by Jack Cochrane.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

### **Equity Commission**

Callan: I'll just say my piece really quickly, which is that for this budget, when these amendments came in, as Di alluded to, there was a lot of discussion about it because it was a very large amendment size and so I was initially quite hesitant about it because I think one of the things that we've been trying to do this year is put together a more comprehensive plan at the



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beginning of the year to show how much care we are putting into Vic student funds and making sure that we're going doing proper planning. That being said, as Di mentioned, this event was very successful and a lot of students attended and so it was a really good opportunity for us. Unfortunately, there were a lot of difficulties in details, in terms of getting it all set up but I'll let them explain how all this was sort of put together.

Diana: So this is something that we are budgeting for now, which is after the event. We don't like retroactive budgeting and we're really not crazy about this but unfortunately, this was something that we really could not have incorporated into our earlier budgeting period because it was simply not a collaboration that was presented to us until later in the semester. We would have presented this at an earlier meeting if possible, but between now and the last meeting we had talking about the the Diwali collaboration, the only meeting has been Caucus where we could not have a discussion. I will tell you a little bit about the statistics, just so you have an understanding of what you're voting for. Basically the total dinner cost was \$2,000. We are budgeting here for \$800 which is 40% of the total cost. We were expecting 40% Vic turnout. That, turnout was actually better than we expected. So we had 80 total attendees of which 38 of them were from Vic, which is 47.5%. So almost half of our attendees were from Vic and that does not include staff. We had a lot of interest in the event around a hundred RSVPs, obviously not everyone showed up, and 20 walk-ins. So I think that it's definitely fair to say that this is something that Vic students are interested in and it would be an appropriate use of Vic funding. That being said, I do understand that we are like past the budgeting period and that this is like a very big ask. So it's definitely understandable that this is something we have to have a lot of conversations about. To clarify, because this is retroactive somebody has already paid for this, members of like the team that are working on this, have paid for it and if we don't pass it those are personal costs that they have agreed to take on.

Callan: Thank you for covering that as well. I'll just give one last thing which is, again, sort of summarizing what I already said. This is a good opportunity for us all, including myself, to learn about, like, how do we go about doing amendments and make that process take place? I think this is a tough one because it's retroactive and it's a large expense but the event had a good turnout. I think it's just like an unfortunate situation where it got very confusing in the planning. I think all the people involved sort of recognize that this is a situation we ideally would not want to be in – where we have to make financial agreements midway through the year and then make a really large amendment to the budget. But I understand that this circumstance is difficult and a lot of it has been out of their control. It's ultimately up to the counselors to vote on it but I think my personal opinion is that we should use this as a learning opportunity about how we go about



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making amendments in the future, especially as it relates to VUSAC, clubs, levies and how we think about the amounts in our budget and the portions of our budget that are planned at the start of the year or the semester, versus those that are made later on.

Diana: Yeah, I definitely agree that this is a good learning opportunity and it's definitely a difficult situation to be in because again, really there was no way that we could have budgeted for this earlier. That being said, we are talking about future collaborations with St. Mike's and we are beginning those planning sessions now. So this is not a situation we intend to end up in again. I also want to say we actually get the last budget line there, Jackie, the one for extra materials we didn't end up using the last budget line there, so I'm gonna motion to strike that. But yeah, I appreciate everybody's conversation. I think that given the circumstance of how difficult it was with the timing and everything, this is something that our governing policies couldn't really have accounted for. That's why I'm still motioning to get this budget passed through. This is a great lesson – looking out for these collaborations and planning them earlier and hopefully, it's something that will be very good to keep in mind that later on.

*Motion to strike line VCEQU-010 by Diana Vink, seconded by Shane Joy.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

Krystyn: This was something I wanted to say about the first line with the body paints. Although we bought it, we didn't end up using the first line instead because I brought my own henna just on a whim. And it was about \$20 worth of henna, but I brought it there and ended up using that for the event and I know like I don't expect to be compensated because I don't know how to? Because we've already submitted the budget lines and I don't know if like reallocation would be possible because like we're thinking to pass this budget but yeah, I just wanted a motion to strike the first line.

Callan: Krystyn, could you just clarify? Do you mean like you already owned this personally and have owned it for a period of time and you brought it in or do you mean that you purchased it for the event and have the receipt for it?

Krystyn: Yeah, I had it previously and then I brought it in so that's why I wouldn't have a receipt to be able to ask for compensation or anything like that. So I'm kind of fine with that.

*Motion to strike line VCEQU-007 by Krystyn Kalloo, seconded by Shane Joy.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*



*Motion to ratify lines VCEQU-008 to VCEQU-009 by Shane Joy, seconded by Amoly Agarwal.  
All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

### **Mental Wellness Commission**

Callan: This one, I believe, was \$200 allocated for this boxing session. Then there was an unexpected charge that came on the invoice. They were quoted that it was gonna be \$200 and I think it was tax or something else that wasn't accounted for. So this is retroactive to account for an extra \$26 to add to this already ratified budget line. However, I have a recommendation regarding this, which is that I actually think this is a good use of the Finance Chair contingency fund. So for those who aren't aware, there's a \$1500 line in our budget that we approved in September and the point for that line is if there's any unexpected expenses where there's an additional tax or additional whatever, to use that to cover the expense. So I'm gonna recommend that we actually use that to cover the expense, rather than increasing this line's amount by \$26.

Lara: Would you just strike this line and go ahead and do it?

Callan: So technically, this is an existing line, like it's just changing the amount of the existing line. So I think what we can do is we can say we're not going to ratify modifying this line. Basically, we'll leave this line as it is ratified in the budget at \$200. And then we'll reimburse \$200 from this line and the \$26 from the contingency fund potentially.

Lara: So if it's already at \$200 on our budget, can we do a friendly amendment to just keep it as \$200 so that we can motion to pass this?

Callan: Yeah, for sure.

Charlie: Yes, can we get a friendly amendment to change this line to \$200?

*Friendly amendment to change line VCMEN-014 to \$200.*

Amoly: I have a question, I didn't quite understand why we need to give money from the fund we have. What happens if we make a new line for \$26 and then ratify that? Or just amend this one for \$226?



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Callan: Yeah, so procedurally, it's going to end up being the same thing regardless. The point is more that the contingency fund is set up for this express purpose, which is that we set aside \$1500 at the beginning of the year in our budget for any unexpected expenses that we incur and so while we typically do make amendments for things like, you know, "there's leftover funds so let's move it between lines" or if there's brand new lines like the Equity one, we don't take that from a contingency fund. We technically can, it does also meet the requirements but it's sort of at the discretion of Council of what they see as fitting the requirements. So yes, you could just increase it on this line. I just think it's a good use of that line for this particular purpose. I think technically we don't have to ratify it because it's already ratified at \$200. So by changing it back to what it was, it's already ratified to this amount. Procedurally, correct if I'm wrong, but I think we should be fine.

Jackie: I think that's fine then because this is not an additional thing. It just went back to what it was originally and it was already ratified so we won't need to vote but thank you for the counselors motioning.

Callan: What we can do is I'll bring up that finance line and I think we don't expressly have to vote to allocate that amount, but I think we have to have a motion to approve using the finance contingency fund to pay for this. So there's the VPSO contingency fund and then there's the Emergency Reserve Fund. I'll just quickly summarize what's written under the line in the budget, which is that it "shall be a line item under the budget of the Finance Chair and shall be used as an emergency funding pool to pay off unexpected debts incurred by the VUSAC and levies".. So I'm proposing that we take \$26 from this to reimburse the rest of the expense.

*Motion to utilize the Finance Chair's contingency fund for the Mental Wellness Commission's line by Lara Athena Reyes, seconded by Isha Timur.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

### **VicPride!**

Callan: VicPride! sent a reallocation and I let them know that because they wanted to add an event to their budget that didn't previously exist, that I would just need like an actual line amendment to say this is the line we want to add and so they sent that over. So in summary, there's no actual increase in their net spending. There's just 2 lines that were previously being spent on which are now being changed to \$0 and there's another line where they're taking that



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\$70 and gonna run a different event. I'm not sure if anyone is here from VicPride! and wants to speak on it but I think this one is pretty clear.

VicPride! (Tiide Koskinen): think you covered all of it. We had to cancel the original event due to scheduling issues, so that's all.

*Motion to strike LPRID-014 and LPRID-015, and to ratify LPRID-030 by Lara Athena Reyes, seconded by Jack Cochrane.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

### **President**

Callan: This one is a line on the President's budget, but it's actually something that I submitted. There was one line on the Fall budget that we approved for revenue incoming from VCAA. We mentioned this in the budget steering committee, but there was an expense incurred at the end of last year for VCAA, and VUSAC fronted that cost so what Shane and I worked out with VCAA was to deduct that amount from the levy cheque, and I just want to make sure we're tracking it here as revenue coming in to VUSAC, because we should know that we have this additional money to spend on clubs and VUSAC events as well.

*Motion to ratify VEPRE-019 by Diana Vink, seconded by Aiko Hashimoto Reis.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

### **VPSO**

Callan: This is a small one from Muskaan. This is a retroactive one for snacks for the all clubs meeting.

Muskaan: Yeah, so this was for the all club heads meeting that took place this Tuesday, on the fourteenth of November. I spent \$26 on getting snacks. It was basically chips, drinks and areas for all the clubheads.

*Motion to ratify VEVPS-004 by Shane Joy, seconded by Jack Cochrane.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

*VUSAC's advocacy for and solidarity with Palestine, put forth by Atlas (30 minutes)*



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Atlas: Okay, so again I will remind people that there's a genocide in Palestine. Israel has dropped the equivalent of over 2 nuclear bombs. 2 nuclear bombs on Gaza. I will remind people that the IOF boasts about having murdered over 20,000 Gaza civilians and that the Zionist regime has made it clear that its goal is nothing short of a second. We have been seeing people all across Toronto, all across Canada, all across the world, fighting actively in solidarity with Palestine. We have seen students taking part in participating and planning rallies, sit in shutdowns and so much more. We've seen UT students speak out repeatedly and consistently despite types of doxing academic consequences and more.. We've seen the YFS be threatened with this madman and yet bravely doubled down in their soldier in Palestine. Why is VUSAC doing none of this? Why has it stopped with just a weak two-sided statement and then also on top of that, is threatening to kick out the only member vocally advocating for Palestine? Like it's time to do better guys. It's time VUSAC demands big reveal the extent of its investments in manufacturers. It's time that it advocates again to pressure the bill or to divest from industries that are literally nothing more than killing machines? It's time that VUSAC that demands todismantle the Coburn Award, it's time that it a cut ties with other universities and join others in full academic boycott. It's time that it supports its Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim students the same way it support supported Ukrainians last year. That demands that a university take meaningful action against anti-Palestinian racism in Islamophobia. Engage in genuine and meaningful advocacy on behalf of the students it claims to represent instead of kicking out the only member that actually is trying to do so. I shouldn't have to be saying this considering our President is someone who until 2 years ago used to be a very loud and very powerful advocate for Palestine. I believe that if the threat of this missile is truly not politically motivated, then VUSAC should actually be showing its solidarity more actively with Palestine. Why am I still the only one publicly speaking out against this genocide? And again, it's a genocide. I will continue to advocate for it, but I think it is concerning that this organization that claims to represent all student members and all of Vic's student body is staying silent and also trying to silence the only member that are advocating for Palestine is shameful.

Erin: I did read VUSAC's statement on the war. I don't wanna call to war, but it's happening. And I was just wondering if there's a reason why it seemed really 2 sided or if like as a union, as a student union, are we not allowed to make a more political statement? I just wanted to know.

Amy: I'm not on an exec and obviously didn't make the statement. I'm just going to comment on the history of making political statements at VUSAC, at least to my knowledge, and the unions more broadly. I think there's always a balance of factors that people consider, but we also have acknowledged historically as a union and I think we're proud that solidarity has always been an important part of it. So UTSU, ASSU, and lots of workers unions. We do make political





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statements in solidarity with the students, and of course, our goal is always to support students. But we also see solidarity, especially with marginalized and oppressed people, as a fundamental part of what it means to support students. But yes, we do make political statements.

Shiven: Today I am speaking on behalf of 18 out of 20 members of the Sustainability Commission. I think we know that the statement from VUSAC was completely inadequate. And I think that we didn't really get a chance to this hear properly from the VUSAC exec more about the decisions behind their statement and why they chose not to use words like apartheid and genocide that obviously, clearly, describe the situation as it stands and not be more in solidarity with Palestine. And I think I want to hear more about that.

Cam: Yeah, I mean, we talked about it a little bit at Caucus, obviously using language that was little bit more flowery for the sake of administrators. The statement was, I think, deliberately mid. You know, those students who felt that it was like not sufficient in expressing solidarity. Yeah, like how do you do that in ways that are strong enough and meaningful enough? I don't think you ever can, but I also think that there are, as you've mentioned, like specific language that folks wanted us to use, that we didn't. And Atlas, the 5 of us, so us the execs and you chatted about this and felt that that we were on the same page. I'm not sure if this was an email that you said to everyone or just to VUSAC but you expressed that that wasn't the case and, you know, honestly, the intent of that discussion was really to make sure that we got it as good as possible. So 2 things then, yes, the reason why we didn't use the language that, you know, folks wanted use - I really don't feel that I can explain this in a meaningful way in 30 seconds and I'll go again a second time afterwards. But yes, statement, mid. Reasons for this, we can explain those and why we feel that that was the decision we made.

Atlas: Correct me if I'm wrong. ut the discussions I had with you and Shane, gave me the impression that we wanted to put controversy and I guess I, I'll say this: I regret not being more direct and more confrontational over there, but I will be more direct and more confrontational here. I feel like avoiding controversy is an unprincipled and cowardly sense. Many issues regarding human rights are often incredibly controversial, especially with the rise of the far right in Canada and across the world. I am a trans student. Trans right and existence is controversial. The next time somebody attacks a trans person, is VUSAC not going to take a both-sided stance on transphobia? Are they going to be like "are we gotta represent the transphobes too?" Yes or no? Simple question. If not, why is Palestine any different? It's unprinciple, that's it.

Shiven: But I was also gonna kind of make the same point. I think that the admission that this was a statement that was deliberately designed to be made uncontroversial is actually mortifying. I don't think that there's a way to justify the complete lack of courage that was displayed by



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leadership, right? Courage is like a prerequisite to leadership. And I remember specifically, so much discussion being held in previous years about VUSAC acting more like a student union and what a student union needs to do is need to fight, right? It doesn't just, it can't just politely ask and kind of see how it goes and I have like I can list like dozens and dozens of organizations, student organizations, that have financial reliance on the university or on vic that have actually set forward and made meaningful and proper statements on this matter and have called things out for what they are. So I don't think it's an issue of like persecution or it's just like a lack of courage.

Cam: Just on a personal level, like really do worry that it wasn't enough and was that statement show everything that I think we all felt in our hearts and wanted to say? No. You know, we have been, and I know that this isn't something that is like particularly public, but very present with administration when it comes to matters of academic freedom. The freedom to do things like pain free Palestine, academic supports for Palestinian and Muslim students. Would we be able to do that as effectively with a stronger statement? At the time and still now, we feel no. This being said, there has been, I think, And this is me personally and okay, I've run out of time.

Albert: I had 2 questions. My first question is, how does the Sustainability Commission have anything to do with politics? Again, I'm a first year counselor so I'm not too familiar with what each commissions do so I just wanted to figure that out. My second concern was I was DMed by a specific member and I was concerned of privacy issues regarding this and more so, how they found my personal social media in the first place. Thank you.

Shiven: So I guess I'll start off with the first question, just kind of talking about what the Sustainability Commission's job is in terms of politics and like it is constitutionally defined that the sustainability commissioner is supposed to promote the ideals of climate justice and sustainability – and those are political things. Especially climate justice implicates social justice. And to be honest, the the ongoing crisis in Gaza and the occupation of Palestine is a climate justice issue. And if you actually read the statement by the Sustainability Commission posted with a bunch of different climate organizations from across UofT, the ties between climate justice, social justice, and Palestinian liberation have very clearly been made. Okay, I don't know if I have the time to address anything else.

Atlas: First of all, literally everything is political, including the air we breathe. I think this should be obvious considering pollution, for example. Specifically as to how the Palestine liberation is connected to sustainability in climate justice, let me remind people or just inform people who don't know, that Gaza is sitting on over 500 billion dollars worth of oil. Now, of course, oil is a fossil fuel. Fossil fuels cause climate change. If what they're doing in Gaza, genocide in the name



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of fossil fuels, this is directly a sustainability issue. And again, as Shevin said, every climate justice is social justice. Even if this was not the case. Every person who cares about climate justice has a duty to fight for the rights of human beings and I think all of us do. So we absolutely have the right to speak on this.

Shane: Yeah, just on the, on the notion of, on the point of privacy, I think that's a really important thing to emphasize. I know a lot of people were messaged and are uncomfortable with that, Albert, so I don't think that you're alone in feeling that way. I think that that's something maybe we should keep in mind moving forward. Perhaps the issue stems from Shiven having access to Atlas's email, which I know is confidential information as pointed out in their contract. I expressly emphasized this in an email when I sent out that spreadsheet. I'd just like to point that out. I do think it is a bit unprofessional. Yeah, those are my thoughts on that and I'm happy to respond to other questions.

Albert: First of all, thank you for clarifying how the Sustainability Commission has ties with politics. In regards to my second question, just to clarify, is this like through Atlas's connections? If so, I don't remember putting in my personal social media anywhere in regards to this. I'm still unclear on how that came to be. I felt extremely uncomfortable. Yeah, I would like to get clarifications on that, please.

Amy: Yeah, obviously everyone should feel respected and have privacy, no matter if you're like in a public world or not. But I do want to just emphasize for everyone to like keep in mind that as student leaders you really do need to keep being accessible to people first and so if you're asking yourself, well, did someone in the Vic community contact me? That's completely on board. And I think we can talk about like, what are the appropriate channels and what aren't. But if the goal is to prevent VCU members from contacting you and to isolate yourself from hearing criticism, regardless of whether or not you think that criticism is valid or merited, I do think that that's extremely problematic tendency and that we probably shouldn't go there. We should all want VCU members to contact us and we should all be like, yay a Vic student took the time to talk to me because frankly, it's hard to get people engaged. Also, your social media isn't exactly private. I mean, it's literally public, but yeah, social media in general, like it's not private.

Shane: Yeah, just to clarify Albert, what I meant by the point about the email is that, in the beginning of the semester, I sent out a spreadsheet containing the name of every single Vic student. It's used for our ticketing purposes on VUSAC. It's not used for any nefarious purposes. Your full name will be included there. Perhaps they just typed in your full name into the



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Instagram search bar and found your Instagram. Not sure if that's the case. Regardless, I think it's a problem. Amy, I see what you're saying about being accessible but our office hours are publicly available. They also have our VUSAC emails, as well.

Albery: Amy, sorry if I didn't provide enough contact. I explicitly said my office hours are from 11AM to 1PM on Wednesdays in the VUSAC office. As Shane rightfully mentioned, we also have our emails publicly known. If whoever found my Instagram or social media through whatever means, I do in fact post the office hour schedules on my story as well. In reply, I got a message saying that this person isn't too comfortable in the VUSAC office and therefore won't meet me in the office during my office hours. In which, I showed my concern to one of our VUSAC members saying that I feel threatened or I feel, you know, unsafe regarding this matter.

Sophie: I think most of what I wanted to say was already addressed. But I was also contacted on Instagram and I also felt uncomfortable with that kind of mixing between my personal life and my life as a VUSAC counselor. I also have office hours and I also have a VUSAC email. I would absolutely love if members of the VCU would contact me through those channels. I will always welcome contact that way, but I do hope that it's kept through those channels and not through my personal life.

Shiven: Yeah, I can totally just take the moment to address this. We can use my name guys. I appreciate the respective privacy. I'm the one who messaged some members of the council. I just want to acknowledge that it's of concern of the specific method through which I got people's personal accounts and it wasn't all people's personal accounts, some was people's campaign accounts. It was just from the Vic post that had all the first and last names of the counselors and I just put it into the Instagram search bar. So if that's the concern, that's that. I completely understand the boundaries. I guess the way I was thinking about it, me personally, as someone who has been very involved in leadership and has been in elected positions before, I personally have never minded being contacted through my personal channels, but that is definitely a boundary that I think can be taken more seriously in the future. I'm definitely very excited to hear that everyone is committed to remaining accessible even if that is through personal channels because I really do think that that's incredibly key.

Amoly: Yeah, most of my concerns were also addressed, but I did wanna bring up Shane's point about other people having access to emails because we do have a spreadsheet with all of our sensitive information, emergency contact, cell phone numbers, which all 30 VUSAC members have access to. If somebody who is not an elected member or a VUSAC members have access to an email, that can give them access to that document. I don't know if that was used, but, having access to the email does give you access to that document which has not only ours but our



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families' contact information. It's just a really great invasion of privacy and I just want that to be addressed.

Jackie: Next is Shevin but after this ,I won't receive any more direct about this matter because as people may notice it's not about solidarity for Palestine.

Shiven: Atlas just asked me to mention that the passwords have all been changed. So that's no longer an issue of concern. I just wanted to say that just to clear the minds of everybody and just get that off their chest because I know that that is a negative impact of that.

Atlas: Again, I just wanted to mention that, this is no longer a concern. I've changed all the passwords and I'm now the only one who has access. Sorry if this made folks feel uncomfortable, but that's no longer an issue.

Jackie: Okay, the directs are over. No longer commenting on this because it's not within the topic of the item

Michael: Hi, yeah, just returning back to the topic. I just wanted to share with everyone that VUSAC has released a statement on Palestine in the past, this was 2 years ago back when Jericho was President. I personally feel the statement was in a much better phrase. It took a harder stance in support of Palestine and it shows that VUSAC has done this in the past and has a record doing this in the past and I would hope that council will continue that in this moment of great need.

Leah: Hi, just also coming back to the topic of the statement. I just wanted to clarify that I also was consulted and involved in the process of releasing the statement. I think that as we said earlier, the intentions of the statement were pretty set in that they were not going to address the ongoing genocide in Gaza, but rather to avoid controversy. I think that I question this framing because it not only obscures the power dynamics between the oppressed people and their oppressor but I think it also affirms the ongoing Israeli work crimes on the form of defense – like having that sort of 2 sided approach to things. I also wanted to say that as a Jew, and I said this in my meeting with Cam and with Shane, I was upset by the assumption that kind of permeates this statement that standing in support of Palestinian liberation and against the Israeli government can be anti-Semitic. I deeply resent the way in which anti-Semitism has been recognized by VUSAC and also by other organizations on campus in order to stay silent and to remain complicit. I think that in general, to associate the Jewish diaspora with these Israeli government and its violent actions is in itself anti-Semitic and I did clearly say this in my conversations with Cam and Shane but I do wish that I had been more vocal about this so that we could have had more stronger



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language in our statements and stood with especially Palestinian students on campus right now that are facing increased Islamophobia. That's all I want to say right now.

Cam: Yeah, 2 things. The first is, you know, the statement is done and out. I think that for all of its faults, it put us in what I think is quite a strong bargaining position with administration. Speaking on a personal level, things like the scholarship I'm actively seized on. I think that there has been a lot of change in the world and changing the forms and this is an opportunity for us to actually do something meaningful there. I think that there's room for change there and while at present the scholarship has been indefinitely suspended because conflict. I think that for both our VUSAC now laying the groundwork for future members of the executive to work on that. And the VOR similarly, when it comes to investments, if that's something that those members want to pursue, certainly I think we've played the grand working. Secondly on the statement. I think as far as, Leah, our chat when we approved it together, the intent was really not to weaponize anti-Semitism at all nor was the intent to avoid controversy as directed at us. I think the idea of avoiding controversy is, we don't want VUSAC to be the controversy. We want the genocide to be what's talked about rather than, "have you selected the statement that was bad?" Clearly, that goal was not achieved. So as much as possible, if folks who were like negatively affected by it or want to chat, please do that because we want to hear what you have to say. When it comes to anti-Semitism, I think we felt that it was important to validate the feelings that students on campus were feeling.

Krystyn: I was gonna ask if anyone had talked to the registrar, because I believe UTM has created support groups for Palestinian students as well as for Jewish students. So I don't know if that's something that anyone's interested in talking to the registrar about because that would actually help reach out to our students to make sure they're not feeling isolated.

Atlas: Yeah, directed towards Cam. I think if the point of the statement was to get people talking about the genocide, maybe the word genocide should actually have been mentioned. Also with regards to things like investment. The VUSAC has fought for so long for divestment of fossil fuels. Why are we not seeing the same unity in the same energy for divestment from companies at the BDS list and for divestment from weapons manufacturers? I think that is probably even more essential than divestment from fossil fuels and I think that should be happening right now, not something the future execs should be doing but things we should be doing right now.

Shiven: Yeah, I just wanted to take a second to respond to Krystyn's point. I think it's a really good point to target all the different ways in which we can offer support to our Palestinian, Jewish, and Middle Eastern students. I completely believe in that. But I do think that there is a really huge value of releasing an overtly or explicitly like political statement on this issue. This is



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a political issue. This is a moral issue. This is a humanitarian issue to be sure but this is also a political issue and the way that VUSAC responds to this issue or talks about this issue reflects a lot about whether or not VUSAC is willing to be courageous to fight for student interests. I think that it's definitely important to find ways to improve how we can help and support the mutual aid in the humanitarian aspect of this. There is a political aspect of this that has a moral stance associated with that which we can't just ignore or replace with more from the other. I don't think that's what you're implying, but I just wanted to put that out there.

*Motion to extend the discussion by 5 minutes by Cameron Miranda-Radbord, seconded by Jack Cochrane.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

George: I'm George. I'm a Vic student. I had a very similar thought to Atlas. If the point of the statement was not taking a bold or morally strong stance on the issue, is to earn clout with the administration that you guys can use to bargain. I just kind of want to ask like are you guys gonna bargain for BDS? Do you guys have the intention of getting in there and advocating for withdrawing investments from companies on the BDS list and weapons manufacturers? Just like yes or no for each member of VUSAC for whom the quality of that question is relevant.

Cam: So when it comes to divestment, I was on the board for fossil fuel divestment. That is work that started very similarly to this – students saying, hey VUSAC, why you are doing this and then VUSAC responding. I think that the easiest target is weapons manufacturers. Having worked with the Board of Regents for 2 years and maybe the current board members have different views. You know, they are, I would say conservative and old. But I think that even those kinds of people are being moved by what they're seeing. Is that something that the board can and should work towards? I think really that's a question more for board members, but at least for me personally, do I think that VUSAC should divest from companies that are manufacturing weapons for human rights abuses in Israel elsewhere? Yes I think that we should be doing that.

Krystyn: No, Shiven. That wasn't what I meant in terms of doing more of one in order to compensate the other. Honestly, I kind of really suck at bureaucracy and politics despite being on VUSAC. But what I just wanted to do was to reach out to students to make sure that they were okay.

Atlas: Yeah, Cam, I believe the question was more so, as an executive or you going to be advocating and pressuring the BR to divest? Whether from BDS or weapons manufacturing. The



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question was not so much whether you think that should happen. The question was, are you going to take action in your capacity as VPE. And I don't think that question was answered.

Shane: Yeah, if I could just speak for Cam, I think it is our responsibility to carry students' concerns forth and we will absolutely do that. I'm probably in a bit of a better position than Cam actually to respond to these concerns just because I am on the Investment Committee of the Board of Regents. As Amy mentioned, like her, I'm happy to speak with people at any time to the extent that the confidentiality contract that I've signed allows me to have conversations about, you know, what Vic students think are important and absolutely carry those concerns forth to the greatest extent possible.

Amy: Yeah, I was just gonna say, we have like 6 student members on the board of regents so we don't actually have a lot of power. I think this absolutely should be a goal and I think it's a good goal and if we want it to happen, I think that we do need support and I do think that the support of VUSAC would be an important start if that's an important goal for students because we would need to rally a lot of student pressure just like we did for an investment. And so an answer to George, that's what I would say.

*Motion to extend the discussion by 5 minutes by Cameron Miranda-Radbord, seconded by Amoly Agarwal.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

Cam: So Atlas, in response to your question, will I directly worked with the board to support divesting from manufacturers? Yes. Shane is on the board and there are 6 students on the board. One of the things I'm trying to do is to get the United Church to use its appointed positions to appoint student members to the board to do those things. This isn't like a new thing. I think Shane and I have been having this conversation, actually the 2 of us for like 2 years. I don't know if it was Caucus or what, but there was a meeting that we talked about it. And obviously we can't reveal what's happened to the board, but this has been like a long-term thing that I think that we have now, a specific leverage to get action.

Erin: I just wanted to say that now that we're actually talking about this subject, I think that if other members agree, we should put out something that is a bit more political, a bit more taking a stance. If it does cause a conspiracy, at least people will start talking about it. This is my opinion.

Shiven: I just want to respond to Erin and say that, it definitely is possible and a lot of different student groups including many that I'm part of have gone through lengthy writing processes, rewriting processes, and voting processes to make sure that overall, the group is with the





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statement and I don't think there's any reason that VUSAC isn't any larger and more complicated than any of the other organizations that I have personally worked with to put out a statement. So I do think that is definitely possible and I would strongly encourage all of you to do that as well in addition to taking other pro-Palestinian or efforts towards Palestinian liberation.

Cam: I think that all of us have commented around generally that this is something that we want action to pick on. I think that this has been helpful in that we now have additional support behind roles that have been pursued by my predecessors in this position for a really long time. When it comes to a statement, and I'm being really quick, this is an ongoing discussion. I'd love to hear the thoughts of others about if that's something that they want VUSAC to prioritize.

Atlas: Yeah, this is more so of a transparency and accountability question. I know that the VUSAC account has not been responding to the VSCR DMs about Palestine. I recently was made aware that VUSAC told the Cat'sEye account to take down a story about Palestine. What is going on here? Why is the VUSAC clearly trying to silence discussions about Palestine?

*Motion to extend the discussion by 2 minutes by Amoly Agarwal, seconded by Isha Mathur.  
All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

Shane: In relation to the point about the Cat's Eye, Muskaan sent that out because we had felt that, it wasn't even about Palestine, to be clear. I think that should be recognized. It was about your removal. That's the one we asked to take down.

George: Yeah, just wanted to pick off a pick up where Shivenleft off. I think that obviously this is an extremely important issue, not just objectively, right? This horrible thing is happening out in the world but also in our community. I think we've heard a lot from everyone about how people care about this issue. People want to see action on this issue. I think that not only is this the kind of issue where you might want to release a second statement if you bungle the first one. If the people on VUSAC just kind of want to save face, there have been developments in the situation and the genocide is ongoing, obviously, right? This isn't just about talking about what happened on October 7th or what's been happening for the past 75 years. I think that you know you can release a statement and you need to release a statement condemning that even if you don't want to admit that your previous statement was totally wrong or totally bad. I think the Vic community would view VUSAC as a body more positively if they were willing to say "we've looked at what's going on more and we need to say something about this we need to actually represent the student community and the stance they want us to take on this."



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*Motion to extend the discussion by 2 minutes by Atlas Changulani, seconded by Erin Timur.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

Atlas: Yeah, first of all, I think regardless of whether or not that was explicitly about Palestine. If people want to show support of me through a petition, and if clubs and levies want to show their support of me through a petition, they should be allowed to do that. Not letting them do a petition whether the exec feels uncomfortable about it is still unfair. Second of all, you still haven't addressed the fact that the VUSAC's account has been ignoring messages about Palestine and the fact that you have not replied to Zoe addressing literally every single VUSAC member in her email, Lara sent a follow-up saying that nobody else should reply to that and the executive will deal with it. And the fact that the executive just did not deal with it for the next 12 days is yeah, it's questionable.

*Motion to extend the discussion by 2 minutes by Atlas Changulani, seconded by Lara Athena Reyes.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

Michael: I'm just gonna bounce off kind of the Cat'sEye point and just mention as a levy head, as an exec on numerous levies and clubs, and as a former VPSO. I think it's incredibly inappropriate for the VUSAC exec to tell a levy, which is supposed to be an autonomous student group, what they can and cannot say publicly. I do not think that is the VUSAC execs place. I understand where it's coming from. I also just don't think that that's something that should be discussed in general. Levies are meant to be autonomous. Levies have operated autonomously and released statements regarding VUSAC in the past. I don't see why this should be done differently.

Muskaan: Yes, so I sent out an email because while every person has a right to have their own opinions about the matters in the community, using a levies platform that does not reflect the opinion of all the executive members of a levy is an inappropriate use of that platform. Had the decision been made by all the people involved in Cat'sEye, I would possibly may not have had a concern with that, but because that decision was made by one person without consulting all of the other people, I think that was not a just use of the platform.

Shane: Yeah, on the point about SCR, it's a continuous conversation we're having – about what we put forth on the VUSAC Instagram account. There's by no means any set principle or policy



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that we follow. We assess things on a case-by-case basis. I encourage the folks at SCR to email us rather than texting the Instagram account, our Communications Coordinator runs the Instagram account. I also think just as a general note that not everybody on council is comfortable with being involved in the promotion of certain political issues no matter what side they stand on. I personally don't think that's relevant. But again, I encourage them to actually come speak with us, rather than continuing to text people in the DMs of Instagram.

Michael: Hi, yeah, just about Muskaan's point regarding the Cat'sEye post. That was approved by the levy heads. I think the levy heads are the ones who are out there and they responsible for the levy and any messaging released by the levy. They're the ones who are ratified by VUSAC to oversee the levy. So I just think that's their word which decides what happens, what doesn't happen towards levies – that's what's supposed to be. We're the ones who are accountable for our own levies. The executives are hired by or elected through the processes run by the levy heads. They're the ones who have say over speaking on behalf of the levy.

Shiven: Yeah, I actually had a question for Muskaan because as I mentioned, like I'm not part of VUSAC. I don't really know too much about how VUSAC works and the different positions and what the responsibilities are. But it is my understanding from being an involved student in this community, that levies are independent from VUSAC and that the way that they govern and the way that they are run is not VUSAC's responsibility to oversee. My question is like, why would you go beyond that? Like why would you try to police or govern another a levy? And more than that, what would even make you suspicious that you had any reason to intervene? Like were there any claims about harassment or was there any complaint that came to you that people's voices were not being heard? What was it that motivated you to go about that in the first place? And if it's nothing, what does that say about your place and if it's nothing what does that like say about your place as an exec to the Vic community at large?

Atlas: Yeah, so about Shane's point about, what they post being a case by case basis. I think the fact that he refused to post about Palestine specifically kind of implies that you have decided that the case of Palestine is not worthy of being talked about on the Instagram. Also regarding whether certain members of the staff are uncomfortable about political things being posted, lack of response to Zoe's email, and from what I've seen on the VUSAC's account clearly shows that VUSAC is actually quite comfortable talking about certain political topics. It regularly reposts things by SCR, which have to deal with the abolishing police and things about mental health issues, things about decolonization. All of these are political topics. Saying that certain numbers of VUSAC are uncomfortable talking about politics on the account in general is clearly untrue.



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*Motion to extend the discussion by 5 minutes by Krystyn Kalloo, seconded by Shane Joy.*

*Most in favour. Some opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

Muskaan: Yes, in response to Shiven, I know levies do not operate under VUSAC and they're an independent entity of their own. But as the VPSO, it is still my responsibility to make sure that they are operating to the best of their ability. To answer why it was not appropriate even if the 2 levy heads had made the decision to make that statement is because I had it on good account that not all the executives did. And because Cat's Eye as an organization represents more than just the levy heads, I do not think that it was feasible for them to use that name. Regardless of whether or not the levy heads themselves were happy with that statement, because Cat's Eye as a levy represents more than just the levy heads even though they were elected or hired, you represent the numerous people who volunteer their hours to have Cat's Eye operate and I did not think it was appropriate for you to use that platform to justify the opinions of just a few people.

Shevin: I guess I wanted to tie this back to something. So I find it very interesting that political statements that go on social media of a certain organization should be approved of by like a majority or the entirety people who are involved, like you said, every single person has a voice. Why was the VUSAC executive statement released on the account without any consultation of the broader council as it does reflect the broader council, like you just said? So I'm just curious, how come it's different?

Michael: That was exactly my point. The exec make statements all the time. The Cat's Eye did the same thing. The Cat's Eye has posted something on behalf of just the exec before. I did one in the summer about congratulating the graduates, which is much less controversial, but like it's a thing that the Cat's Eye has done before, there's a history with it. Sorry if it came off as like every single person ever said when the Cat's Eye agrees with this position but I don't think that's something that is ever feasible.

Shane: Yeah, I think this is maybe a conversation, specifically related to the Cat's Eye that should be carried on between the Co-Managers of the Cat's Eye and Muskaan. Because I think that the conversation is only going to progress through them. On the point of releasing a statement, we have to ratify statements if we're going to do a statement released by VUSAC, it needs to be ratified by council. We can't ratify that through email. We need to ratify it in a meeting. That means that today would be the day that we put forward the statement rather than



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17 days ago. We heard a lot of comments on our Instagram post about sort of making a statement in a fashion that was quick and expeditious. We did that. Yeah, I hope that clarifies the matter.

Shiven: I don't think that my question was answered because this was about social media and what's posted on social media. Even though that the the post was signed by the VUSAC executive, it is posted on the VUSAC social media and frankly because of that, and a bunch of other reason, represents and reflects on the entire VUSAC. The exact identical point that Muskaan just presented. So I'm curious about why VUSAC is an exception to this rule that seems to be applied to other people.

Shane: Because we are elected to represent students. I feel like that's straightforward. Secondly, how else would you suggest that we put that out? Would you suggest that we email it to everybody?

*Motion to extend the discussion by 5 minutes by Erin Timur, seconded by Atlas Changulani.  
Some in favour. Most opposed. None abstaining. Motion failed.*

Atlas: If you as VUSAC execs are entitled to do so because you're elected, why are Cat'sEye levy heads, who are also elected, not entitled to so. I'm just pointing out the double standards. Also, on that note, I will bring, up the back that, Shane expressed. Some rather passive aggressive, I would say, comments to Leah on our statement despite it being passed in the sustainability commission by an overwhelming majority and said that "commissions are not entitled to individual political voices." Nowhere in the constitution does it say that.

*Discussion on the messaging and individual stances of VUSAC commissions, put forth by Leah  
(10 minutes)*

Leah: Thank you, Atlas for that literally perfect transition. So yeah, as you guys already probably know by now, the sustainability commission recently chose to release a statement on Palestine with other climate justice organizers, including climate justice UofT. And this was done, of course, first and foremost in order to respond to the ongoing ethnic cleansing in Gaza. The decision to release the statement was not reached unilaterally or without intention like Atlas was saying this was a choice that the sustainability commission executive made as a collective, we conducted an anonymous votes, that at the outcome of what showed resounding majority that the execs wanted this statement to be released. In response to this, Shane messaged me and said that this action undermined VUSAC statement and therefore, the unity of the student union as a



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whole and he also said that the commission like Atlas said is not entitled to independent political voices. I would just like to respond to these claims with all of you guys here because I think it's important to reflect on this undemocratic and repressive tactic VUSAC is taking. Also to recenter the voices of those who were here to represent and that's Victoria students. I think first, I will say that to assume that the statement put out by the Sustainability Commission undermines VUSAC unity, demonstrates that we prioritize looking cohesive over listening and representing students in a moment of crisis. I think that silencing voices, especially marginalized voices, in the name of unity is an antidemocratic tactic for suppression. Secondly, I will say that nothing in our constitution, says that the commission must align themselves politically with the rest of VUSAC. Like Shivenand Atlas said earlier, the constitution says that we must, be responsible for representing Victoria College's student's concerns around climate justice. And I think that we did exactly that by putting out this statement. Like Atlas said earlier, the statement explicitly made the connections between climate justice and the genocide going on in Gaza. I won't repeat what they said, but I think that that's a really important message to be highlighting right now. We had every right to do so. Obviously this is a question to be put out to Shane that I wanted everyone else to hear their response to.

Atlas: I would also just like to add the fact that, I explicitly told Shane in the meeting we had just before the VUSAC statement that the sustainability commission would be releasing another statement that would be talking about the the Palestinian genocides connecting to climate justice and I don't seem to recall Shane having too much of an issue over there.

Shane: Perhaps that's because you never brought it up. But, I'll just note that, Leah, firstly, on the text that I sent you, I certainly did not mean for it to come off as a passive aggressive statement. I know that Shiven also described it in a similar way and I'll just say that firstly, if that was the impact, I'm sorry. But on the message itself, I believe and it is the executive's opinion that commissions are not entitled to their independent political voice in the sense that it's important for us to be able to come together and be collaborative and consultative about the statements that we make, and that was done with the executive statement. I absolutely agree with the folks who have mentioned or implied that that could have been done better. It could have. I think the way that it could have been done better is by putting it through council itself. We didn't have the time to do that unfortunately. We were not consulted on the statement, unfortunately, although I know that that's something that you and Atlas both mentioned in your check-ins with Lara that that's something you would've preferred. I think it's good if we sort of reciprocate those efforts – that's what I wanted to hint at in my message. I hope they came across that way and I hope it didn't come across in any way that was harmful. But that's just what I want to authenticate. I know it's not in our constitution, but there's never been a problem with this. I don't think that it's our



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interest to seem outwardly cohesive. It's to be cohesive in reality and I don't think that that's the case. I think it's important for us to have conversations and come together. For example, what if the Sustainability Commission, or VUSAC, put out a statement about divestment as it did 2 years ago? And the Arts and Culture commission, put out a (sorry Kate), statement saying they opposed it. That wouldn't be helpful. But it's just an example of how that might not work. I hope that helps.

Shiven: Yeah, like I said, I am here to represent this sustainability commission's voice. So I do want to comment on that. I think what's a little bit difficult for us as a commission to wrap our head around is the idea that it passed with such an overwhelming majority in the sustainability commission that it just didn't make sense that your voices as the execs would matter more than the voices of the commission itself because we are the sustainability commission so what we say is a political voice. We are the greatest stakeholders in it. We are the ones who are allowing this to reflect on who we are as people and on the places that we are organized with. I also do want to mention and this is a very important thing to note that there is nothing directly contradictory between the sustainability commission, the climate justice UofT statement, and the statement that VUSAC put out. In fact, that was done with intentionality and we definitely pose ourselves that question and we wanted to be able to have at least that threshold of cohesion. And that is, I think, an adequate threshold of cohesion.

Leah: I honestly think that Shiven said most of what I wanted to say. I will say that, to be honest, I didn't take your comments as passive aggressive. I think they were pretty direct. I'll echo that nothing in our statement went directly against VUSAC and I think just to say that we did or that we undermine VUSAC message in general shows that just by using stronger language, in order to condemn what's happening in Gaza right now is something that VUSAC doesn't want to stand by. So I think it's important to note that. I also think that the sustainability commission does have a longer history of working with other climate organizers and we've built coalitions that are really strong and we have a community that we wanted to stand by and that was part of why we wanted to release the statement, which was developed by some really smart and wise creators at climate justice of UofT.

Shane: The word I used, both in my text and today is not the word contradictory. But that undermines. I think those are different. But I'll also just note that the 19 of 20 members of the Sustainability Commission were not elected to be in those positions. I'm not saying that that doesn't mean that you can have an individual political voice. I think absolutely you can. I just think when it comes to representation, Atlas is the one who should be putting that forth. We asked for that from Atlas as well and they shared that with us half heartedly, unfortunately.



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Shevin: I'm really struggling to wrap around why the commission needs to be elected to put out a statement on behalf of themselves. We are the sustainability commission. So we are saying this message. We do get to decide what we as a group says. And we took the approach to vote into discussing and to writing this. We have taken or been inspired by heaps of other student organizations. The way VUSAC does it is not the only way to do it. Not everyone has to be elected to have a voice. You elect things to carry your voice and part of something that we voted for in an election was the statement. This is our voice and I think we're entitled to share our voice as a group.

Atlas: I think on the topic of being elected representatives, I'd just like to remind the commission that our president was not in fact elected by majority. He is there because the actual winner Michael Elsaesser was disqualified. I would also remind you that the VPI was also not elected. She won by default. Because there was no other person contested in the election. So if you wanted to talk about being elected, I will remind you that neither of you are elected either.

*Motion to extend the discussion by 5 minutes by Jack Cochrane, seconded by Lara Athena Reyes. in favour. Most opposed. None abstaining. Motion failed.*

Shane: Regardless of Atlas's comment, I'm just going to say as Shevin mentioned, you are entitled to your own voice. I just think all of the commissions on VUSAC, all the representatives on VUSAC are elected to represent students. They aren't elected to sort of just say what they want and throw it on their platform. I think that what I was trying to say is that we should all be having a conversation about that and we're doing that now. I just think it's unfortunate that we're doing it now in that we weren't sort of asked earlier because I think there would have been much less of a problem. But I also don't know because we don't know what council thinks because they weren't consulted. Again, I just think it is important from a standpoint of best practice in being cohesive as a council. I don't really know how much else to say on that.

Dhir: Just one comment on Atlas's statement about Shane not being, elected or Michael getting disqualified. I think ECR has made some decisions and they may have had some grounds on which they made those decisions. I don't think it's right for us to comment on that. And of now, this is what the council is and I think it's good that we respect it.

Shiven: Yeah, I just wanted to quickly comment on Shane's comment about the implication on how the statement that was released by the sustainability commission which is just something that Atlas put together one day and just decided that they wanted to say and then put it out on the social media. That is not what happened at all. I've described it very very clearly. We had a multi-day, multi-week long writing process. We consulted a lawyer. We worked with other





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organizations. We put a lot of effort into it and we voted on it like we put a lot of energy, attention, effort, and focus into developing a statement that was thoughtful, mindful, and cognizant of what people are going through and, in fact, according to my knowledge, it seems as though the VUSAC statement was actually put together in a much more hasty method that maybedid result in a couple of shortcomings as we're discussing now and as have come to the surface since then that I think it's just really irresponsible and kind of messed up to, imply that the sustainability commission put in no effort into their statement when that is in fact the opposite of the truth.

Atlas: Dhir, I am not questioning their legitimacy. I fully respect their decisions, in fact. I am sorry if that was accidentally implied, that's not what I was saying. What I was saying was that this makeup of the council, with regards to the President is reflective of the decisions made by the CRO and the EAC. I'm not saying they are illegitimate. I'm just saying they're not reflective of what the people of the VCU actually voted for. That's all I'm saying. I'm saying it's not representative of the people who voted. I'm not saying they're legitimate. Yeah.

Shane: My only thing is to say that, Shiven, I wasn't saying that Atlas put the statement on their own. I'm aware that the Sustainability Commission execs put it out together. My point still stands from before. I don't really have much else to say on this.

George: I think it's important to understand that the statement wasn't just the perspective of the executives, but also the constituency of Atlas and the Commission, right? There were the entire community was involved in discussing and crafting the statement. Personally as someone who's not even part of VUSAC, I found myself on the Google Doc, right? Multi-organization, like whole coalition, community effort. I feel like that's much more representative as a statement than seeing the execs of VUSAC act as your constituency and just parroting what they said.

Diana: I just wanted to comment really quickly that according to our ERC, our elections code, unopposed positions still have to be one with a majority vote. If more than half of the votes now are listed for declare vacant. In the past, if it was like abstain or whatever then the position would not be awarded.

### ACTION ITEMS:

*Motion by Lara Athena Reyes to remove Atlas as Sustainability Commissioner (Appendix B), seconded by Shane Joy (30 minutes)*

Lara: Hi everyone. So this is in the appendix, which is in the meeting agenda. This is the timeline that I've created in my role as Vice President Internal. These are all objective and in regards to



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constitutional and other documents that are listed as responsibilities and expectations of the sustainability commissioner. As you can see on October 8th, I gave Atlas an official warning and we (Shane, Atlas, and I) had a meeting on the 13th in regards to the warning and we kind of had that meeting and the mutual agreement was that communication was just needed more and absolutely, it was a productive conversation. And Atlas and Shane, feel free to correct me if I recall wrong. So obviously, after this meeting, we would give time for the council member who has been given the warning to improve and in regards to that, this is something that I have afforded to all of the council members who I have given a warning to in the past. The earliest meeting that we could have motioned for this action item have had to be after fall Caucus because there couldn't be any items during Caucus. So this is the earliest meeting, the 17th. And I just wanted to note I have and will continue to hold council members to the standard. But I've given other council members warnings this before. This is not personal. I'm simply doing my job and holding council members accountable for those responsibilities they agreed to commit to. I'm happy to talk about any of the things listed on the timeline if you need any further explanation. And I also want to address the fact that a lot of the feedback that we've been getting is that we would go in camera, but, we're not doing that right now. This would be a good opportunity for anyone if you have any questions or anything you'd like to say. I encourage you to. Thanks.

Atlas: First of all, I think in that meeting I explicitly made it clear that I would be absent from the retreat. I seem to recall that both Shane and Lara said that would be okay. I made it clear that that was for mental health reasons. I made it clear that the multiple things that missed, were also for mental health reasons. Also, I would like to point out that, number one, the counselors have been contacted, number 2, the printing policy thing is just untrue that was for sustainability commission related event. This was before the policy of getting a commission related printouts be approved by the office manager came out, so I was fully within my rate. I don't see how I broke any rules there. At least 3 of the items on that appendix are questionable.

Shane: Yeah, I'll just say, one, you didn't convey that you'd be absent from retreat, even if you did, that would require an email to Jackie and Lara. I'll also say on the Printing Policy part, it was enforced. You would have known if you attended our meetings. That's all I'll say.

Lara: In regards to this matter being a mental health concern, I absolutely understand and I have reiterated to council members in the past if you are going through anything, please communicate that to me and I think that from that meeting ,we had very much established that all that was needed was communication if you weren't able to do your duties or if you weren't able to attend



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things. And in regards to the meeting and absence from retreat. I had the sustainability check-ins with Leah and you didn't show up and so I said, okay, I emailed and asked for a follow-up so that we could check in on a separate time and then there was no response, so I followed up and no response again. I think that I've made it very clear that I've exhausted all my options and I absolutely understand that this might be a mental health concern but I also need to be acting within my constitutional duties as do you.

Shiven: Yeah, so I guess from my perspective, I'm not here to comment on all of these meeting policies, that's not my area of expertise there. Far more people that have more to say and are much more knowledgeable in that matter. Like I said, I'm here to represent the voice of the sustainability commission. And to be honest, this is the area on which we are most unified and that is that, through the sustainability commission report that you guys saw earlier as well as the more detailed version that I was able to email, you guys hopefully were able to review at least some of it, that Atlas actually has been a phenomenal commissioner, even if let's take executive their most charitable case and say that all of these like bureaucratic duties haven't necessarily been responded to adequately. I understand that's beyond the scope I think of what is core and what is central to making a sustainability commissioner so like what makes them them and this is coming from somebody who has spent a year and a half or has been an executive member of the sustainability commission for 2 years. And that is that the job of the sustainability commissioner, to promote the ideals of climate justice and sustainability and through our 13 events, our 7 meetings, our 17 working group meetings, our 6 other weekly events. We have been holding things literally 3 out of every 4 days that we have been able to vote on political statements that we have been able to create a true sense of unity that is so strong. That, right now, if Atlas is removed and replaced with anybody who is approved by less than 65% of the sustainability commission as it stands today will leave the sustainability commission. So the choice that you have before you is not just the choice of whether or not Atlas is capable in their role as commissioner, but also on posing questions like where do so many people get such respect for Atlas as a sustainability commissioner such that they're willing to leave their primary method of you know working on climate justice in order to be in solidarity with them and I'll talk more later.

Atlas: In regards to communication, I did spend a lot of time talking on the meeting we had after the warning about my mental health and I again, did mention about the retreat. Yes, maybe I did not email them, but if all that was required was communication, regardless of whether it was formal or informal, the fact that the absent for retreat is in the appendix despite me having clearly communicated that I might not be able to attend is proved that this relationship is not in fact,



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reciprocal. And you have, regardless of whether I have been upholding my end, you all have not been doing it either.

Lara: I'm gonna respond to a couple things. First, I wanted to mention that even if you did communicate you were going to be absent for retreat, yes, given that it is on the timeline, I think that just because one thing might be something on the timeline that maybe you have communicated, that does not invalidate every single thing here. This is something that I pulled up for my calendar, from my notes, from our check-ins, and everything that I have taken note of in my role as VPI. I don't think there's a reason to invalidate my job. And also Shiven, to respond. I want to say that I am not questioning Atlas's leadership as sustainability commissioner. I think that absolutely they can be doing a wonderful job. But it doesn't change the fact that they also have VUSAC constitution duties that they need to uphold, which means attending meetings, responding to emails, things like that, that all of council members are required to uphold and this is something that we need for operations to keep functioning at VUSAC.

Shane: Firstly, Shevin, your point about Atlas's leadership, I fully agree with Lara. Your admission that you don't know the policy is, I think especially telling in this case. Just because a lot of what we have a problem with is what is contained within our policies, which we expect each VUSAC member to uphold. Atlas signed the contract after being elected, that they'd fulfill these responsibilities as well. Threatening VUSAC with leaving the commission, I think that's terribly unfortunate, but we can't let an ultimatum or blackmail like this get in the way of us upholding the constitution because we have to do it for all people.

Shiven: I'll just start off by responding to Shane by saying that to characterize the statement that the sustainability commission has made as a threat is such a bad faith in interpretation or description of what the message is. What we are saying is that we look up to and respect Atlas and see them as such a phenomenal leader and such a phenomenal commissioner that we would not be happy working under somebody else. That is respect that the commissioner has garnered from their primary community that they impact and that is something that is worth noting as much as your voice is important on speaking on the capabilities or the responsibilities or how well Atlas has fulfilled them as sustainability commissioner. It is equally, if not much more important to consider the voices of those who interact with them most in that capacity. I just wanna clarify that this is not a threat. You should interpret this as "wow, this is how much this community respects them and that speaks for something."



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Shane: I completely understand what you're saying. I did not say threat. I said, ultimatum or blackmail. It does seem that way. It's fine if you're noting this. I think it's really admirable that you folks have gone through all this effort to make that report. I will say that a lot of the things in there are a bit misinformative. For example, 50 people attending your meeting, that's not the case. But I will just also note that this, I think amounts to, when one is up for review at their job, that you can't ask your friend to come speak about how great of a job you're doing. The details that we're talking about are privy to council members and we're trying to bring those forth in this conversation today. And I hope we were able to have a frank conversation about that.

Erin: I just wanna say like I've read the reports. Thank you, Shivenin sending them and I'm not disputing the amazing work that Atlas has done. I honestly respect them as a commissioner. I just think that right now, at least for this discussion, it's between are we going to be subjective and say, they've done good work or objectively stick to the constitution. I don't think that this should be viewed as an attack on them and their work. Because I do agree with what you said in the last agenda. It's just right now, I think it's a different discussion.

Atlas: Direct to Erin and direct to Shane. This is not a business. This is an elected platform. And so I think the voices of the vic community and the people who are executive and general members of sustainability commission absolutely do matter and it's not just up to the executives. It shouldn't just be up to the executive. Second of all, no, the question is not so much so whether the constitution implicates me and I think the question is more so whether I should remove be removed or not be removed. And I think the work that I am doing and have done in the past is absolutely a factor that needs to be put in regardless of what the Constitution says. I think it is important to consider the material impact the sustainability commission under my leadership has happened having on students. And not just whether or not this formal document says something or not.

Shiven: I'll just respond to Erin and some, that the broader thematic ideas here. But, first of all, thank you so much, Erin, for recognizing that work. What I think the question for me and the question for me as a constituent of VUSAC, I'm not one of you, and as somebody who is not just like some random friend that Atlas decided to bring on this call, but I'm actually speaking on behalf and with the consent of the Sustainability Commission. So please just put a little bit more respect on that. I would ask you to than just saying like this is like all this miscredit because it's just a random friend. I'm not speaking as a random friend. I'm speaking on behalf of the Sustainability Commission and that is worth something. This isn't really a question of between the constitution and the constitutional whatever bureaucratic responsibilities of Atlas versus what



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they have shown. I think this is a question of whether overall it is worth it for Atlas to remain on VUSAC and to be the sustainability commissioner. I think that the most important question to ask about that is to examine the entire breadth of Atlas's impact and not just on a specific technicality.

George: Just a very simple question because yepople were saying stuff like, this is about whether we objectively follow the Constitution or subjectively do what we want to do. Does the constitution just say, in all cases objectively, if you miss a number of meetings you're out or does the constitution itself create a role for a subjective judgment in this decision. I'm not an expert on the VUSAC constitution, but I'm just posing that question for everybody because I don't think it's necessarily a fair dichotomy to say, oh, the people who want to remove Atlas are being objective and the people who don't want to move Atlas are being subjective, right? I think it's all situational and there's probably room for it to case to case. Which is why we're talking about all the things we're talking about.

Amy: Yeah, just totally bring this conversation forward. I think we're going in circles. I kind of wanted to say what the constitution says and hopefully we could progress in there. So the Constitution has 3 different grounds for removal. One of them is absenteeism, which is the one that we are talking about here and that one says that if you have 3 inexcusable absences from a VUSAC meeting, then you get a warning, and then after additional one, then we can talk about termination. So in this case, the 3 unexusable absences and Lara, correct me if I'm wrong, would be the 3 VUSAC meetings plus the check-in, right? Because they got a warning after that and then the check-in happened and that's when, as the wonderful appendix they put together, shows that's when they remove them. But then additionally, has a clause talking about the way that everybody was marginalized identity such as mental health and also different transphobia and those kind of things can also be important factors that not just VUSAC can consider but VUSAC must consider when making this decision and so really to me it comes down to 2 factors. The first one is what do we mean by inexcusable absences? I know in one of the cases.

Michael: Okay, so I'll let Amy finish her point whenever we get back to Amy. Also, just note that on the petition sent to every member of VUSAC. You have signatories from 2 former VPSOs, a former VPI, a former Chair who are all telling us the reading of the constitution stating that you must remove that list currently at this moment. Like a must is incorrect and that these actions are not morally but also constitutionally incorrect. These are former members of the judiciary who had the role of interpreting the VUSAC Constitution and also writing the VUSAC Constitution,



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including the exact clauses we are discussing today, and I'm telling you this is not how they're meant to be applied. The verb is “can” not “must.” There you go. I'll let Amy finish the point.

Lara: In terms of inexcused absences, what that means is basically did they send regrets. I'm sure Jackie could obviously shed more light on this if she'd like to. Did they send regrets in, was it a developed excuse? Obviously we can go into so much conversation about whether or not something is a valid excuse. I'm taking a look now at the absence attendance that I have and Atlas was absent for 2 meetings plus retreat. But regardless, you also had not done email votes which also counts and the check-in obviously counts like in a way to me.

Shane: I do think it's important to emphasize that this is not only absenteeism, but non-performance of duties. Absenteeism doesn't encompass the refusal to communicate. The open expressions of hatred, which are not contained on the timeline, but I think should be noted. Those things are also in mind when we're considering this question. I think also on the question of marginalization, it's marginalization on council, it's not marginalization in one's community. There are 15 or more people on this council who come from marginalized backgrounds, have marginalized identities, and come from marginalized communities. It is not about experiencing marginalization once. It happens to a lot of people in daily life to a lot of people on council and a lot of people in our community. That's not something that we shouldn't consider, but it's important to note.

Jackie: I'm just clarifying on what is considered as absence. It has been shared through the retreat materials, which was, emailed, even to those who weren't actually in the retreat. I noted because that was based on all the policies and the constitutions indicating stuff about the meeting. There was a warning regardless of excused or inexcuse din terms of absences, but that's just a warning. And in terms of what is considered, an absence is it does include email votes. Because that's what the policies are. So I just think it's good for everyone to know what is considered an absence.

Atlas: First of all, I don't think calling, the executive actions cowardly or expressing my frustration is considered a hatred by any means whatsoever. Second of all, if you're accusing me of hatred by pointing to my stance, I will point out that as Leah and multiple other people mentioned, that is not anti-Semitic and it is in fact anti-brown, anti-Palestinian, and Islamophobic on your side. My other point was that the Constitution is not immutable. It is not God's word. It is it has been written down by students and it can be amended and changed again. We do not owe our absolute loyalty to the Constitution. None of you are under any threats to obey the



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Constitution to perfect letter. I think as a union it is important to consider what our priorities are. And I don't think we're doing that.

Lara: First off, I agree. Obviously the constitution isn't God's word. We were human when we wrote it. It doesn't change the fact that it is ratified by council and it is our job to uphold the Constitution and I think that, absolutely we can make amendments. We can consider these things and try to make the constitution more accommodating more of like all these different factors we need to be considering as students, but that does not change the fact that we are operating within that constitution today and we cannot change that right now. Also a small thing I wanted to mention – it's also just absences from meetings. If you're trying to say that Atlas's incredible job as sustainability commissioner is not limited to just that, I want to point out that by missing budget steering meetings and by missing meetings, you are missing action items that are relevant to the absolute advocacy to sustainability, which is the point of your role and you're not able to uphold that and then that becomes an issue.

Diana: I just wanted to ask Shane, if you're comfortable, if you would be willing to expand on what you mean by hatred. I feel like that's kind of a big word to throw out and I would like some more clarity.

Shane: For sure. It's not just a word I've used. I just know that Atlas has said that publicly, which I just feel is unprofessional. That's all I know.

Jackie: So on your note from retreat that you're gonna be considering email vote absences as missing meetings. That was after the email votes that Atlas missed, if I'm correct, based on the timeline, the email votes Atlas missed were over the summer and the retreat happened mid October. So that message was conveyed to Atlas after the events occurred. I don't think it's properly just to punish someone for actions they were not aware of would be explicitly punished in that manner if that information were only conveyed mid October. But please correct me if I'm wrong by that timeline.

Amy: I'm just gonna really quickly respond because I know we have a lot of things to get to. I also put the relevant part of the constitution in the chat so I really encourage people read through it. I actually do very much agree that it's important that we follow the constitution. And just a large point, it doesn't say 3 excused missed absences, it's 3 inexcusable missed meetings. And inexcusable to me is a very big and very different thing because to inexcusably miss a meeting





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means that you missed a meeting for an invalid reason. So if my father died or that even if I didn't send Jackie an email, it's still a very excusable reason, in fact it's explicitly mentioned.

Shiven: Yeah, so I guess I'll quickly just say that, relevant to this item in particular, I would urge Atlas, if they're comfortable, to talk a little bit about some of these experiences that they've had that have prevented them from being able to talk about some of these because I completely agree with Amy that inexcusable is there is a very strong word. I think that the Constitution intends to use it strongly and uses that word for a reason. The constitution wasn't put together slopily to uses that word for a very specific reason. I also do think that it is pretty unprofessional of Shane to make on a pretty substantial allegation of Atlas saying something that I personally as someone who spends so much time around them have never heard them say, that doesn't mean that they didn't say it, but I also think that if you can properly substantiate a claim like that, then there's no point in bringing into this discourse and I do think that it is in bad faith. I do think it comes across a little bit as petulant and I think that so far one thing I can commend the VUSAC exec for is that they have substantiated all of the things that they have said so far except I don't know why that needs to go down

Atlas: Yeah, again, sorry, Shane. What do you mean by I have used the word hatred before? That makes absolutely no sense. I do not remember actually claiming that any view VUSAC member so far has expressed any sort of hatred towards me except conditional states, which I recently stated that if VUSAC members are considering my pro-Palestinian stance as a hatred then that is anti-brown and anti-Islamic. This is conditional. I am not actually saying that anyone on VUSAC has ever expressed any meaning later towards me and I would like you to clarify what you mean and substantiate what you mean.

Jackie: Just to comment on Michael's question about when was this communicated, what meaning to do the email votes. The retreat material was basically a summary of the policies. So it doesn't mean that it wasn't valid until then, it means it was already there and I have sent on multiple emails regardless of the policies about warning, just to let them know that you have to do this as a part of the voting member's duty. I've already communicated through email. Oh, it's not a formal warning, but as a reminder because I know they're new.

Lara: I was just gonna add on to what you were saying, Jackie. I think that Michael and what you were saying about it not being communicated, I don't think that's a fair thing to say because they were an elected member. It is their responsibility to know what their responsibilities are and the expectations that they sign up for when they signed their contract and when they're elected into



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the position. I also want to note, yes, Jackie had given an email vote warning in August and so they also know what's required of them to be doing their email votes. So I don't think that's a plausible argument.

Cam: I think I want to come back to the issue of going in camera, for the vote. I think my approach has always been to work for the inside rather than actually from the outside. That is to say that I don't want to create the impression that the exec is not united. However, I want to voice my respectful disagreement focusing just on the motion to go in camera, others, Lara, Michael, Amy Shane, have already spoken to the motion to remove. There's a lot of potential to consider that. I think the intent of the motion to go in camera is not shady or suspicious and that's honorable. However, the perception is that rightly, it's extremely suspicious and I think that if we want to be viewed as a transparent and accountable organization we have to be able to be held accountable. This is scary. There are 2 important things to know if you're afraid. The first is you can explain as to why it is you're voting the way you are. The second is that it is scarier to have people speculate.

*Motion to extend the discussion by 6 minutes by Cameron Miranda-Radbord, seconded by Krystyn Kalloo.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

Michael: I'm happy transgender awareness week. I can't be there in person tonight because I have an oncology appointment back home today. It's let me to reflect a lot on my experience as a cancer survivor and how my illness affected my ability to complete tasks and engage with my community in leadership roles. But I was fortunate enough to have friends, peers, teachers, and school staff who understood the need for accommodation to allow people in roles to achieve their very best. It was through these communities that I found the strength to push through my cancer, chemo, and radiation. It was through those communities that while I lost my hair, my energy, my availabilities, I did not lose myself. It was through those communities that I was able to recover and do myself into who I am today. Health in this many physical and mental forms impacts our ability to complete a variety of tasks when designed and enableist framework. We are all students. We all struggle with our own health and wellness, our own personal interiority, our social lives, our academics, and on top of that our student leadership roles, which are volunteer. Looking at this submitted timeline, I see only a list of ambiguous marks against Atlas and heartless email warnings. I do not see attempts to reach out as a concerned person. I do not see attempts to take work off someone's plate. I do not see basic compassion and sympathy for a fellow young person navigating to complexities and inequities in their life. True equity is making



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room for all of us to have those opportunities no matter the external forces which may prohibit them. True compassion is looking at your peer, your friend who may miss some events and asking if they're okay and accommodating to give them the best opportunity to succeed. To empathy is not a solo strike system and impersonal email threats rather than adapting. This is a fact for many Vic clubs and levies. I urge council to look towards those systems in place that very student works including the Cat'sEye and Voices which have provisions specifically to ensure that, when it becomes obvious that group member is struggling, they're taken care of and accommodations are made rather than automatic and unjust punishments enforced.

Lara: I think to make a comment like that is absolutely questioning my integrity as VPI and I take offense to that. Because council can very much attest to the fact that I'm a very supportive person. I have even since the official warnings, I've reached out to Atlas in the sense that hey, this is something you should be doing. When they communicated that as well as after missing the check in, Leah and I were also in discussions and we were also understanding that Atlas was going to be missing some of the responsibilities and it was going to be shifted to Leah. That was absolutely communicated to me and I absolutely recognize that.

Michael: As someone who's personally targeted by both Shane and Lara in harassment and cruelty, I find unfortunate and unsurprising that they're continuing to weaponize positions of power against those who they dislike and disagree with. I know personally, I've heard them speak before Atlas was even elected that they were not happy with the idea of Atlas being on council. I also think the perspective of who has felt supported properly by these actions – the only person we can get that opinion from is Atlas as the individual in question who has obviously demonstrated that they did not feel supported properly. I'm not saying anything is like objectively your bad at your job. I'm just saying this individual did not feel properly supported in this way. I think that's worthy of recognizing in context.

Cam: I guess I'll just quickly say that, as some of you may know, I'm intimately familiar with the process of being removed from office for non-attendance around mental health, it sucks. I think regardless of what today's outcome is, it is clear that we need constitutional change both around clarity and expansiveness to ensure that I think what was initially started out as removing people who were very clearly no longer caring about VUSAC, I think proposed during COVID, has now evolved into a flaws of light. You know, what do we value doing one's jobs sufficiently or not? So I think that in the long term, that's something we should talk about. I think others are better quick to speak on the short term situation. So I'll refer to them.



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*Motion to extend the discussion by 5 minutes by Cameron Miranda-Radbord, seconded by Krystyn Kalloo.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

Amy: I'm hoping, to maybe move this conversation forward. I know that everyone here is doing it with good intentions and I don't think anyone is trying to hurt anyone or is like a bad faith actor and so I think it's important that we all see that we're trying to, I guess, come for the best thing for VUSAC and then go from there. I kind of wanted to go back to the constitution because I do think that it is important to address what the constitution says and I think the when I first read the constitution through, I guess I was a little bit confused because of the word inexcusable absences there and I know one of the middle absences was for a midterm. I also think that like no one thinks that an email vote is a meeting so if you're gonna redefine a missed meeting as an email vote, then that has to be communicated they can't just be like well they should have known or implied because no one would know that by reading the constitution that you sign. I also wanted to talk to you about Cam's point, which I think was a wonderful point, about what was the purpose of this to begin with and I think the purpose was definitely for people that just no longer have interest in VUSAC and not necessarily to police people who are having mental health issues regardless of how well we think that they're doing at their duties because at the end of the day, the point of having a democratic system is that the people who decide if people are doing their duties well are the voters, right? And that's why we have yearly elections. I just want to caution people about thinking too much about it from that lens because at the end of the day, I mean, there's a world when we substitute, like our own will for the will of the voters and for what they think is the appropriate thing and like that's autocracy and I don't think any of us want to be anautocracy.

Jackie: I have communicated in July when the summer meeting commenced and about email votes. It wasn't a formal warning, it was describing that non-response is considered an automatic extension and a warning from the chair position as listed in chapter 4, section 5 of the council policies. I've detailed it so I'm not assuming that they they should have known. I'm saying that I have informed, that much. I'm not having an opinion, but I hope that it's not communicated in a way that I'm assuming they should have known. I have informed them.

Michael: In the Constitution, there's the recall procedure. If you really think that Atlas should be removed, let it be up to the students who elected Atlas into their position. That is a way for students to vote. To kick someone out of council, I think that's a much more democratic process. If you think the Atlas is not doing their job is like absenteeism or not performing their duties properly, let the students tell you if we want this from our sustainability commissioner not put it



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to a recall vote if you really want to allow us to be a democratic process and not an autocratic process.

*Motion to extend the discussion by 10 minutes by Diana Vink, seconded by Aiko Hashimoto Reis.  
All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

Atlas: First of all, on the point Michael made of very long while ago. Yes, I will in fact go on and state that I did not feel supported or comfortable around Lara and Shane and this is not a reflection of their personalities or capabilities as leaders. This is just a simple fact that the 3 of us for whatever reason do not feel there's a relationship right now that can be conducive to things like meaningful communication, honesty and comfort. That's just what it is. So yeah, I do not feel comfortable, I did not feel supported, I did not feel as if my communication would be respected. Not an indictment of the personality, just a fact. Second of all, again, absolutely seconded Cam's point. I think given the fact that this exact thing also targeted Cam because of chronic illness last year, there is a clear precedent for this particular part of the Constitution. They're inadvertently targeting disabled people. I have ADHD, I have mental health problems, Cam had chronic illness issues. I'm sure a lot of us also have, have dealt with mental health problems or not then at least to stress. I think this is important to consider. I think that given that this part is part of the constitution has clearly been ableist before and will likely continue to act enforce ableist rules. It is important to review and amend this. I think this fact should be taken into account when we go into voting. I do not think it is fair for people to vote to remove me based on a policy that has been established ableist.

Lara: I just wanted to mention, Atlas, I do apologize if this has been the environment for you and that's the atmosphere that we have established on council for you. Obviously that is not at all my intention. You can communicate that to me. In regards to you not liking how council is, that is one of the questions that I asked during my check-ins, such as council interactions depending how the VUSAC vibe's been. That's something I ask literally in my check-ins and I think that it is unfortunate that that was your experience, but I think that it doesn't change the fact that if we continue to go on and clearly there hasn't been any improvement that we've seen in terms of your constitutional duties. There's no way that I can condone this way of council functioning for another semester. It is absolutely gonna impede the operations of council.

Shane: Just to note, I think wrongful to compare Cam's situation with yours. Cam was completely communicative with us at least to some extent, when I think there was outright refusal from you. On the point of hatred, I don't want to bring it up again. I just don't want to



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engage in a debate about it, but I'll just note and I don't want to put him on the spot, but it seems that he's comfortable with it, so I'll just say it. Cam has brought up to me that you've expressed it openly that you hate both myself and Lara so I'm sorry that this is the way you feel. I think it would have been good for us to communicate this so that we could have, you know, worked it out. I think it's sad that we've come to this point.

Amy: I hear you guys are all coming from, so I guess what I'd be wondering is like what would be the plan afterwards? Clearly people voted for Atlas and that was what people wanted and so you're gonna to move Atlas, are you gonna point Leah or something else? I think that those kind of information is very important for us to know.

Shane: So the Constitution notes that the executive would need to consider who fills that sort of spot. I think as you know, the first person would be Leah. I'm also just keeping in mind, you know, the note about people wanting to leave. I think this is a conversation that's maybe better placed after this has happened just because we still don't know what's gonna happen right now.

Krystyn: I wanted to ask Lara if there was any like provisions or edits we could make to the constitution in terms of like absenteeism and those sorts of things to make it more... I hope you know what I mean. I do also struggle with my mental health even though I do try to fill my position to the best of my capacity. So I just wanted to know if you had any suggestions.

Lara: Absolutely Krystyn, we've had these conversations. I think that absolutely, this is something that we should be taking into consideration. We've heard a lot of feedback given the circumstances that we're in and I think that it's really great how can include this absolutely in our discussions when we reviewing our governing documents in the winter. Obviously right now, there is nothing that can be done. And in terms of this meeting and how this is going, I would strongly urge council to move on to voting as soon as the indirects are finished.

Isha: I'm Isha, I'm also new to VUSAC but I just wanted to say I'm sure all of you agree that Atlashas done an amazing job for the Sustainability Commission. I don't know much of their work but I'm sure it's amazing but this discussion is about their position on VUSAC and the roles that they play in bridging the communication between the commission and VUSAC. Because they've been absen, as fromwhat it seems, is that they aren't doing their duties. They can totally stay on sustainability commission but maybe they aren't as fit for the commissioner's role. There's reasons for that and I respect that but that's the discussion right now.



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Atlas: I think the discussion needs to take into account that the sustainability commission, though I'm sure, would be functioning just as well without me. The commission currently very open about the fact that they would like to see me continue in my position as sustainability commissioner and I think that point is important to bring up and that removing me in my position as sustainability commissioner will in fact impact both the functioning of the commission as well as the advocacy I can do on campus and in sustainability at Vic. So these are absolutely valid considerations. It's not just about whether or not I've been missing from VUSAC meetings. There are absolutely broader impacts that need to be considered and I think the vote would be unfair. Also just incredibly irresponsible if those facts were not taken into consideration.

Albert: Yeah, so I just wanted to add on to Isha's point. So medical and health concerns aside, I think it's important that we note that counselors and VUSAC members have certain roles that we have to fulfill and certain rules that we need to follow in order to be in the position. For me personally, I can also name like 20 different medical conditions that I have ranging from, you know, my mobility to a history of having cancer as well in middle school. I can tell you that I also have a few experiences working in positions like this. Sometimes my back hurts too much and I don't wanna walk to school, but I still come to my office hours and I still come to all the meetings, right? I think it's very important as Isha said, to fulfill our roles as counselors.

*Motion to extend the discussion by 14 minutes by Shane Joy, seconded by Krystyn Kalloo.  
All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

Amoly: I have a few points. One, to just reiterate Isha's point was not that Atlas is not doing a great job as sustainability commissioner. I think it's very evident from the documents that were circulated that they are and there are a lot of good things that the sustainability commissioner is achieving in accordance to the sustainability commission. I think this is regarding their role not as a sustainability commissioner to the sustainability commission but as a sustainability commissioner to VUSAC and I think there are a lot of constitutionally, even though we can debate the validity and accuracy of the constitution, in accordance to that, there are some variations that we are trying to discuss right now. Just to point Isha's point, we're not saying that Atlas is not doing a good job as the commissioner, they are.

Leah : If there are ways to accommodate Atlas and to help them out, I volunteered multiple times to like help them in communication with VUSAC and I think I had been doing that, to a good extent. Also, I think that we should be doing our best to make those sorts of accommodations and to just say that, oh well other people have mental health issues or medical issues and they're still



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showing up, I think is like a really harmful and damaging kind of comparison to make and I think that we should, in all cases, be making accommodations to help people if they need it and if it helps again, I'm willing to do whatever I can to help Atlas and make communication with other commissions and with VUSAC to be more smooth and more constant in the future.

Dhir: Mine's more so directly towards the entire sustainability council and it's on the topic of voting rights. I think as voting members of council, you know you are bestowed with voting rights from the moment you are elected and I think it's really important to exercise your rights when it's when required. Irrespective of however you feel it's something small or big in your opinion, I think one of your primary duties is voting rights and this is to all council members who have voting rights. Please use your voting rights when needed and do not ignore. Yeah.

Stephanie: I just wanted to say like from the email, we all recognize that Atlas has done a lot of really wonderful work and we know that Atlas, they want to stay on VUSAC. And if we want to think about how to move forward, I would like to hear from Atlas and also like Shane and Lara how we can improve communication in the future. Because Atlas, if you say that you feel uncomfortable around Shane and Lara, and there has been so many personal attacks and finger pointing about things that happened in the past going on in this meeting. How are we going to all work together in the future? I thought I just wanted to add that like from my own experience, Shane and Lara have been really wonderful executives.

George: I wanna refocus and have everybody who's a voting member. This whole situation, this whole motion, is colored by personal issues between top executives at VUSAC and Atlas. This whole situation is colored by VUSAC's negative attitude towards Atlas's support for Palestinian liberation. This whole situation is colored by what happened last election and everybody on the council. I don't think anybody has any bad intentions right now, but just as an outside observer, I think the perception of the community right now is you guys need to take a break from disqualifying and removing people you don't like and you know, use all of your amazing capabilities to do great work that we as the community elected you to do and this motion to remove Atlas is a complete distraction from that great work that I know all of you are capable of doing. And at the end of the day, the constitution, I also agree with Amy and everyone else, the constitution needs to be followed, but this provision in the constitution is not meant to be used as a cudgel against people with mental health problems and executive dysfunction abilities. Like if that's your perspective on, this provision, then you're just admitting outright that it's ableist and I'd like to think that we can all agree that there are non-ableist ways to interpret the constitution and respect the intentions behind it. And so just vote against this motion. Keep doing your great





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work. Keep putting great initiatives. This is just gonna be a really bad move, a really massive mess and a really massive distraction from the good work that we're all trying to do.

Shiven: I just wanted to touch on a couple of things and this is like the last time that I'm going to be speaking for the evening. I just want to reiterate what I've said and I'm really glad that my emails about all the work that sustainability commission has done have really gotten through to people. I just want to remind you that this isn't really a vote on whether or not Atlas has responded to these duties. This truly is a vote about whether or not Atlas remaining on, in the capacity as a sustainability commissioner is an overall net positive. And I think that all of these issues of climate justice and sustainability and all the outreach and all the amazing work that we have done are proof that the net impact that at least being on commission is extremely positive and that we do have ways in which we can overcome the challenges that Atlas specifically has, when it comes to accessibility concerns. As overall, I want to acknowledge that this has been a very heated conversation, a lot of things have happened. I personally am very uncomfortable around VUSAC as well. I have decided to attend today because I really do think and the sustainability commission think that our voices do need to be heard and do need to be considered just as much, if not more so, than the voice of the executive on this. I don't think that means that the voices of the executives are invalid or shouldn't be listened to. I just really, really want you to hear our message. Our message just that Atlas is the best suited person for the job as a sustainability commissioner. That is all we can do of you is now, ask you for the chance to allow them to continue to grow in their role to adapt to their role and allow us to continue doing the amazing work that we have been doing so effectively as a commission.

Michael: I was just gonna kind of reiterate some points that I think should be clear and at the end of this, the constitution does not mandate that you must remove Atlas even if they checked off all the box that they supposedly did. It gives you the ability to, but doesn't say you have to – it's left up to the interpretation of the individual. I call on all of you to prioritize the well-being of individuals and recognizing the marginalization they may face based on mental and physical health abilities. And making sure that's factored into your decision making – that will be reflected in your vote. Also, if you want to be open and accessible and accountable to the Vic student body which you claim to represent, put this to a recall vote and let the students decide if Atlas is the sustainability commissioner we want and that their actions, decisions, and abilities are what we want to look for in the commissioner. They were voted into the position based on that and I think they should be removed by the student body if they are to be, not by individuals who as demonstrated in this meeting, who have had personal issues with Atlas..



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Diana: Thanks to everybody for giving your insight. I'm really glad to have people who are here and speaking about this and I think it's an important conversation have. I want to pause and reiterate something that Leah mentioned. Just that I don't really think it's a good practice to be kind of comparing people's abilities to each other. I'm a person who's also disabled, but disability works in so many different ways. Everybody is gonna be able to function at different levels. That being said, what I do think is important to think about and what is concerning to me is not the non-performance as much as the non-communication. Because I have experienced and I have seen other people experience issues where, they have been really struggling. And they have communicated that and come to solutions or agreements together about what is functional. And Atlas, I'm really sorry that you didn't feel comfortable going to the executives. I obviously don't have a lot of context on that. But from what I'm hearing, I'm concerned that there is not just a hesitance to communicate, but also an outright refusal to communicate and try and brainstorm ideas or ways to make things work. While I'm very, very empathetic about the accessibility concerns, I think we're bringing up a lot of good concerns about the constitution. I just want to bring up that that's kind of my point of concern, which is a willingness to work towards those solutions together.

Atlas: With regards to the refusal to communicate. That was never my intention. I am sorry if that came as a refusal. Yes, I have been frustrated in the past week for very obvious reasons, but I think when we're talking about a refusal to communicate, a threat of resign or else will try to kick you out sounds like a refusal to communicate to me. The fact that this motion is here sounds like a refusal to communicate to me and it feels like a much more targeted refusal for that matter. Particularly now that Michael has enlightened the council about the fact that apparently Shane and Lara did not want me here in the first place. Yes, there has been a targeting of me and I don't see how that shows well-intentionality on the side of the executive.

Shane: I just think it's an important note to maybe to end off on. There's a lot mentioned about the personal nature of this. It seems that people are suggesting a racist or ableist nature of this. I think it's really terrible that people are using these terms and these problems as cudgels, to beat members of council into voting a particular way or another. Atlas, you have not only failed to communicate, you've absolutely refused to communicate. The email that Lara sent was not if you don't leave, we will motion for your removal, it is, we are motioning for your removal. But to protect you from dealing with a really difficult conversation such as this one, you can resign. We've gone through this conversation with a bunch of people already on council and they have improved in accordance with our Constitution. We asked you to do that. We reached out to you a bunch of times, as the timeline suggests, to do that. I'm really sorry that these feelings are



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coming up. I just need to reiterate again that this is not personal. This has nothing to do with what I myself or what Lara thinks of you. It has nothing to do with anyone's opinions on any political matters.

Albert: So again, I think it all comes down to what Stephanie and Diana mentioned. The Sustainability Commission and some of the members not being comfortable with VUSAC and the organization itself, I think, is the root cause of the problem. Explicitly Shevin has messaged me: "I'm not the most comfortable in the VUSAC office to be honest." in the messages he sent me.

*Motion to take a 2 minute break before voting by Krystyn Kalloo, seconded by Jack Cochrane.  
All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

Jackie: Amoly is motioning to have an anonymous vote, which is allowed, according to the Roberts rules, which we follow. It's for the protection of the of individuals trying to express their opinions.

Amoly: I just wanna reiterate that this is not a conspiracy, but there were general concerns about people's safety and people personally receive threats so I think this is to protect a lot of people who are uncomfortable with the idea of possibly facing personal backlash.

Atlas: I have a questions bout the logistics, how does this exactly work in an online meeting?

Lara: This is something that we do on hiring panels but you just send your vote directly to Jackie personally.

Jackie: Send a test DM first just in case mistakes happen.

*Motion to have an anonymous vote by Amoly Agarwal, seconded by Krystyn Kalloo.  
All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

*Motion by Lara Athena Reyes to remove Atlas as Sustainability Commissioner (Appendix B),  
seconded by Shane Joy.*

Jackie: Just a reminder because, as stated in the constitution, in regards to removal of a member, it will be three-fourths majority.

*Majority in favour. Motion passes.*



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*Motion to adjourn the meeting by Lara Athena Reyes, seconded by Shane Joy.*

*All in favour. None opposed. None abstaining. Motion passes.*

*Meeting adjourned at 9:12PM.*