GRADUATE STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY, April 24, 2018, 5:00 PM

SA 104

Attendees:

Brit Paris, President
Negar Mohammadi, VP Academic
Willem Klumpenhouwer, VP External
Taha Afyouni, VP Student Life
Kyle McCallum, Speaker
Haley Vecchiarelli, Clerk

Quorum:

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Kratofil Rachel Marie
Kuznetsova Svetlana
Ladisa Claudia
Lang Rebecca
Mancini Nicole Lynn
Mansouri Mohammad
Habibabadi
Mayr Kyle Andrew
Mele Bria Scriven
Meunier Paul Norman
Miller Kristina
Mohammadi Negar
Morris Jeremy Stephane
Murphy William Anthony
Nettleton Jodi
Nightingale Miriam
Olmo-Velazquez Annamaris
Paris Britney Michele
Pearse Lauretta Feyisetan
Plotsky Kyle Jordan
Salari Mostafa
Saucedo Abraham
Cepeda
Welsh Thomas Aidan
Wilson William Marcus
SGM Meeting Minutes

Meeting Began 17:21

Territorial Acknowledgement 17:21

Approval of Agenda 17:22

Motioned/seconded
Opposed:0
Abstained:0
CARRIED

Approval of September 2017 AGM Minutes 17:23

Motioned/seconded
Opposed:0
Abstained:1
CARRIED

Motion 1 17:30

Brit: We are just going to start with a background for each motion. The first motion is approving withdrawal from Societies Act. Before GSA was legislated to exist by post-secondary learning act (PSLA), we wanted to be recognized and legitimate, but now with the PSLA and Bill 7, the Societies Act is redundant. We are currently one of a few students association as part of the Societies Act. When government passed Bill 7, which deemed us as the bargaining agent, this in combination with the PSLA meant that there were 3 bills to follow, which is a lot and we get no authority from the Societies Act.

Willem: The point of the Societies Act is to create a way for organizations to be a little more transparent, for example community associations. Our provincial organization, abGPAC, is a member of the Societies Act because do not derive authority from elsewhere. Main points are to hold an annual general meeting and present budget and we already have to do this, so redundant. We are not taking away any responsibilities by leaving the Societies Act.

Brit: Keeping the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Keeping things that are good practice from the Societies Act.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Students’ Association of the University of Calgary under the recommendation of the Governance Committee, take necessary action to remove themselves from any obligation under the Societies Act (Alberta).

Motioned/seconded

Discussion:
Q: What laws were we using under Societies Act?
A (Willem): Register with Societies Act as a society, and there are certain rights and responsibilities associated with being a society. For example, the right to a seal. Just trying to remove redundancies.
A (Jason): Board is registered through Lobbyist Act, which gives power to interact with the government.

Opposed:0
Abstained:3
CARRIED

Motion 2 17:36

Brit: Alberta government passed Bill 7 which deemed graduate students’ associations as bargaining agents, which means that we bargain your collective agreement. Because of this, we had to make some structural changes to the bylaws. The first was that we removed references to the removal of Societies Act, based on the assumption that you would pass our first motion. Secondly, we had to create a labour relations committee; this will be a group of academically employed or recently employed graduate students. This body reports to the board, but no board member can interfere. We had to create an arms-length body that consult and report on labour issues. So while bylaws were open to make these changes, we made some changes to some wording to be more consistent, including changing job titles and removing all references to Societies Act.

Willem: Had a lot of consultation about the labour relations, including have a labour relations pilot committee populated from students from around campus.

Brit: We had consultation from our lawyers, who got consultation from labour lawyers.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Students’ Association of the University of Calgary rescind the 2017-2018 bylaws of the Association in their entirety and replace them with the proposed 2018-2019 Bylaws.

Motioned/seconded

Discussion:

Q: If the board can not interfere, who is this committee and who are they accountable to?
A (Willem): They are accountable to their members, like a union, so all academically employed graduate students. We will have the chair report to the board informationally. There will be elections every year. When there is negotiation of Collective Agreement, votes to strike, etc., there is a vote from all currently employed graduate students.

Q: What are the differences between the two sets of bylaws?
A (Willem): A list of changes was sent out, but there are two major changes, references to the Societies Act no longer appears and added (section 18) to describe the labour relations committee, and its structure, function and elections.

Q: Changes to election bylaws?
A (Brit): It is no longer mandatory for candidates to come to the elections forum. The elections policy addresses more of the minutia of the elections process and this is currently under review?

Q: Does the CRO also oversee the elections of the Labour Relations Committee?
A (Willem): Yes.
Q: Why is this not detailed in CRO description (section 1.9)?
A (Willem): We will have an AGM in Sept, and we can update bylaws again then, so thank you for pointing that out. We are noting these so we can make changes in September, good catch.

Q: What time of year holding elections for Labour Relations Committee? Depending on faculty, employment varies throughout the year.
A (Brit): To serve on the committee, anyone who has been academically employed over the past year will be eligible.
A (Willem): Except for the first one, for which elections will take place this fall, will do elections in the winter semester.
Q: Same role for voting?
A (Brit): Yes. Our definition of recently academically employed graduate students is within the past year. Voting on CA or striking, however, is from currently academically employed graduate students.
A (Willem): That rule comes from the labour code.

Q: Is the constitution the same as bylaws?
A (Willem): We do not have a constitution we have bylaws.

Opposed:0
Abstained:1
CARRIED

Willem: Thank you all for coming. It makes us a better organization when you all come out and engage in this process. We have appointed an interim chair of the labour relations committee, Neil Christensen, who was a member of the pilot committee; we needed to appoint a chair to sign the collective agreement.

Brit: Thank you to everyone who put in a lot of work, especially Jason and Willem. Thank you to all of you who came out to ask questions and who emailed questions, this was a big help. Thank you!

**Adjournment of Open Session 17:46**
Moved/seconded
Opposed:0
Abstained:0
CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 17:46