

SAF Annual General Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 27th, 2018

Meeting Time: 17h00 - 20h00

Meeting Chair: Devon McKellar

SAF Overview Presentation: Mark Underwood

Metrics Presentation: Olivia Champagne

Budget Presentation: Ariel Dabora

Online Application Demo: Justine Provost

Meeting Minute Taker: Jordan Beaulieu

1. Welcome and call to order

- Meeting called to order at 18h00, following a project fair by SAF funded initiatives.
- Land recognition and welcoming statements given.
- Review of tonight's voting procedure.

2. Approval of agenda

- Review of 2017 AGM minutes.

Motion for the assembly to approve the agenda as presented.

- Moved by: Marcus
- Seconded by: (Name missing)
- *Motion passed*

3. Approval of the previous AGM minutes

- Review of September 20th 2017 AGM minutes.

Motion to approve the minutes of the 2017 Annual General Meeting.

- Moved by: Julia
- Seconded by: Antonious
- *Motion passed*

4. Annual overview of the Sustainability Action Fund

About the Sustainability Action Fund:

- SAF is a Concordia University fee-levy granting organization for students who want to develop projects in sustainable infrastructure, community-building, and education around social and environmental sustainability issues. SAF is financed by a 25-cent per-credit undergraduate student fee levy, and a \$1.25 per term graduate student fee

levy. SAF funded projects fall under a wide variety of themes including community, education, energy, resources & technology, food, health & wellbeing, social justice, and waste.

- For OVER TEN YEARS! SAF has been giving approximately \$100,000 per year to projects on campus.

A Look Back on 2017-2018:

- The Curriculum Project: with the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, over a number of years an audit took place looking at sustainability in the department's curriculum.
- Thus the **Sustainability Research Awards**: in partnership with the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, SAF has begun awarding scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students for their research in sustainability, specifically research based in action. All of this year's recipients are listed on the SAF website.
- Most award recipients were from Arts and Sciences this year; SAF is trying to get more faculties to help with funding the awards so more awards may be given out each year.
- The awards are given out in March, which is important to keep in mind as you move forward with your class work for the next two semesters.
- Recipients sorted by theme include lots of projects focused on food systems, also waste. Overall most sustainability themes addressed by SAF were addressed by award recipients.
- **Eric St-Pierre Sustainability Student Project Fund**: funding created by an alumni in partnership with SAF for 3 projects per year focused on reducing green house gas emissions.
- NOVA Plastics, Vermicycle, Photovoltaic Mapping recipients of the Eric St-Pierre last year.
- And **Hi Mark!** New SAF's new beloved CEO, who took over for previous beloved CEO Nadra Wagdy in June 2018.

5. Project metrics

- 43 projects funded in the 2017-18 fiscal year.
- Average amount funded per project is \$2,500.
- Average amount of student engaged per project is 100 students (average cost to engage one student is \$25).
- Annual funding gap is 50% this year (funds request versus funds allocated)
- Most common project themes are Social Justice, followed by Community, then Energy, Resources & Technology.
- On average all themes received about the same amount of funding.
- Lots of Social Justice themed projects focus on gender and sexuality (about 15% of all projects funded last year were on this theme).
- Education Research and Social Justice themed projects have skyrocketed this year.
- Democratization of Knowledge themed projects have picked up this year too.

- About 161 events were held on campus this year as part of SAF funded projects, with approximately 30,000 attendees total, with an average attendance of 187 per on-campus event, and an average of 17 organizers per event.
- 32 events were held off-campus, with 5000 total attendees, an average of 155 attendees per off-campus event, and usually more organizers than on-campus events.
- Collaborative faculty projects received about \$1,000 more on average.
- Fine Arts and Arts and Sciences tend to collaborate with each other, while Engineering and JMSB tend to collaborate more often.
- Artist metrics: 194 artists were empowered through SAF resources, with \$170 on average invested in each artist, 76% of artists were POC or from the LGBTQ+ community.

6. Constitution amendments

Board of Directors Quorum

- **Article 3, section 3:** “Directors may set the quorum for meetings of the Board of Directors by resolution, but unless and until it is thus decided otherwise, Quorum is 7 directors for a meeting for any decisions to be legitimate.”
- **Change to:** “Quorum for a meeting of the Board is a simple majority of Directors in order for any decisions to be legitimate.”
- **Rationale:**
 - Quorum is set by membership, therefore only the membership should be able to modify quorum.
 - Using a simple majority allows for flexibility if Directors resign.
 - Clarity and ease of reading.
- The original proposed change read “Quorum for a meeting of the Board is 50% +1 of Directors in order for any decisions to be legitimate” but this was changed to “a simple majority” at the recommendation of the members.

Motion to approve the amendments to the constitution.

- Moved by: Dominic
- Seconded by: Thomas
- *Motion passed; 1 abstention*

7. Presentation and ratification of new Board of Directors

- Presentation of CSU Exec, CSU Council, CASA, FASA, and SC representatives.

Motion to ratify the SAF Board of Directors 2018-19 appointments as presented.

- Moved by: Julia
- Seconded by: Calvin
- *Motion passed; Mackenzie abstains*

- Presentation of **Niall Heath, Student-at-Large Candidate**
- JMSB student with a background in architecture, enthusiastic about sustainability.

Motion to appoint Niall to the SAF BoD.

- Moved by: Mackenzie
- Seconded by: Julia
- *Motion passed*

- Presentation of **Calvin Clarke, Student-at-Large Candidate**
- Major in philosophy, interested in the environmental sector/environmental ethics, founded a solidarity cooperative Cafe.

Motion to appoint Calvin to the SAF BoD.

- Moved by: Antonious
- Seconded by: Julia
- *Motion passed*

- Presentation of **Emma Campbell, ASFA Candidate**
- Student in Human Environment, so sorry I didn't catch the rest of your bio!

Motion to appoint Emma to the SAF BoD.

- Moved by: Rowan
- Seconded by: Antonious
- *Motion passed*

- Presentation of **Ashvin Ramasamay, Community Member Candidate**
- Working with an NGO focused on sustainability, making metrics and lots of other good stuff. Former Concordia student, admires student initiatives and wants to be involved.

Motion to appoint Ashvin to the SAF BoD.

- Moved by: Dominic
- Seconded by: Raphael
- *Motion passed*

- Presentation of **Arrien Weeks, Graduate Student Association Candidate**
- Long-time advocate for sustainability at Concordia, long-time member of Sustainable Concordia, one of the co-founders of CUCCR, doing a Masters in Art Education.

Motion to appoint Arrien to the SAF BoD.

- Moved by: Julia
- Seconded by: Antonious
- *Motion passed*

- Presentation of **Raphael Young, Engineering & Computer Science Candidate**
- Has worked on projects funded by SAF in the past, started an electric formula one team, interested in the integration of sustainability with everyday technologies and practices.

Motion to appoint Raphael to the SAF BoD.

- Moved by: Mackenzie
- Seconded by: Emma
- *Motion passed*

Representing	Representative
Concordia Student Union Executive	Akira de Carlos
Concordia Student Union Councilor	TBC
Arts & Science Federation of Association	Emma Campbell
Commerce and Administration Students' Association	Mackenzie Murray
Fine Arts Student Alliance	Mariana Moreno Caro
Graduate Student Association	Arrien Weeks
Engineering and Computer Science Association	Raphael Young
Sustainable Concordia	Vanessa Macri
Concordia Community	Ashvin Ramasamay
Student-at-Large	Calvin Clake
Student-at-Large	Niall Heath

8. Presentation of finances

About the SAF's finances:

- **The cycle of financial controls:** financial officer (Ariel), independent auditor, audit committee, board of directors, users of financial statements.
- The independent auditor is a third party company (Ron Amstutz Inc) hired to go over SAF's numbers.
- BoD Audit committee goes over the finances.
- Presentations are given to the BoD every quarter about budgeting and variances.
- Financial information is also all available online for all members (any student paying fees) to see, with added commentary to try to make them more readable / understandable.

- **Key internal controls:**
- Dual signing authority on all disbursements.
- Cheque Requisition forms to pay honorariums to pay companies directly on behalf of projects.
- Payroll timesheet (all employees keep detailed timesheets)
- Spot audits throughout the year, budgets to actual, and year-end audits also created.
- Frequently changing passwords for online security and locking cabinets with sensitive documents.

Highlights of 2017-2018:

- Transitioned to QuickBooks online and Cloud Reporting to save time and generate reports quickly and accurately, also used as a CRM.
- ~\$110k allocated to 40+ projects (record number).
- Entered into two new long-term (3 year) partnerships with university faculties.
- ~\$1k interest income generated through Desjardins saving account, trying to be as sustainable as possible by tapping all available resources.
- Fiscal year June 1st to May 31st (different than university's fiscal year which ends in April).
- SAF's graduate fee levy revenue increased due to more graduate enrolment.
- Twice as many opt-outs as expected.
- ~4k income collected from cheques issued to projects that were never cashed (going a few years back).
- Collected \$5,000 from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences for the research awards.
- Gave out \$107,000 to projects (over 50% of total revenue).
- Saved about \$14,000 on payroll, mainly due to transitioning CEOs in March 2018.
- Operating and Marketing/IT also under budget.
- \$30,000 surplus this year, to be build into reserve fund.

Roll Over as of May 31, 2018:

- Roll-Over balance at year-end May 31st, 2018 = ~99K
- Not good for fee levy groups to run a big surplus, as students won't benefit from their fees while at the university.
- SAF has run a deficit for the last three years to try to balance the surplus from previous years.
- \$35-\$40k of reserve is the best amount to keep as it's enough for SAF to operate on for one full semester.
- BoD this year will have to look at a longterm plan (1-2 year transition) and find best way to invest these surplus funds (to decrease the reserve to a smaller amount).

Presentation of the operating budget for this year, June 1st 2018 to May 31st 2019:

- The full operating budget as presented may be viewed online on SAF's website at <http://www.safconcordia.ca> (About - Reports - Budgets).

- ~\$26k Summer, ~\$102k Fall, ~\$93k Winter, plus partnerships, total projected revenues is \$221,460.
- 55% of money collected is planned to be invested directly into sustainability projects.
- Total payroll is \$81,02. Other operational expenses include food for meetings, professional fees for year-end audit, phone, postage, website, professional development for SAF employees (fund to invest in training related to their careers at SAF), health and wellbeing fund for employees to keep active and well.
- Running very close to breakeven this year, in light of the rollover cushion, though not breaking into that yet.
- Audit firm, Ron Amstutz Inc, does hundreds of audits for non-profits in Montreal, is completely independent of SAF.

Questions from the members:

Q: How does the CEO absence effect the payroll outcome?

A: Between mid-March and May 2018 SAF had three employees instead of four.

Q: Roll-over surplus from last year won't be used in this year's budget?

A: No, because SAF is still determining the best way to allocate the surplus.

Motion to ratify the operating budget for June 1st 2018, to May 31st 2019.

- Moved by: Anna
- Seconded by: Mackenzie
- *Motion passed*

Motion to appointment the audit firm, Ron Amstutz Inc.

- Moved by: Emma
- Seconded by: Dominic
- *Motion passed*

9. New Online Application Form Demo

- Justine has done some design and outreach for the future~
- New application portal, excellent demo
- Trying to simplify the application process, make it more efficient, automate parts of the process.
- First step is the drafting phase, using a Word Doc for this drafting stage.
- Project Coordinator can give vital feedback during the drafting process, which the new application emphasizes.
- Once the project has drafted their application and spoken with Olivia they're ready to prepare their online submission.
- Online application form can be SAVED and returned to at anytime as long as the same computer and browser are used.

- Documents section allows the option to upload files.
- Online application form budgeting section includes a table that works exactly like Excel.
- Way to go Justine! After four great years she will be leaving the SAF in November to do new and exciting things. Thank you Justine!

Questions from the members:

Q: Does it say to get in touch with staff on the information page?

A: Yes, it's in the instructions as Step 2.

Q: Is there a way of making a calendar to schedule appointments with coordinators online?

A: No but will look into that!

10. Closing remarks and adjournment

- Plant giveaway!

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

- Everyone agrees wholeheartedly
- *Motion passed*

Meeting adjourned at 19h25