



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
STUDENTS' UNION

Minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting

Friday, October 8, 2021

5:00 PM - 9:00 PM EST

Student Commons and Online Via Zoom

1. **Call to Order**
Procedural
2. **Approval of Agenda**
Resolution
3. **Presidential Address**
Discussion
4. **Approval of the 2021 SGM Minutes**
Resolution
5. **Receipt of Audited Financial Statements**
Resolution
6. **Appointment of Auditors**
Resolution
7. **Bylaws Amendments**
Resolution
8. **Executive Question Period**
Discussion
9. **Other Business**
Discussion
10. **Adjournment**
Procedural



MINUTES

Open Session

1. Call to Order

This meeting is called to order at 5:24 PM.

2. Approval of Agenda

RESOLUTION

MOVED: BALLIS

SECONDED: NAGRA

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

CARRIED

3. Presidential Address

DISCUSSION ITEM

PRESENTED: BALLIS

Good evening everyone and welcome to the UTSU's 2021 Annual General Meeting. My name is Alexa Ballis and I'm the president of the UTSU for the 2021-2022 term. First of all, thank you all so much for taking the time to attend our AGM, whether you're watching it from the comfort of your own home or on campus. These meetings are often very long and we really do appreciate you making room for it in your busy schedules especially during midterm season.

Saying that the past year and a half has been a challenge is an understatement. For the first time since March of 2020, students have been actively attending classes on campus. It is wonderful seeing the campus so full again, although it looks very different now. Despite the excitement of being in person again, a number of concerns have been raised about the return to campus, such as international students who can't get to campus during the university's allotted time frame, the lack of online options, switching to in person or online with very short notice, ensuring students who are immuno-compromised are safe. We released an open letter that received over 650 signatures from students, staff, and faculty in August, demanding that the university require proof of vaccination, social distancing measures, and provide online learning options for students. Since the letter was released, the UofT did change their policy to mandate that proof of vaccination. But the situation is still imperfect. We have been, and will continue to be, committed to raising these concerns to the UofT administration to ensure that students' needs are met especially as we head into the winter semester.

As in-person activities have resumed at UofT, there's also a new building on campus. Every single year, at the UTSU's annual general meeting, a question has been asked about when the student commons is opening. I'm very excited that this is the AGM that we can finally say that, after 13 long years, the student commons is open to all students. Yes, believe it or not, it actually does exist. I'm sitting here in the building right now, you should come too, we have stickers. They're very cute. The new student center is located on 270 College St. and is open from 9am to 5pm every weekday. That being said, there is still much to do to complete this building. Many services are not available yet: we still need to finalize how we're going to do space bookings, and a cafe still needs to be built and so on. Staff and student employees at the UTSU have been hard at work for the past few months to get us ready for the opening, including ensuring that all proper covid 19 procedures are in place. This is not the opening that many of us have wished for



or expected, but we're super excited to have the building open. We're hoping that once the situation improves, we're able to hold a proper grand opening.

Now, I wanted to take some time to quickly highlight some of the other work that the UTSU has been up to over the past few months. Our VP Operations, Fiona, has been committed to improving the UTSU's financial transparency and initiated a budget consultation at the start of our term to ensure that student input is included. In addition, she introduced a microtransaction bursary to assist students with costs such as TopHat. Our VP Student Life, Maria, coordinated an abundance of orientation events to welcome students onto our campus, including both online and in person clubs fairs, and a student commons tour video which can be found on our social media channels. Our VP Equity, Reva, collaborated with our HR manager, Yara, to introduce, develop and execute mandatory equity training for the UTSU board members, staff and club heads. Our VP Professional Faculties, Cathy, has worked to advocate for the various needs of professional faculties students, including adjusting student-faculty relationships and priority enrolment concerns. Additionally, although she has had to end her term short for health-related reasons, Catherine, our now former VP Public and University Affairs, initiated the UTSU's advocacy efforts in favour of the University of Toronto's multi-tenant housing framework proposal. We couldn't have gotten any of that done without the work of our incredible students who make up the executive assistant team at the UTSU, as well as our devoted full-time and part-time staff.

Finally, I want to close off by saying that we welcome any feedback that you can give us. We have created a number of platforms you can use this year to share input with us. From introducing monthly town halls to creating an anonymous feedback form which you can find on our website. If these avenues don't work for you our inboxes are always open. We truly want to serve you the best way that we can and if you think there's any way we can do better we genuinely want to hear it. At the end of the day, we report to all of you and it is an absolute privilege to be able to serve you. So, thank you for being here.

4. Approval of 2021 Special General Meeting Minutes

RESOLUTION

MOVED: BALLIS

SECONDED: ERDOGAN

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the minutes of the 2021 Special General Meeting be approved as presented.

CARRIED

5. Receipt of Audited Financial Statements

RESOLUTION

MOVED: REUTER

SECONDED: D'AVERSA

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Audited Financial Statements of the 2020-2021 fiscal year be approved as presented.

DISCUSSION

Reuter gave an overview of the audited financial statements included in the meeting package. One main priority this year is to be more transparent with finances. She went over the different sections of the audit and specifically drew attention to pages 3 and 4 where some key numbers are located. Having a strong Health and Dental reserve is something noteworthy, as is the



switch of providers to Greenshield. She highlighted that the UTSU's assets have substantially increased, meaning that UTSU is fiscally strong. General student fees have also increased, which is something positive. Reuter pointed out the expansion of staff that occurred to support the move into the new building. Additionally, she also noted the increase in cash flow, which also demonstrates the UTSU's fiscal strength. She concludes by emphasizing that the audit is meant to reflect last year's financials, and not the current year's.

CARRIED

6. Appointment of Auditors

RESOLUTION

MOVED: REUTER SECONDED: DEKEL

BE IT RESOLVED THAT _____ be appointed as the external auditors of the University of Toronto Students' Union for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

DISCUSSION

6.1 Motion to Fill the Blanks

RESOLUTION

MOVED: REUTER SECONDED: KHAN

BE IT RESOLVED THAT BDO be appointed as the external auditors of the University of Toronto Students' Union for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

Reuter stated that the UTSU's external auditors had been Sloan for the past few years, and that it is considered good financial practice to change external auditors regularly. She stated that BDO is a reputable auditing firm which would hold the UTSU fiscally accountable. She thanked Sloan for their work and reiterated that it is a standard financial practice to change auditors every 3-4 years.

CARRIED

CARRIED

7. Bylaws Amendments

RESOLUTION

MOVED: REUTER SECONDED: TOLTON

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the amendments to the UTSU's Bylaws since the 2021 Special General Meeting approved by the Board of Directors be approved as presented in the appendices.

DISCUSSION

Reuter began with the amendments to the mission statement, and stated that the UTSU wanted to ensure that the mission statement uses gender-neutral language when referring to the UTSU membership. She continued with Bylaw IV, and credited the VP Operations for the previous year for the change. Bylaw IV would amalgamate the Charter for Referenda and the EPC into one document, which helps make elections procedures more straightforward. She continued with Bylaw VI, and stated that it updates the Election Referenda bylaw to add a new



clause which simplifies internal election procedure and explains procedure for vacant seats. She explained the changes to Bylaw X, which details removal of Executives from their positions, and noted that the changes are intended to allow for new disciplinary procedures to place more power in the hands of the membership and Board of Directors. She stated that this would ensure more Executive accountability and continue the ongoing work to reform the UTSU's HR mechanisms. She stated that Bylaw XV will also be returning to its previous state in order to continue the ongoing work of previous teams, and that this would cause a return to the previous Grievance Procedure. Finally, she explained that the changes to Bylaw XVI would see a return to the previous Appellate Board procedure as this year's Governance Committee noted that the Appellate Board composition is too restrictive. More work will be done on Bylaws X, XV, and XVI by the Governance Committee later on in the year. She stated that any student with questions on the amendments is free to email her.

O'Halloran stated that he had noticed that the Bylaw X, XV, and and XVI work was incomplete, but that this was not a large issue. He expressed concern over the Appendix that was submitted, as the version of Bylaws X, XV, and XVI that they will be reverted to has been presented in a way that may cause some members to believe that the content is new. He stated that the text was the incorrect colour, as it insinuated that the changes made previously to the same Bylaws were solidified by the membership, which they were not.

Reuter stated that the changes to the Bylaw were presented in order to promote transparency and make the amendments easier to distinguish. She stated that while the Bylaws were not technically being changed (as the previous changes to the Bylaws had not been solidified by the membership), the new text amended by the Board of Directors had not yet been approved by the membership and thus the colour was consistent with the key at the beginning of the document. She stated that presenting the entire Bylaw as black text would insinuate that there had been no change.

O'Halloran stated while it makes sense to ensure that the membership can distinguish the changes, the Bylaws on the paperwork to Corporations Canada would be identical to the previous years'.

7.1 Motion to Amend

RESOLUTION

MOVED: O'HALLORAN

SECONDED: NAGRA

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the purple text presented in Bylaw X subsections 4 & 6, Bylaw XV, and Bylaw XVI be changed to black.

O'Halloran stated that because the changes were a reversal of something the Board had approved but the members had never substantively approved, and it would be misleading to present it as new material.

CARRIED

CARRIED



8. Executive Question Period

DISCUSSION ITEM

PRESENTED: BALLIS

Ballis stated that if anyone has any questions about the work that the UTSU is doing, or any suggestions for work that they would like the UTSU to do, this is the forum to raise those.

The meeting entered recess at 6:00 PM and resumed at 6:10 PM.

Darici stated that in the email her club received today, occurring to CSG-002 all clubs are required to send at least one representative to the AGM in order to be recognized, and that failure to attend would result in the club being unable to receive UTSU funding. However, she was unable to find this on the club agreement she had signed earlier in the year, and that the exact wording of the clause that was quoted is that clubs are “expected” to send a representative. She stated that this was a large difference, especially since the club agreement did not outline any consequences for failing to send a representative. She asked that the VP Student Life explain the discrepancy between the email she had received and the document she signed. She stated that the question was especially important considering the AGM is a four-hour meeting on a Friday during exam season.

Lin stated that the requirement to attend the AGM has been in the Clubs policy for many years. She noted that on the UTSU website, it is listed under the recognition requirements. She stated that she will look into the exact issue, but that the policy has not been changed.

Darici stated that she had the policy in front of her, as well as the document that she signed. She stated that the clause she is referring to is CSG-002-3-H, which and the last update is noted as May 30, 2021. She noted that this clause only states that clubs are “expected” to attend the AGM, which is inconsistent with the email she received.

Lin stated that this clause was under the “Recognition Requirements” section of the policy, and that clubs must meet all recognition requirements to receive funding,

Ballis stated that to her understanding, the confusion is around word choice. She stated that the word can be read multiple ways, and that they can look into the issue. She stated that the words “expected” and “required” are used interchangeably throughout the document.

Lodoya asked what the UTSU policy would be if they are unable to find someone to fill the Vice-President Public & University Affairs position.

Ballis stated that in the case of a vacancy even after the fall by-election, the UTSU will move to an appointment process. In the event that the vacancy cannot be filled, the remainder of the Executive Committee will have to redistribute the work. She stated that most the the advocacy work is currently being done in the Presidential portfolio, but expressed hope that the position will be filled.

Yang asked the VP Student Life if any club grants had yet been assessed, and if so, if the clubs who were not granted funds had been notified.



Lin stated that the UTSU will be holding the Clubs Committee that weekend and will be looking at the grants then. She stated that clubs will be informed of the decision in the event that they are denied, and that they will be working with clubs to try and secure funding in the event that they are missing elements of their application. She stated that the Clubs Committee will be scheduled bi-weekly for the new school year, and that she will ensure that the timeline is available on the website.

Yang stated that he had applied for grants for events that had already occurred, and asked if there was still a possibility that he could be reimbursed.

Lin stated that as long as the grant application was filed four weeks or more prior to the event taking place, the application will be assessed.

Miller stated that they were part of the West Indian Student Association, and asked if there was an approximate date that event spaces in the Student Commons would be open for clubs to use.

Ballis stated that the UTSU was aiming for January, but would like to open the booking system sooner as she knows that clubs book events in advance.

Sherlock asked why it took the UTSU two months to endorse the Faculty of Music Undergraduate Association's open letter the previous summer. He stated that it was unacceptable for the UTSU to have such a delay in responding.

Ballis stated that the UTSU endorsed it as soon as they were made aware of it, released an open letter in support of it, and have been in communication with the FMUA since about how they can work together to advocate for sexual violence supports on campus.

Nami asked if there could be clarification on the UTSU's expectations for who can be elected onto the Equity & Accessibility Committee.

Ballis stated that the Committee is made up of members of the Board of Directors, but that all Committee meetings are open to all students. She noted that the UTSU occasionally invites various student groups to Committee meetings.

Aggarwal stated that the Equity & Accessibility Committee is currently made up of six members, as well as herself and Ballis. She reiterated that Committee meetings are open to the public, and that they are looking at inviting equity-based groups to sit on the Committee as well.

Nami stated that the Equity position was a very sensitive one which affects students all across campus. She stated that she is asking whether there are social media checks to ensure that the individuals on the Committee have not made posts which can be harmful to certain groups, and if not if the VP Equity is willing to come up with some sort of screening policy for Directors.

Aggarwal stated that there are no special screening checks, but that Directors are required to partake in the UTSU's equity training. She noted that nothing harmful has been said at the Committee, but that the UTSU can explore screening options.



Ballis stated that the Directors are all subject to the UTSU's People and Culture Policies, but noted that Nami's suggestion is a good idea in the age of social media. She thanked Nami for raising the concern and apologized that a system was not already in place.

Rubaina asked if there could be an expected response time for individuals who email the UTSU.

Ballis stated that the UTSU receives a lot of emails in a day, and that it depends on the time of year. She stated that for urgent matters, 48 hours is an acceptable amount of time to wait before sending a follow-up email. She apologized for past and future delays in email responses.

Rubaina asked if clubs would be able to rent items such as tables for events in the Student Commons.

Ballis stated that the logistics behind study spaces will be worked out next semester, and flagged that the Student Commons will also have bookable student spaces.

Martin asked the VP Student Life what the process is to run or host an in-person event for a club.

Lin stated that it can be difficult with COVID-19 regulations, and that the process for hosting an in-person Clubs Fair was very lengthy. She stated that Campus Events does not have clear guidelines on how in-person events can move forward, and apologizes for the vague answer. She stated that she will reach out to Campus Events, and that clubs can email her for updates.

Martin asked whether clubs can reach out to Campus Events.

Lin stated that Campus Events looks at the COVID-19 regulations for in-person events, so clubs can reach out to them in regards to hosting in-person events.

Kamil stated that he was a member of a club and was wondering how to host events at the newly-renovated Student Campus, as they are not an officially registered club with the UTSU. He asked if it would be possible for non-recognized clubs to host events on campus.

Ballis stated that it would be possible to host events on campus, depending on where the club wanted to book their event. She stated that in general, unrecognized groups have to pay an extra fee to book spaces. She noted that the UTSU had not yet determined a policy in this regard for the Student Commons, but that outside organizations will be allowed to book spaces.

Cindy asked the VP Student Life if clubs are allowed to host on-campus fundraising events during COVID, and if so, if they are allowed to rent tables from the faculty buildings. She asked if there are regulations to stop clubs from hosting events off-campus but extremely close.

Lin stated that different faculties have their own procedures for renting tables, and that they would have to check with the specific faculty. She stated that the UTSU hopes to open the resource bank during the winter semester, from which clubs can rent tables, and recommended checking in with Campus Events in regards to COVID regulations. She stated that their website also has some information, and stated that she can also assist in locating information.



Elise stated that they were from the International Students' Advocacy Network, and had some communication with the UTSU previously. They asked if the UTSU is planning any advocacy for international students in the coming year.

Ballis hoped that the UTSU could set more meetings with ISAN in the future, and stated that a safe return to campus is a priority. She noted that they would like to see international tuition lowered, but that unfortunately the UTSU is extremely busy on account of the vacant VP Public & University Affairs position. She stated that the UTSU is open to suggestions on how best to support international students.

Kevin asked if a club who wished to rent a venue outside of campus on a weekly basis would have to apply for funding 30 days in advance of each meeting, or if they were allowed to rent off-campus spaces at all.

Lin stated that clubs can apply for an events grant if they will be hosting events or initiatives off-campus, but that meetings among club executives should occur on-campus.

Kevin asked what the distinction between an event and an initiative is, in terms of grants.

Lin stated that an event or initiative is opened to the general club membership and University community, whereas an executive team meeting is internal.

Ashiriya asked if it was acceptable for one student to represent multiple clubs for the purpose of AGM attendance. She noted that she is part of two very small clubs and was the only one available from each.

Lin stated that unfortunately one club needs to be represented by one unique individual, because different clubs have different missions and interests. She stated that this measure is an attempt to avoid biasing any votes. She encouraged anyone who is currently representing multiple clubs to email her in order to determine accommodations that can be made, as this is the first time the policy has been enforced and may be unfamiliar to club executives.

Yang stated that he is representing a sports team which generally moves inside for the winter. He stated that they usually book space in Hart House, but are unable to do so this year due to COVID regulations. He asked for support in ways to continue the club activity, and noted that it may be unreasonable to submit a grant application for each event as the club meets every Saturday.

Lin noted that initiatives are series-based, and that they can look into providing funding for a series of events. She encouraged Yang to reach out to her for a meeting, as his scenario was very specific. She encouraged other club executives with unique difficulties to email her as well.

Stella stated that she was also representing two clubs, and asked if it would be best to scramble to find another club member.

Lin stated that accommodations are available for this case. She stated that individuals representing two clubs should choose one for the moment, and that the second club should email her requesting accommodation.



Stella asked what the accommodations would look like.

Lin stated that clubs would be required to send a representative to the Special General Meeting instead. She noted that this may complicate funding, but that she is happy to explain it in detail if necessary.

Chen stated that she is representing the U of T Web Project club, which submitted their project application around two weeks ago. She asked when they can expect to hear back about their partnership status.

Lin stated that the processing timeline is available on the UTSU website under the Student Life section. She noted that the recent Clubs Fair has delayed the timeline slightly, but that they are trying their best to keep to the timeline.

Rubaina asked how new clubs can receive access to their funding.

Lin stated that new clubs follow the same process as returning clubs, and can get funding by applying for recognition. She stated that there is no distinction between new or returning clubs in the funding or recognition processes, and that recognized clubs will have access to UTSU funding. She noted that more information can be found on the UTSU website.

Prem asked what the mechanism and priorities for advocacy at the UTSU are, considering that the Vice-President Public & University Affairs position is vacant. They noted that it seems as though nobody is currently in charge of advocacy.

Ballis stated that the UTSU is trying their best to redistribute the work. She noted that she has taken on large portions of the portfolio, and that the VP Professional Faculties and VP Equity are also taking on sections of advocacy work. She stated that priorities include a safe return to campus (including accommodations for international students who are not yet on campus), the multi-tenant housing framework being considered by the City of Toronto, and sexual violence advocacy. She wished there was more work being done, but stated that unfortunately the UTSU is at capacity.

Prem stated that they are glad to hear steps are being taken. They stated that they are concerned that the individual who fills the position will be overwhelmed and be unable to balance priorities. They stated that one of the clubs they are in was told they would be having monthly meetings with the UTSU, but that this has not occurred, and they feel this is a result of the VP PUA position being vacant. They stated that it is one thing to tell groups they are being heard, and another to actually listen.

Ballis thanked Pranay for raising the issue. She stated that they are aware of the issue and hope to address it moving forward, and that her email is always open for issues such as this.

Melissa thanked the Executive for organizing the AGM. She stated that she was concerned about the requirement for clubs to attend the AGM at the risk of losing status and funding, considering that it is an extremely long meeting which takes place at a pressing time in the semester, and that many students have made plans to go home over the long weekend. She stated that it could be difficult for clubs to attend. She suggested making the AGM optional.



Ballis thanked Melissa for their point, and stated that the UTSU will be exploring the policy given the concerns raised that night.

The meeting entered recess at 7:00 PM and resumed at 7:10 PM.

Other Business

~~DISCUSSION ITEM~~
PRESENTED:

9. Adjournment

RESOLUTION

MOVED: NAGRA

SECONDED: D'AVERSA

BE IT RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourns at 7:14 PM.

Appendices Listed on Following Page