



Student Representative Assembly Meeting 24K
Sunday, November 17, 2024 at 5:00pm (EST)
Council Room, Gilmour Hall 111

Called to Order at 5:01pm

Call of the Roll

Present: Batusic, Black, Bolca, Cheung, Dodd, A. El-Kadi, S. El-Kadi, Forbes, Hu, Issa, Jeyakumar, Khan, Kim, Long, McKay, McLean, Modi, Naqvi, Newman, Olejarz, Pickering, Popovic, Qannam, Rahman, Ricafort, Sweeney, Wang, Yousafzai, Zeiler
Absent Excused: Abbott (Conference), Hobbs (Conference)
Absent: Arora, Begun
Late: Schaub
Others Present: Emily Yang (SASS Observer), Owen Quann (DRO), Sinéad Gono (CRO), Mark Chen (Solar Car), Dennis Cao (Solar Car), Maheera Choudhury (AVP (Finance)), V. Scott (Recording Secretary)
Chair: Abigail Samuels (MSU Speaker)

Territory Recognition

- The SRA would like to recognize today that we are situated on traditional Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe territories through the 'Dish with One Spoon Wampum Treaty'.

Adoption of Agenda

Moved by A. El-Kadi, **seconded** by Popovic that the Assembly adopt the agenda, as presented.

Amendment

Moved by Sweeney, **seconded** by Popovic to move Business Item #1 to be directly after Delegation from the Floor.

- Sweeney stated that it made sense to have Committee of the Whole right after the presentation.

Vote on Amendment

Passes Unanimously

Vote to Adopt

Moved by A. El-Kadi, **seconded** by Popovic that the Assembly adopt the agenda, as amended.

Passes Unanimously

Adoption of the Minutes

Moved by Long, **seconded** by Jeyakumar that the Assembly adopt the minutes from SRA meeting 24J – November 3, 2024, as circulated.

Passes Unanimously

Announcements from the Chair

- The Chair let the Assembly know that the consensus for SRA swag was a hoodie and stickers. They stated that they will pass this information on to the Underground, and let the Assembly know to expect everything in the new year. The Chair thanked Hu for organizing the headshots of the SRA members to go on the website.

Delegations from the Floor

Set Parameters

Moved by Sweeney, **seconded** by Popovic to set parameters for the Delegation from the Floor to be five minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for questions.

- Sweeney stated that this was the baseline set out for all Bylaw 9 groups. They added that Solar Car had been waiting the longest to present, and they were excited to see what Solar Car presented.

Vote on Parameters

Passes Unanimously

1. McMaster Solar Car – Dennis Cao and Mark Chen presented

- McMaster Solar Car summarized their presentation.

Questions

- Sweeney stated that Solar Car put on a great presentation and asked if there was anything else that they would like to review in further detail due to timing. Chen responded that they were good to answer any questions.
- Pickering stated that the presentation mentioned having a goal of 15 sponsorships. They asked how this was working. Chen responded that they had to rework the sponsorship package, as before it was about selling the dream of having a car. They added that the team and the package were more attractive now with the car.
- S. El-Kadi asked how Solar Car would explain to Business students why it would be good to join them. Chen responded that they had Finance and Outreach teams and added that Outreach was responsible for sponsorships, while Finance was responsible for reimbursement. Chen added that the information compiled in the presentation was done by themselves and Finance and explained that it wasn't just about money.
- S. El-Kadi asked if Solar Car was looking to add anyone to the Finance team, as they wanted to advertise opportunities to business students. Chen responded that they were. They explained that they had hired 7-8 students from DSB, and would be grateful if it could be advertised.
- Batusic asked which races Solar Car would be going to over the 2025 school year. Chen responded that they will be participating in the 2025 Sun Grand Prix, which is a bi-yearly American Solar Car challenge. They added that there was a race being hosted in Australia, but they could not afford to go.
- Forbes asked what the retention rate was year over year and what type of soft skills were developed as being a part of the project. Chen responded that they felt that developed leadership skills, and that working through they learned about leadership and management. Chen added that last year, only four out of 100 volunteers left the team due to graduating, and that members found the team to be fulfilling.

Business

1. Committee of the Whole - Solar Car

Moved by Sweeney, **seconded** by Black that the Assembly move into Committee of the Whole to discuss the Solar Car presentation.

Passes Unanimously

Moved by Sweeney, **seconded** by A. El-Kadi that the Assembly move out of Committee of the Whole and to Rise and Report.

Passes Unanimously

Rise and Report

- Sweeney reported that there weren't any concerns about the upcoming fiscal year.

Report Period

1. Science Caucus – report circulated

- Newman summarized the report.

2. Social Sciences Caucus – report circulated

- Modi summarized the report.

Questions

- Sweeney offered their support, if help was needed with the card.

3. Municipal Affairs Committee – report circulated

- McLean summarized the report.

4. University Affairs Committee – report attached

- McLean summarized the report.

5. Executive Board – report circulated

- A. El-Kadi summarized the report.

6. Vice-President (Administration) – A. El-Kadi presented

- A. El-Kadi summarized the report.

Questions

- Sweeney clarified that the plan was to shift to March before the SRA General Election to drive engagement.
- Batusic asked how much progress had been made on the Interfaith Council policy.
- A. El-Kadi responded that there had not been a lot of progress made and that they and Andy, from the

Spiritual Care and Learning Centre, were looking to schedule something for December.

7. OUSA Fall General Assembly – report circulated

- Popovic summarized the report.

Questions

- Sweeney stated that the delegates were fantastic and did a phenomenal job.
- McLean asked what the biggest concerns were going into the Financial Aid paper.
- Khan responded that there were misconceptions in the paper, and the group had to clear them up. They added that there was also a lot of confusion about OSAP and uncertainty around academic restrictions as well.
- Sweeney added that the other papers were either misinterpreted or not as clear as they should have been. They stated that the delegates wanted to ensure that policies that could harm students weren't passed, and therefore a lot of re-writes were done.

8. MSU Fall Policy Conference – report circulated

- Stephanie Henry summarized the report.

9. CASA Policy & Strategy Conference – report circulated

- Popovic summarized the report.

10. Elections Department – October SRA By-Elections – Sinead Gono and Owen Quann presented

- Gono summarized the report.

Questions

- Sweeney stated that they saw the notes about the different academic divisions and percentages gained, and hoped that the MSU would get up to seven percent across the board. Sweeney asked what the Elections Department needed to help promote the elections.
- Gono responded that most students did not fully know what the SRA did, and the more the SRA engaged, the more students would be aware.
- Quann added that they would appreciate if everyone engaged with social media, shared the promotions that Elections put out, and spoke about it with their constituents.
- The Speaker declined the Chair.
- The Deputy Speaker assumed the Chair.

Business

2. Close MSU Seats on Awards Committees

Moved by Long, **seconded** by Popovic that the Assembly close nominations for MSU member seats to the following Award Selection Committees:

- Honour M (1)
- MSU Merit Scholarship (1)
- J. Lynn Watson (1)
- MSU Spirit (1)
- Rudy Heinzl (1)

- The Speaker resumed the Chair.

Nominations

- Stephanie Henry nominated themselves for Honour M.
- Ali Ahmed nominated themselves for Honour M.
- Ali Ahmed nominated themselves for MSU Merit Scholarship.
- Ali Ahmed nominated themselves for J. Lynn Watson.
- Ali Ahmed nominated themselves for MSU Spirit.
- Ali Ahmed nominated themselves for Rudy Heinzl.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

- Ali Ahmed won the MSU seats on the following award selection committees by acclamation: MSU Merit Scholarship, J. Lynn Watson, MSU Spirit, Rudy Heinzl.

Honour M Award Selection Committee Election

Nominations

- Ali Ahmed
- Stephanie Henry

Set Parameters

Moved by A. El-Kadi, **seconded** by Popovic to set parameters for the Honour M Awards Selection Committee election to be one minute for opening statements, two minutes for questions, and one minute for closing statements.

Passes Unanimously

- The Candidates spoke with the time allotted.
- The Assembly voted by secret ballot.

Candidate	Vote
Ahmed	2
Henry	28
Spoiled	0
Abstained	0

- Stephanie Henry won the MSU seat on the Honour M Award Selection Committee.

3. Referendum – Engineers without Borders

Moved by Sweeney, **seconded** by Popovic that the Assembly send the Engineers Without Borders annual fee of \$0.44 to referendum, to coincide with the 2024/25 MSU Presidential Election.

- Sweeney reviewed the memo with the Assembly. They stated that they were opening the discussion as a continuation from the last SRA meeting, stating that it was ultimately up to the students to decide on the issue.
- Popovic stated that by providing an opportunity for others to speak, they were highlighting the importance of holding Engineers Without Borders (EWB) accountable, particularly regarding their

mandate, transparency, and financial responsibility. Some members felt that these areas had been neglected.

- Khan gave context for those not present. They mentioned meeting with EWB, where concerns were raised about improper financial statements, lack of upkeep from previous years, and mishandling of credit cards. They stated that EWB had been brought to referendum a couple of times in the past, but it was decided that bringing it to referendum again was in the best interest of the students. Khan invited further discussion on the matter.
- Popovic clarified that the vote at this meeting was to send the issue to referendum.
- Cheung asked about the space available in the referendum to explain the reasons behind bringing the issue forward and the financial details. Cheung ceded their time to Sweeney.
- Sweeney responded that the memo was written to publicly address these issues. The document listed five key problems, and stated that any SRA member could set up a campaign side if they wished.
- Hu stated that the Finance Committee had extensively reviewed EWB's financial situation, including email communications and recommendations. They added that despite providing several suggestions in the past two years, EWB had ignored them. Hu explained that the Finance Committee felt it was time for change and believed there should be consequences for the mishandling of funds.
- Long brought up the idea of potentially reducing the fee, but noted that the current amount was so small that it made more sense to send the question to stop funding EWB altogether to referendum.
- Sweeney asked the Elections Department if there was anything else needed to ensure that all necessary bylaw parameters had been addressed before a vote was taken on the matter. Sweeney ceded their time to the Elections Department.
- Gono stated that they could not provide feedback at this time.
- McLean asked Khan about the previous referenda, specifically why the initiative had failed in the past. McLean ceded their time to Khan.
- Khan explained that the primary issue was voter turnout. In past referenda, there had been a lack of campaigning, which led to poor voter engagement. They stated that there wasn't a real team behind the initiative, which contributed to its failure.
- Batusic asked Sweeney about the \$12,500 budget that EWB had previously allocated for an internship, which was later canceled. They inquired where the money had gone. Batusic ceded their time to Sweeney.
- Sweeney stated that they were unaware of the specifics but mentioned that EWB had presented ideas for how to proceed with the remaining funds.
- McKay stated that during consultations with EWB, it had become clear that they didn't have a concrete plan for how to spend the allocated \$12,000. They expressed concerns about the difficulty of spending such a large sum in one year. This, coupled with the lack of a solid plan for next year, was part of the reason for bringing the issue to referendum.
- Olejarz stated that Finance Committee pushed EWB to consider alternative options to being a Bylaw 9 group, suggesting that EWB might be better suited as a regular club.
- McLean asked Sweeney if there were any plans to increase voter turnout for the referendum, given the potential for the same results as in the past. McLean ceded their time to Sweeney.
- Sweeney responded that there were ideas to improve voter turnout, and they were confident that if the referendum was held during the Presidential elections, it would likely achieve 18-20% turnout. Sweeney emphasized the importance of allowing students to make the final decision. They encouraged any SRA members who felt strongly about the issue to run a campaign side during the Presidential elections.

Vote on Motion

Moved by Sweeney, **seconded** by Popovic that the Assembly send the Engineers Without Borders annual fee of \$0.44 to referendum, to coincide with the 2024/25 MSU Presidential Election.

Passes Unanimously

Moved by Sweeney, **seconded** by A. El-Kadi to recess for five minutes.

- Sweeney explained that it was important for the Assembly to read over the next two motions, and that if anyone had questions, to ask them during recess.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

Recessed at 6:38pm

Called to Order at 6:44pm

Call of the Roll

Present: Batusic, Black, Bolca, Cheung, Dodd, A. El-Kadi, S. El-Kadi, Forbes, Hu, Issa, Jeyakumar, Khan, Kim, Long, McKay, McLean, Modi, Naqvi, Newman, Pickering, Popovic, Qannam, Rahman, Ricafort, Schaub, Sweeney, Wang, Yousafzai, Zeiler

Absent Excused: Abbott (Conference), Hobbs (Conference)

Absent: Arora, Begun

Late: Olejarz

Others Present: Emily Yang (SASS Observer), Owen Quann (DRO), Sinéad Gono (CRO), Maheera Choudhury (AVP (Finance)), V. Scott (Recording Secretary)

Chair: Abigail Samuels (MSU Speaker)

4. Referendum – Food Accessibility Initiative

Moved by Popovic, **seconded** by Zeiler that the Assembly call a referendum to coincide with the 2024-2025 MSU Presidential Election, for the Food Accessibility Initiative, to increase the MSU organizational fee by \$6.50 per student as outlined in the memo circulated.

- Popovic reviewed the memo with the Assembly.
- Khan asked about the number of soup portions to be provided, and the frequency of the service. They also requested more background on the student population that the program aimed to support. Khan ceded their time to Popovic.
- Popovic clarified that the program would provide 90,000 portions annually, served 3-4 times per week. The soup would likely serve between 700-1,200 portions daily, primarily during lunch hours, from 12:00 pm until the soup runs out. The program was modeled after the soup service at Dalhousie University, where lines formed every day due to food insecurity.
- S. El-Kadi inquired about the need for a full-time staff position and the associated costs. They ceded their time to Popovic.
- Popovic clarified that the positions would be for two part-time students, not full-time staff. They originally planned to use the existing budget, but with drops in student enrollment, financial flexibility had been reduced for this year.
- Forbes expressed support for the program but was concerned about how the word would be spread to students and whether the program would reach enough people. Forbes ceded their time to Popovic.

- Popovic explained that the communications team would handle outreach if the referendum passed. They also mentioned the possibility of offering service at different locations, either TwelvEighty or the Hub, to reach more students.
- Newman was worried that students facing food insecurity might not be able to access the program if there were issues with availability. Newman ceded the rest of their time to Popovic.
- Popovic reassured the Assembly that the goal was to make the program accessible to as many students as possible and that communication efforts would address potential barriers.
- Batusic asked about eligibility, specifically whether only undergraduates could access the soup program. They wondered if student cards would be used for verification. They ceded the rest of their time to Popovic.
- Popovic responded that McMaster's Parking Services now deals with student cards, and would help handle the student card scanning system, which was expected to be fully operational by the start of the next school year. The program would rely on student card verification to ensure eligibility.
- Hu asked about the frequency of soup service and whether it would be available every day or on an alternating schedule. They ceded the rest of their time to Popovic.
- Popovic explained that there would be a rotation, with different soups available most days. The costs for the program would be similar to the current projections, with no expected variance.
- Zeiler asked whether the \$6.50 fee was the amount charged to students for the soup program. They ceded the rest of their time to Popovic.
- Popovic clarified that the \$6.50 fee would be included in the MSU organization fee, a one-time upfront payment, which would cover unlimited access to the soup program for the year.
- Rahman asked if there would be an opt-out option for the fee. They ceded the rest of their time to Popovic.
- Popovic confirmed that there would not be an opt-out option, as was common for most MSU fees. They emphasized that the program was designed to benefit as many students as possible, even if not everyone would use it.
- Sweeney agreed with the idea of consolidating fees into the MSU organization fee, noting that without it, the program would not be sustainable. They stated that the question was whether the \$6.50 fee would be enough to provide food security for students. They clarified that students cannot opt out of the HSR bus pass, but they can opt out of the bike share, OPIRG, and health and dental plans.

Vote on Motion

Moved by Popovic, **seconded** by Zeiler that the Assembly call a referendum to coincide with the 2024-2025 MSU Presidential Election, for the Food Accessibility Initiative, to increase the MSU organizational fee by \$6.50 per student as outlined in the memo circulated.

Passes Unanimously

5. Referendum – Homecoming

Moved by Popovic, **seconded** by S. El-Kadi that the Assembly call a referendum coinciding with the 2024-2025 MSU Presidential Election, for the proposed Homecoming Fee to increase the MSU organizational fee by \$20.00 per student, as outlined in the memo circulated.

- Popovic reviewed the memo with the Assembly.
- S. El-Kadi asked about the student body's readiness to campaign for the proposed initiative and whether any specific individuals were in mind for leading this. They ceded the rest of their time to Popovic.
- Popovic mentioned that several students had approached them expressing interest in supporting the campaign.

- Issa raised concerns about the phrasing of the ballot, particularly regarding how it referred to funding for Homecoming and other events like "Light Up the Night." They suggested that the ballot clarify that the additional \$20 fee would fund multiple events, not just Homecoming. They ceded their time to the Elections Department.
- Gono explained that the Elections Committee was responsible for phrasing the question, so they would look into it.
- Issa asked how much of student tuition was already allocated to special events, expressing concern about a lack of transparency regarding student spending. Issa ceded the rest of their time to Popovic.
- Popovic explained that approximately \$43,000 was currently allocated to student events, but that reallocating funds between events has become necessary. They emphasized that the current budget was not sustainable, and the additional fee would help maintain support for large-scale events.
- Batusic asked how the organization would ensure that the funds allocated would actually go toward major MSU events and not be misused. They ceded the rest of their time to Popovic.
- Popovic reassured that any funds from the referendum would be dedicated to large-scale events, as specified in the referendum question. They noted that the organization had not yet deviated from this approach, and funds would be spent according to the voters' decision.
- McLean wanted clarification on the numbers for large-scale events. They explained that Homecoming had a capacity of 6,000 tickets, though liquor laws had previously limited the capacity due to Hospitality Services selling drinks inside the venue. McLean ceded the rest of their time to Popovic.
- Popovic stated that the approach would remain consistent with previous years, assuming the same capacity and potentially more depending on future circumstances. They also noted that revenues from ticket sales could change, but the goal was to sustain large-scale events like Homecoming and Light Up the Night.
- McKay expressed concern about the increasing number of international students and the resulting budget cuts. They questioned whether the \$20 fee for events like Homecoming was the best use of student funds and whether the money could be used in other ways that might benefit the broader student body. They ceded the rest of their time to Popovic.
- Popovic explained that the proposed funding would not only support events but also stabilize the MSU's financial position. They emphasized the importance of student engagement, which was fostered through large-scale events. This engagement would lead to increased usage of student services, ultimately benefiting the broader student body. Without such events, the MSU risked becoming irrelevant, and budget cuts could affect other services.
- Zeiler stated that they performed a quick calculation, noting that, assuming no students opt out of the fee, the total amount collected would exceed \$500,000. They asked about the budget for Homecoming without ticket sales and whether the current approach would increase the scale or frequency of events. Zeiler ceded the rest of their time to Popovic.
- Popovic clarified that the \$500,000 budget for Homecoming would remain the same as in previous years, with the new fee potentially increasing revenue. This would help sustain large-scale events and also support new initiatives such as the Winter Marketplace.

Vote on Motion

Moved by Popovic, **seconded** by S. El-Kadi that the Assembly call a referendum coinciding with the 2024-2025 MSU Presidential Election, for the proposed Homecoming Fee to increase the MSU organizational fee by \$20.00 per student, as outlined in the memo circulated.

In Favour: 29 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 1
Abstained: Sweeney
Motion Passes

Information Period

- No information was given.

Question Period

- No questions were asked.

Committee Business

1. Proposed Changes to Operating Policy – Room Bookings

Moved by A. El-Kadi that the Assembly approve the proposed changes to **Operating Policy – Room Bookings**, as circulated and attached.

- El-Kadi reviewed the memo with the Assembly.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

Time of Next Meeting

**Sunday, December 1, 2024
5:00pm EST
Council Room, Gilmour Hall 111**

Call of the Roll

Present: Batusic, Black, Bolca, Cheung, Dodd, A. El-Kadi, S. El-Kadi, Forbes, Hu, Issa, Jeyakumar, Khan, Kim, Long, McKay, McLean, Modi, Naqvi, Newman, Olejarz, Pickering, Popovic, Qannam, Rahman, Ricafort, Schaub, Sweeney, Wang, Yousafzai, Zeiler
Absent Excused: Abbott (Conference), Hobbs (Conference)
Absent: Arora, Begun
Late:
Others Present: V. Scott (Recording Secretary)
Chair: Abigail Samuels (MSU Speaker)

Adjournment

Moved by Rahman, **seconded** by Khan that the meeting be adjourned.

Passes Unanimously

Adjourned at 7:27pm

/vs