**VUSAC Meeting Minutes**

January 20 at 5:30 PM in the Goldring Student Center

MINUTES

**In Attendance**

**VUSAC**

**Judiciary**

PRESIDENTS: Stuart Norton

VP STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS: Hannah Brennen

VP EXTERNAL: Stephen Warner

VP INTERNAL: Golda Greenspoon

**Assessor Members**

CHAIR: Saambavi Mano

SECRETARY: Artimes Ghahremani

FINANCE: Peter Huycke

**Commissioners & Councillors**

SCARLET AND GOLD: Zahavah Kay

SUSTAINABILITY : Jamil Fiorino-Habib

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT : Nina Christianson

COMMUTER: Commissionner Isaac Khouzam

ARTS AND CULTURE : Olivia Klasios

EQUITY : Commissionner Yasmine Hassan

**COUNCILLORS**

Tyler Biswurm

Alexa Breininger

Milliene Xu

Melinda Hector

Peter Huycke

Hamboluhle Moyo

Sharon Tan

Jayde Jones

**GUESTS**

Campus Life Coordinator Emily Gilbert

Kaitlyn Simpson

Hana Nikčević

**REGRETS**

PRESIDENTS: Rahul Christoffersen

COMMUNICATIONS: Shailee Koranne

**ABSENT**

EQUITY : Co-Chair Zoe Kwan

COMMUTER: Co-Chair Karen Indraatmadja

CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER: Taylor Cenac

Land Recognition: Zahavah

Motion: Isaac moves to approve the minutes from last meeting. Jamil seconds. Motion passes.

* Favour: All
* Abstained:
* Opposed:

Motion: Zahavah moves to approve the agenda as it stands. Jayde seconds. Motion passes.

* Favour: All
* Abstained:
* Opposed:

*\*Stuart adds 3 minutes for the Finance Chair Honorarium under Discussion Items*

*\*Zahavah moves 4 minutes from Highball to Constitutional Review Discussion*

*\*Stephen moves Constitutional Review Update before Code Red*

**EX-OFFICIO REPORTS AND UPDATES**

*CLC – Emily Gilbert*

Emily says there is space available for Ideas for the World, encourages us to sign up online. If you have any questions, email Ashley at vic.ideas@utoronto.ca . Next Thursday is the Gardiner Gala. Next Friday is Varsity Night, they will be meeting in the Atrium to leave together. Commuter and residence Don applications are out. Orientation Executive applications will be out soon. They are still boosting the better coping skills workshop. They are held every second Wednesday from 12-1:30 in Wymilwood lounge.

Hambo asks what the varsity night was. Emily responds that there will be free pizza, Scott and the Commuter Dons will be taking Vic students to varsity stadium.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

*Stephen – Discussion of Caucus Constitutional Amendments*

Stephen says in case people didn’t see the changes in the email, he has included a re-write of the bylaw concerning caucus. Two basic changes – first, he is making it from 3 times a year to twice a year, this is because people hate caucus, and having 3 in a year is excessive. It matches the best practices of other student societies which only have one AGM per year. He decided to have 2 because it is a bigger deal here than in other student societies. The second major change stops forcing certain groups to attend, and divides attendance to ‘expected’ and ‘invited’. It clarifies that we don’t have the power to tell them what to do, but that we’d like them to come. There are minor changes to who chairs the meeting, VPE (VP External) would call the meeting, but the actual chairing goes to the actual chair.

Jayde asks what the rationale was for not listing The Strand in the invited guests section. Stephen says levy representatives already required to come anyway, so in theory they should already be there. Sending a reporter to write about it is their prerogative.

*Saambavi – Constitutional Review*

**Discussion of Where Clubs Should Go**

Jamil says in the past there was a clubs commissioner – why was this scrapped? Stuart says because historically, they didn’t do much, and a lot of it was contextual to them impeaching the commissioner at the time because he dropped the ball. They then merged into VPO (VP Operations), then VPSO (VP Student Organizations). Essentially, they thought managing clubs wasn’t a commission compared to other active portfolios, with no direct connection of clubs to the executive. The clubs’ concerns needed to be brought to the judiciary.

Hannah says in response to Stuart, she understands having a judiciary this large, with the proposed constitutional amendment, the judiciary would be back down to three people and this is good. Hannah says after last meeting, it was suggested that the levies go to the VPE which makes sense, but it would be worth looking into a councillor responsible for clubs. Each year the structure of councillors is unclear – as a councillor in the past she didn’t feel like there was anything tangible to do. If one worked closely with the VPE, there would be a group who knew what was going on. Electing them in the fall or spring is up for debate. She thinks this is a worthwhile suggestion, especially if the councillor in charge of clubs would have something to do.

Zahavah voted against moving clubs under S&G (The Scarlet and Gold Commission). She says she loves the position of S&G, but it can be a disproportionate workload. She is not wholly opposed to S&G absorbing clubs into their portfolio, but is opposed with the way it stands right now. If it becomes larger, at the very least, there should be a commission. It would be more appropriate if S&G is put on the judiciary as a VP Student Life. If the position were moved to the judiciary, then potentially her vote might have changed. Just adding a commission might not be enough.

Olivia responds generally that she was present at the time of the last clubs commissioner, and its unfeasible to have that counsellor elected in the fall. They can’t have someone come in late. It would be left to the VPE over the summer then transferred. If we were to call it a counsellor position in the spring election, we might as well bring back the clubs commission – as you have a plethora of organizations to deal with.

To Zahavah, Hannah says that if the position is a lot as is, adding a more active commission to lighten the burden would do the opposite of help, as managing is easier with one person. It seems a lot more people to talk to and delegate. Her idea is having clubs and levies managed by the same person. To split that in two doesn’t make sense. If levies go to the VPE, clubs could also go to the VPE and they could get help with that. If the point of making the judiciary smaller is the aim of the amendment, it makes sense to keep clubs and levies in the judiciary. Last year’s VPSO had help, and organizationally that didn’t make sense. S&G will be busy every year, so it doesn’t make sense to put them there.

Peter asks if the clubs commission also included levies. Olivia responds at that point it was just clubs. Peter concurs with Hannah to keep them together. This is more structural, and has to do with the inner happenings on VUSAC. He suggests keeping the portfolio of the VPSO, but moving it to a commission.

Milliene asks what the responsibilities of the person in charge of clubs would be and what kind of work load that would be. Hannah responds budgeting is a big one, as well as hiring committees, subcommittees, walking clubs through how to do these things. The role fluctuates, sometimes it is really busy. Things come up as the year progresses. It is hard to summarize, but mainly accommodating and making sure things are going well.

Olivia, speaking as a former S&G, is completely against moving clubs under that position. There are new clubs coming in yearly. Having to plan semi-formal, pub nights, Highball, Winterfest, then also being in contact with the people in clubs, their socials and meetings, is too much for one person. The proposal of a commission isn’t strong, because it will vary year to year on who will sign up – they can’t sustain the amount of work they are proposing.

Jamil says if they are moved under S&G, would there be a possibility of an assistant commissioner? Zahavah says that potentially would help, but as per the earlier point, to be candid, as far as the position of a commissioner is on a CCR – it is hard to sell a position that is going to be recognized the same as other positions that have far less to do. On a personal level, it is a great job to have, but that is a problem with recognition. People would be more inclined to run and assume those responsibilities if it comes with recognition.

Stuart says as a former S&G, he suggested this idea, and making it a campus life position. Thinking about the amendments proposed, it is not just absorbing clubs, there is going to be wa policy about commissions and their operations. There was a poll, most are opposed. Moving forward, whatever we decide to happen with clubs should be as streamlined and accessible as possible, maintaining the connection clubs currently have with the judiciary.

Hannah says with having a co-S&G, one of the things expressed consistently was that clubs felt VUSAC was insular, just giving them money from time to time. Having a co-chair wouldn’t help that issue. Her suggestion would be giving the VPE clubs and levies, with the help of a councillor.

Stephen asks what the plan is for going forward with this. Saambavi says she will get a feel for which of these options people are in favour of. There are contradictions in the election section that they need to move forward with soon. They can consult on it more, but should attempt to get it passed as soon as possible. Stephen suggests to vote on the non-contentious parts tonight, then put the next parts aside.

Peter asks if we are going to vote, to have the three major blocks of finance, clubs, and co-presidency. They should at least vote on co-presidents right now, just to say we want to. Then when we present at next meeting it would go forward.

Olivia asks about the rationale behind it.

Peter moves to extend by 10 mins. Stephen seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Stuart speaks to why co-presidents were removed. It doesn’t work to split one job into two. There is lots of responsibility, having to attend meetings and jobs. When they amended the constitution, they were reacting to a situation where one president couldn’t handle the work. Instead of reallocating work to the VPs, they just split it in half. This resulted in half the work and opportunities. As much as they communicate, there is no direct connection with certain bodies. It is not streamlined. Also, splitting the job into two, and having to be a leader – doesn’t make sense. No other divisions have co-presidents. It makes more sense to reallocate to the VPE and VPI (VP Internal).

Zahavah’s concern is in reference to why the co-presidency was put in. She is worried about the amount of work from a mental health point of view. Everything boils down to one person during stressful situations, and she worries about shouldering the burden on one person. Other members are involved, but people reduce VUSAC to its president. Politics can be contentious, this is mentally straining.

Stephen elaborates about why the changes were made. At least part of the decision was influenced by the overlap on the presidential and VPE portfolios. With two presidents, one person does the work that would otherwise be delegated to the VPE. One change was enshrining in the constitution roles for the VPE, like dealing with the Dean’s Office. This is a significant burden off the president. The president would keep relations with other departments. Zahavah made a good point about the strain on one person, but he says they have done their due diligence in splitting up the workload. Aside, there are other councils that operate on a two-person system (President and VP), that includes St. Mikes. There is a concern about the workload, but they have done enough to mitigate it. It will always be an issue no matter what leadership position you take on at Vic.

Stuart says in response to Zahavah, considering the nature of splitting one job into two results in an automatic buffer. One might get busy and overwhelmed. That is what’s happened in past years and this year. They lose the direct control, with one person doing too much, and one not doing enough. They are redefining the role, and this outweighs the concerns. It is important to make use of the executive during crises. This is what to do moving forward, constructing a support network.

Hannah says furthermore, the president’s role right now is to sit on committees dominated by members of administration. There are three students in a room of 35 intimidating middle aged men. If you have two presidents, it detracts from the amount of authority that person has on the student body. It is better to have one person in charge of a specific set of things.

Olivia reminds everyone that if we return to a single president, and redistribute to the VP, while reassessing the position of S&G, then we return to a 4-person judiciary. We lack a tie breaker. She thinks the best course of action is to keep the VPSO portfolio, but move it down to commissioner level.

A straw poll is taken to see how council feels on club/levy reallocation.

Melinda asks if the revised VPE role will be too much to handle. Stephen says levies used to be under the VPE portfolio. It’s not entirely unreasonable to expect this of a judiciary member, a lot of the changes assume judiciary members will be doing more. Right now, the VPE doesn’t do much, there is room for the role to do more. Especially with the addition of councillors dealing with clubs, this is not an issue. Peter adds that adding clubs to the VPE portfolio will fluctuate depending on Vic’s involvement year to year. In the past few years, there have been big jobs because of the way campus stuff has happened. Stephen replies that it is not in the VPE portfolio to run proxy campaigns for the UTSU.

The straw poll continues.

*Result: Most people satisfied with VPE getting clubs and levies, and having councillor to help.*

Jamil says, regarding election reform, if we are going to have councillors dedicated to a position, should this be added in the elections process? Olivia points out that many years ago, there was often a ‘MAL’ (Member at Large) specifically dedicated to a certain portfolio. Once you became a councillor, you would list what your objectives were, assigned to a specific commissioner or VP, and stay with them.

Jayde says that is similar to how it was organized this year, asks Golda if it worked out well. Golda says most people were happy with what they were assigned to. You can be assigned to one specific commissioner or VP.

A straw poll is taken to see how council feels on the co-president position.

*Result: Most feel we should remove the option of co-presidency.*

**Discussion of Whether Finance Should Remain Hired or Elected**

A straw poll is taken to see how council feels on hiring or electing the Finance position.

*Result: Most feel it should remain a hired position.*

Jayde says they were speaking earlier about the finance position, and that a few people mentioned they had voted for one or the other because there were only two options. Jayde wonders if including another option in voting would have affected the outcome being such a clear majority in favor of hiring. Golda asks what the compromise would be. Jayde admits her only suggestion would be having a hiring committee select a pool of candidates, then having the students elect the candidate, but says her main concern is whether a third option would have greatly impacted the results. Golda says one issue with election is the idea of them getting a vote.

Olivia says we already talk about how little voter turnout is, and now they would be voting in the person in charge of a large amount of money.

Hannah echoes Stephen in saying that the people in charge of hiring are voted in by the same people who would be voting in the finance position. It is the same issue either way, and voter turnout is a different issue.

Zahavah responds that she disagrees that it is the same issue, it’s just that voters are not well informed. Even if the people who make up the hiring committee are elected from a small number of voters, they will inform themselves, so the hiring committee is well informed.

*Code Red – Stephen*

Stephen moves his speaking right to Zahavah here. She says that what happened was that the Code Red (Semi-Formal) cash box was the same one brought to the event for people to buy tickets at the door. It remained with Zahavah or another VUSAC member the entire night. When the event ended, she counted the money and went back to the VUSAC office and wanted to put it in the President’s office, but none of the people with a key were there. Because she did not have access to the locked office, she put it into the cabinet and told the Finance Chair at the time where it was. Between then and when the cash box was taken from that location, $500 had gone missing. A portion of the loss can be attributed to incorrect ticket administration, but that is not the entire amount. This is not to name-names, but rather about how we can move forward and make sure it doesn’t happen again. This wasn’t handled as it should have been. First, at the end of every cash event, one of the people with a key to the President’s office needs to be there to put it away. We are a trusting community, but a lot of people have access to the office, they also bring friends with them, and there are periods of time where there isn’t someone at the desk. We need to be more diligent about that. Another change is in terms of ticket recording, being more thorough and accurate. The biggest thing is knowing this has happened, and implementing a mental change. The space is not as safe as we would like to think it is. This carries over into the printer money box. Another change is through the process of selling tickets. Every second or third day of ticket sales, only the float should be left and everything else taken out.

Stephen continues that in terms of transparency, on the audit of ticket sales, when Peter and Stephen did the initial count of the box, there was around enough money for 111 tickets sold. In reference with the spreadsheet, there were 139 tickets sold. On top of that, 22 tickets were distributed without reference – they had been sold, but not recorded. They went item by item down the spreadsheet, confirming if the remaining tickets weren’t recorded as sold. The 22 tickets were ones they didn’t have, but didn’t have recorded. This brings the total to 161, and that is how they arrived at the number 500. There are options. They talked about reforming ticket sales going forward, the areas that need to improve are record keeping, and flow of the cashbox, as well as depositing the cashbox into a locked and safe place.

Jamil says that all the recommendations are good. From retail experiences, he says you should deduct anything that isn’t the float, drop it into a bag and throw it into a slot of a safe, or somewhere accessible only by key. In deducting the ticket sales from the day, it would be the last person on office hours responsible for doing so.

Peter says that the policy is supposed to be that at the end of every day, the cash in the printing box should be removed and slid under the president’s door, at the minimum every week. Regarding these changes, the finance councillor was supposed to count the change, and we should start doing this once a week. This would mean figuring out the exact amount they want as float, and to start keeping track of the money. Additionally, they had to spend an hour and a half counting tickets, figuring out the ticketing – because it was confusing. The biggest problem is when you have a spreadsheet. We have iPads, and he suggests we use them for ticket sales so that it is all on one computer. The possibilities of accounting errors are minimized.

Milliene asks approximately how much was in the box. Zahavah says she was under the assumption that no money would be missing, so she roughly sorted the count, and didn’t write down the number. When she put the money in the cabinet, it wasn’t taken out by the finance chair for 2 days, and when Zahavah saw it after it was taken out, visually there was money missing. When she looked at it then, there was at least $300 missing. She says in the future should the person counting should record the number. Milliene adds that the iPad isn’t necessary. Zahavah says the idea is that there is one device, so charger discrepancies and access to the spreadsheet wouldn’t be a problem. Milliene asks if we could record when the ticket was sold. Hannah says timestamping would be used in an emergency, but the tightened process should prevent this from happening in the first place. Otherwise, don’t need to necessarily. Tyler doesn’t agree with the timestamping. The idea of more accountability makes more sense- at the end of office hours, saying how many tickets were sold, it would be easier to track things if something goes wrong. There are more layers of recordkeeping this way. Olivia responds that this coincides with how google docs works. On our VUSAC emails, records are kept already in edit history. Just log-in with your VUSAC account, and record the tickets you sell.

Zahavah says about the depositing, instead of having it be the responsibility of the last person on office hours, the person selling tickets could check up twice a week. The first and last person on office hours would count – the last person would count the money and write it down, put the bills under the president’s door, then get the first person to count the money again.

Stuart says we should all agree to keep it on google sheets. This will solve all problems. Looking back, people were selling without taking down info – this is a performance issue. If you are unsure, ask for clarification from the person in charge. Moving forward, there will be some consequences about who has access to the office after hours. Regarding the iPad, signing in with your email is the main problem. Following procedure, not creating new ones.

Olivia says that there is another dimension about who has access to the safe, as well as a disconnect if we have two safes.

Shannon shares some things Jennifer McCann with the bursar shared. She encouraged using a physical receipt book, every time you sold a ticket. That might help instead of a sheet. You give a copy to whoever you sold to, and keep one for yourself. She also said at the end of every shift, the person leaving and the one coming on count the money together and sign on together, tracking it every two hours.

Jamil says in response to Olivia, he did not mean adding another safe, but a slot in the door, with a bin that would collect it. It would be just the existing people with a key responsible for the money. The second point is that some people ask why we don’t take debit or credit. He is not sure if square space would conflict and make things more complicated, but it is a good idea.

Melinda says that sometimes when you don’t have enough money in one box, you might exchange from another box.

Hambo says in that situation, if you exchange the money, you shouldn’t have a discrepancy. Secondly, regarding people on shift counting money, it would bear a burden on the person coming in at first and leaving – unless they counted during their office hours, it is a lot of time. It would be better to count during your hours, not when they end.

Stuart says that about taking credit and debit, they encouraged us to do this. VUSAC hasn’t because they would be paying a heavy service fee. This is not feasible given their current financial status. UC does take debit and credit, but they have more financial support.

Zahavah says it was a lot more money, and she had considered it for highball. She says exchanging from different money boxes shouldn’t be happening. No one should be mixing money between boxes. If there is not enough money, that should be brought up with the FC or presidents. We can’t have that happening.

Stephen says to close, we will be putting out a statement about this, so people know and we can work on it on the future. Secondly, he has been taking notes on ideas for ways to fix this, and will be bringing suggestions next meeting.

*Finance – Stuart*

Stuart would like to move to release a portion of the honorarium to the former finance chair. He and Stephen negotiated the honorarium with Nicole. Most the budgeting and reimbursement work has already been completed, and Nicole had to do a hefty amount of work. As a judiciary, they agree that Nicole should be compensated for what they did. Stuart is asking that $375 of the $500 honorarium be released to them.

Stuart moves to to release $375.00 from SVPI-007 (Assessor Honoraria) to former Finance Chair Nicole Gumapac. Isaac seconds. Motion passes.

* Abstained: Olivia, Zahavah
* Opposed:
* Favour: All others

Stuart thanks Nicole for their service in the finance role and all they did for VUSAC.

**ASSESSOR MEMBER REPORTS AND UPDATES**

*Communications – Semi Annual Report*

Shailee could not be here, but wants to let everyone know that three people have not submitted their reports yet, but it should be out by next meeting.

**COMMISSION REPORTS AND UPDATES**

*Arts and Culture – Update*

Olivia says the Gardiner Gala is coming up. The people who do not have to purchase a ticket have volunteered their time. Otherwise, you can purchase tickets next week. Other than that, she will be offering sets of *Winterlicious* tickets at the end of January and into February.

*Scarlet and Gold – Winterfest Update*

Zahavah says Winterfest was successful. The co-chairs are in the process of writing a transition report. She will be including in her own report a transition on the hiring process. She extends a thank you to them and the committee for a successful Winterfest.

**JUDICIARY REPORTS AND UPDATES**  
*VP Student Organizations – Hannah*

**New Clubs**

Hannah ratifies the following new clubs.

*University of Toronto Korean Students’ Association (UTKSA)*

*Trailers & Trivia*

*Healthy Habits*

Stephen asks if the trailers and trivia club is about ‘camping’ trailers. He realizes they meant movie trailers. Peter asks if it is trivia about trailers, or while watching them. Hannah says to join their club meetings every 2-3 weeks to find out.

Olivia asks if they are asking for funding this year. It is ok for space, but if they want funding, there is a pre-existing trivia club, and dividing funding is straining on the budget. Hannah says thus far they want to operate independently. If they do, she will reiterate merging and collaboration. Isaac says to direct them to student projects. Hannah said they don’t fund day-to-day operating costs. It is also what the contingency fund is for.

Zahavah asks if any of the clubs are asking for money. Hannah says as of now no, but Healthy Habits’ goal is to give students resources to food, maybe collaborating with the commuter dons. If they do, there is money set aside.

Olivia says student projects funding needs to be accessible to the majority of Vic, and being a club makes it inaccessible.

Olivia moves to omnibus the clubs. Zahavah seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Hannah moves to ratify University of Toronto Korean Students’ Association (UTKSA), Trailers & Trivia, and Healthy Habits. Stuart seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Peter asks if the Healthy Habits club no longer wants funding. Hannah says no, but that she understood they haven’t asked and will be collaborating with commuter dons.

**Cat’s Eye**

Hannah says the Cat’s Eye has requested that VUSAC and other VUSAC-concerned members spend more time in the Cat’s Eye to reinvigorate the space. It is quieter than in years past, and they would like to see more presence.

*VP External – Stephen*

**Crescams**

Stephen says the Crescams are an awards ceremony by VUSAC and the Dean’s Office in mid-late March. Nominations will be going out in February. If you know someone who deserves one, get them to apply. More information on this will be coming in the future, but it is something to keep on the radar.

**Student Experience Focus Groups**

Stephen says he spoke about this last semester, and wanted to let people know the project is moving forward in the form of Dean’s Office focus groups. This came about through a series of questions about student experience at Vic. Scott set up a randomized focus group, which will be meeting 4 times. He hopes to bring the results to people, and will do so after reading week. This will help whoever takes the job over.

Artimes asks why all the focus group dates were set for Wednesday, which makes it somewhat inaccessible. Stephen says it was convenient for Scott. They set a variety of times. It was well attended in terms of people last Wednesday. Stuart says Wednesday is one of the busiest days on campus, with the most classes happening, and the time where they get the most traffic. They are open to changing and accommodating things, this just made the most sense at the time.

*Co-Presidents – Stuart*

**Board of Regents: Introduction and Update**

Stuart says he is an ex-officio member on the Board of Regents. There are four other student members on the board.

Victoria University did adopt U of T’s sexual violence policy. In accordance with Bill 132. There have been discussions to flesh out Vic’s version, and Kelley wants to make Vic a bit more unique in this context. The policy was passed December 17 at an Exec meeting.

If you look on Acorn, it says there is a Goldirng Student Center fee. It is from an agreement between Vic University and VUSAC, in which students are paying off the remaining loan for the building. The fees are not going into services or management; it is an agreement to pay off outstanding costs. We will be continuing to pay until 2025. It is interesting, as you cannot opt out. If students are asking what the fee is about, it is a loan.

He passes around the grounds master plan of Victoria University – what the space will look like in the next decade.

Also, Northrop Frye is currently infested with asbestos. It was not built to last, as it was meant to last 50 years. Currently, there are discussions about renovations or demolitions, as the building which hosts academic programming and the registrar’s office isn’t in the best condition.

Hannah adds that they are discussing what will happen. There was a property meeting on Tuesday, and the budget was contentious. The next property committee meeting will be about a month from now.

**Co-President Report Update**

Stuart says they are done the second full week of school, and things have been very busy. He gives a shout-out to everyone for keeping the momentum moving. He has been attending a lot of meetings in the first week back. He thanks everyone for putting up with him as the Winterfest Co-chair. He looks forward to having a great next 3 months. Rahul cannot be here, as he is speaking about the relationship between VUSAC and Caffiends at their celebration.

Motion: Olivia moves to adjourn the meeting. Sharon seconds. Motion passes.

Meeting is adjourned.

* Favour: ALL
* Abstained:
* Opposed:
  + Absent: