

Steward's Council Meeting  
November 20<sup>th</sup> 2014  
M-C D 214 5:00pm

Chair (Moderator) Chris Cochrane calls meeting to order at 5:06pm  
Minutes taken by Stéfy McKnight

1. Quorum Check and Attendance

Attendance: Suyin Olguin (ENGL), Morgan Oddie (IR), Andrew Law (ENGL), Silja Freitag (Unit 2), Stéfy McKnight (CUST), John Rose (GPHY), Nathan Townend (Unit 1), Lekhnath Ghimire (GPHY), Gabriel Cheung (Unit 1), Pansee Atta (CUST), Danyel Haughten (GNDS), Adam Meyer (BIOL), Sam Twietmeyer (POLs), Denys Robinson (PHIL), Dinah J (HIST), Chris Cochrane (MECH), Travis Skippon (MECH)

Quorum is met.

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2. Adopt Agenda

Chair: Proposed Agenda is displayed on screen

- 1) Know Your CA – Article 9
- 2) Report on JUMC
- 3) Departmental Issues
- 4) Submitted Motions

Chair: Call for motion to amend agenda. Motion to remove items 1) Know Your CA – Article 9 and 2) Report on JUMC until next Steward's Council Meeting because the JUMC scheduled for Thursday November 20<sup>th</sup> was cancelled, therefore there are no updates.

Craig Berggold (Cultural Studies): Explain what is a JUMC? The PSAC and employer rotate meetings to sit down and express concerns. PSAC Executives create an agenda of items they would like to discuss with the employer. The items that the executive would like to bring to the employer are: 1) the childcare building and the loss of space; 2) the issue that was brought up at the last Steward's Council meeting about RA funding – scholarship; 3) Waste disposal. 27 janitors have been laid off. There is a letter sent to President Woolf by CUPE. CUPE is possibly in the process of grieving (Letter is uploaded on PSAC website and will be emailed to Members) and boycotting the Isabel Bader; 4) There are two meetings, one for unit 1 and another for unit 2. There will be a meeting addressing specific Postdoc issues; 5) Negotiations with the management about the Health and Safety training that is being implemented by the new labor law. This training is similar to the AODA training. The employer is proposing a two tier system: Employees who have an annual salary (Postdocs, faculty, ongoing adjuncts) will absorb the training into their salary. Secondly they are proposing that TA's and TF's be paid the hourly TA wage. We believe that all TA's, TF's and Postdocs be paid equally to encourage solidarity. The meeting will be rescheduled some time next week.

Chair: Calls for motion to approve Agenda

Membership Vote

## Motion Carries

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### 3. Departmental Issues

Chair: Calls for department issues.

JR: Graduate Students Council also submitted a letter about garbage disposal.

Chair: Note to membership: Garbage is not being serviced

Stéfy (Cultural Studies): There are bags of garbage being left in the M-C graduate lounge beside garbage bins. Nothing is being done with it.

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### 4. Submitted Motions

#### **Motion**

Moved: Travis Skippon, MECH

Seconded: Andrew Law, ENGL

**Whereas** Steward's Council exists to provide oversight of the executive and ensure that actions taken by the executive are accountable to the membership, and

**Whereas** publication or distribution of correspondence on behalf of PSAC901 implies that the contents have been endorsed by the membership, and

**Whereas** executive meetings are closed to the membership, preventing any non-executive members from contributing to, or even reading, any correspondence drafted in such a meeting, and

**Whereas** steward's council meetings are open to all members in good standing and would welcome input from the membership,

**BIRT** the Executive will cease publishing or distributing any correspondence on behalf of PSAC901. Individual members of the executive will retain the rights to publish or distribute correspondence on behalf of themselves and/or their offices.

**BIFRT** any correspondence distributed or published on behalf of PSAC901 first have its final content approved as a motion before Steward's Council, an Annual General Meeting, or a Special General Meeting

Chair: Invites Travis to speak on behalf of his motion.

Travis Skippon: This is in response to a motion that was brought up at the last Steward's Council meeting (October 16<sup>th</sup> 2014) that was not written but wanted approval. The letter was about childcare and was brought to the meeting by the Social Justice committee. I felt uncomfortable that a document was being written without myself and the members knowing. Exec meetings are closed to members. Some times letters are thought, drafted and then sent in one meeting. Input is not being sought by the membership. Don't like that Exec meetings are being done in private.

Christo Aivalis (submitted comments):

In general, the executive is a manifestation of representative democracy, wherein the members elect it to represent them on union functions. Even still, most people understand that when a letter

is signed by "PSAC 901," "Queen's University," or "The Government of Canada," it is not taken to the direct words of every constituent therein.

The idea that we can't speak in one voice defeats the point of a union. Further, if you examine our list of outgoing solidarity letters (<http://www.psa901.org/resources-2/solidarity/>) you will see that the signatories often indicate the executive of PSAC 901, and don't claim a more universal mandate. If the idea is that union bodies should not speak on behalf of the members, the stewards' council should not be given special treatment, regardless of the arguments made around accessibility to it.

Perhaps we could make the statement, informally and non-binding of course, that the executive will endeavor to sign correspondence on behalf of the executive instead of the general local where appropriate. But in any case, the executive should still be allowed to sign on behalf of the local; should a sufficient number of members disagree with the executive's judgement, they can always move for a recall of its member(s).

Craig: Can we re read the minutes to clarify the motion that was presented?

Chair: Reads previous minutes

Minutes October 16<sup>th</sup> 2014

Motion: Letter re: Childcare Centre

By: MaryClaire

Second: Stéfy

I motion that the Steward's council committee compose a letter (after two week consultation with Stewards after the consultation, the letter will be distributed) to Queen's University and their representatives in support of those affected by the closure of the childcare center to reinstated the services as soon as possible. (in response to the motion posed in the SJ meeting)

For: 9

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 2

Stéfy: There are other ways members can access information and give feedback. Social Justice Committee is an avenue that is open to anyone. They have access to SJ committee and Steward's Council Meetings. We also brought the motion to the Steward's Council Meeting specifically so the Stewards could go to their departments and inform them. We also sent many emails to members inviting them to come write the letter.

Travis: The Executive meeting times are never posted or public.

Dinah: Minutes have never been held back from membership, over the last year some of the things that have been discussed may be bargaining strategies which would not wanted to be shared with management, grievances that cannot be distributed and are confidential.

JR: Correspondence, does this mean emails, letters, and information given to individual members? This eliminates the opportunity for the Exec to speak to members.

Travis: Correspondence is intentionally vague, interfering with communication, working with the union, couldn't think of anything it as being essential.

JR: So is the intention to give authority to individual executive rather than the executive as a whole? From the executive, which doesn't make sense to change because it is a burden? There hasn't been an issue in the past, so why don't we deal with it on an issue to issue basis?

Travis: I'm not sure what the problem is, Craig already has the opportunity to send an email as a person.

JR: How is this different as a exec putting it out?

Travis: I have a problem with the executive sending a letter out that speaks to all of PSAC 901.

Denys: Confusion, whether exec meetings are closed, they should be open. It will be uncommon for members to come to meetings. They can go to bylaw review. What extent can the representatives use their election to do what they want? This motion may have side effect of hand tying, situation of giving the execs a power to give a letter. Why is this practically useful? The exec can't end up in a situation where the executives can do what they want, Steward's Council can vote. In camera, Minutes should be posted, but that confidentiality can be taken in to place.

Why I think it is important, practical role of the exec, aggregation voice of 1500 of us, has weight, practical political power. We can direct that, through strike, all 1500 are saying there is a problem, there is more weight. Prevent the exec from doing this undermines their practical capacity to undergo their issues. Childcare does affect members.

Stéfy: I think it affect my position in specific as information officer. Will I have to contact the Steward's Council each time I need to submit info or a newsletter?

Danyel: Union represented democracy. Why is this letter a problem, because it was about women and childcare? First time it is being scrutinized. I agree about being more opened. As Steward of Gender Studies, I go to my department and ask them about issues to bring to Steward's Council. It is our responsibility of Steward's to inform them.

Craig: To put record straight. During the first Executive meeting, the issue of Childcare was brought forward by members. I said in the meetings that it would be inappropriate to write a letter that was not passed by the Steward's Council. The intent of the whole process was to do what this motion is trying to do. It is in the minutes that I specifically said that it would be inappropriate to write a letter that has not be shared or spoken to the members about. The Social Justice committee hasn't met since last month; the letter will be presented at the next SJC meeting next week. The whole process was meant to involve everyone.

Travis: Didn't intend to make it sound as though. Process should not depend on the good will of the executive. Institutional forces in place to go out and take voice of members. Avoid problems in the future. In relation to Denys, the execs are a voice, not being able to speak in one voice would be a hindrance. Putting that power of voice in Steward's, because there are more members involved instead of having only 8 people having a say.

Dinah: Stewards Council and Executive have been working well together, never seen any contentiousness, no distrust between Stewards. Steer things in cooperation, and keep the employer accountable.

Adam (Biology): Are there any other examples of times where things were published or correspondence that has been brought by the execs that are not represented by the union, or when the executive needed to publish something quickly where they didn't go to the stewards council because of time?

Dinah: Last minute thing that has happened, was the fire on Princess street and that they could go to the ARC. Not particularly contentious.

Pansee: This affects the Information Officer: material distributed, basic information, training dates, Facebook page, information distributed by branded PSAC National, factual, day to day basis communication that is essential.

JR: What about the twitter account? It is named PSAC 901.

Craig: Motion to call the question.  
Seconded by Denys, all in favor, motion passes,

Motion to call the question.  
Motioned by Craig,  
Seconded by Denys.  
Membership Votes  
Motion Passes

Chair: Calls for motion, as written:  
Motioned by Travis,  
Seconded by Andrew  
Membership Vote  
Favor: 14  
Nay: 1

Motion does not carry.

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MaryClaire: Met with SGPS about Childcare issue, to know all of the possible information. Early discussion that will be made in December, based on Childcare committee (University Childcare Committee). Apologize for the delay. Can bring it to the next Social Justice or Steward's Council Meeting.

Craig: Are we going to have another Steward's Council Meeting before the break?

Chair: Are people available to meet in December?

Craig: Do people want to meet within the first week of December, 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>.

Chair: MC will table the letter until next meeting. December 1<sup>st</sup> 5pm

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Motion to Adjourn

Motioned by Denys,  
Seconded by Travis

Meeting Adjourned at 6:04