

SAF Board of Directors Minutes

Wednesday, March 6th, 2019

Meeting Time: 17:00–19:00

Meeting Facilitator: Devon McKellar

Meeting Minute Taker: Jordan Beaulieu

Members in attendance:

Mark Underwood (SAF)
Oliva Champagne (SAF)
Rebecca Black (SAF)
Ariel Dabora (SAF)
Marlene Iradukunda (CSU Council)
Raphael Yeung (ECA)
Tara McGowan-Ross (SC)
Emma Campbell (ASFA)
Calvin Clarke (Student-at-Large)
Ashvin Ramasamay (CU Community)
Akira De Carlos (CSU Exec)
Arrien Weeks (GSA)

Members absent:

Niall Heath (Student-at-Large)
Mackenzie Murray (CASA)
Mariana Moreno Caro (FASA)

1. Call to order and territorial acknowledgement

2. Review & approval of previous meeting minutes

Motion to approve the Jan. 25 meeting minutes:

- Moved by: Raph
- Seconded by: Ashvin
- *Motion passed*

3. Review & adoption of agenda

- Moving project funding to the top of the agenda

Motion to adopt the agenda:

- Moved by: Tara
- Seconded by: Arrien
- *Motion passed*

4. Project funding allocations (8)

\$33,243 remaining in allocations budget after SPC allocations

Project 1: Adam & Eve

- Requesting \$300 or \$500 (unclear)
- Film project, funding is for film festival fees
- Project not specific to sustainability overall; storyline doesn't relate to sustainability even though the filmmaker is interested in sustainable practices
- SPC voted to deny funding

Project 2: Education Department

- Requesting \$500
- Edu Dept symposium
- SPC voted to deny funding
- Application was unclear; confusing budget, unclear how much of the event is sustainable
- Receiving funding from many other contributors, SAF funding not vital

Project 3: SAE

- Requesting \$1,200
- SAE has an electric car to drive around on the roads but the batteries are dead (and they want to replace them)
- SPC recommended project reapply in June when there is more budget to go around and a project of this nature is more likely to receive funding

Project 4: CASA

- Requesting \$1,500
- CASA hosting a fashion show to raise funds for the Montreal Children's Hospital
- SPC recommends project reappplies with more details; budget was unclear (two separate budget files)
- A lot of money going to decorations, printing, contingency to pay sponsors for damaged clothing (board would like more details on how these are sustainable practices)
- SAF could make an announcement at the event
- Clarification from Olivia: Printing (\$1,200) is for brochures printed at Rubiks though they'll also advertise online (note: Rubiks is actually using less recycled content in their paper now, not very sustainable anymore!)
- Board wondering who their fashion sponsors are?
- In general, how connected are sustainability and philanthropy?
- Good attendance, big Concordia turnout
- Sponsors listed on website aren't sustainable companies (Ardene fast fashion, NAYA water)

Motion to deny funding to CASA Fashion Show:

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

Project 5: Ineffable

- Requesting \$2,039
- Original play exploring blackness and queerness to be shown at Revolution They Wrote festival
- Funding is for honorariums for participants and food/catering
- How many students will be impacted?
- SPC recommends full funding
- Q: How many collaborators will be paid minimum wage equivalent? A: Probably about 3, they likely used the minimum wage to calculate the honorarium
- Should the honorariums be higher?
- Revision request is at their disposal if they'd like to pay higher honorariums, board would be happy to receive the request
- Free tickets could be made available for the board if anyone would like one
- Tara could review the play if project is interested

Motion to allocate full funding of \$2,039 to Ineffable, with a recommendation to remind them about revision requests:

- Moved by: Arrien
- Seconded by: Tara
- *Motion passed*

Project 6: Feminist Policy Panel

- Requesting \$2,500
- Conference put on by students about feminist policy in business
- Requesting SAF cover a lot of the budget given that the project is course based (a class project); they shouldn't have to pay for space or equipment, these can be accessed for free on campus
- Paying for honorariums for speakers, panellists
- Shouldn't pay a Concordia prof to moderate or a public figure (probably wouldn't accept payment anyway)
- SPC recommends funding of \$800 in light of those holes in their budget
- They already have alcohol permits
- A lot of things in their budget can be covered by on-campus services
- A more detailed set of objectives would be good info to have from them
- Q: Wondering what the \$800 recommendation is looking to cover? A: Food, they asked \$900 for food and drinks

- No mention of the Dish Project or another sustainable dish-ware strategy, however any event on campus funded by SAF does have to get sustainable event certification which includes the Dish Project
- Application is still messy even after Olivia’s clarifications
- Q: Why fund the Digital Democracy panel and not this one? A: Digital Democracy provided a better and more focused big-picture for their project and its connection to social sustainability

Motion to deny funding to Feminist Policy Panel:

- Moved by: Ashvin
- Seconded by: Calvin
- *Motion passed*, Akira, Raph, Tara abstain

Project 7: CEED

- Requesting \$1,850
- Project called the Colours of Activism; discussion on how to organize grass-roots movements
- All the speakers have changed from their original application—they’ve booked two activists from Uganda, co-founder of Sayaspora, others; all speakers are organizers from Africa or the diaspora.
- SPC likes the project but thinks the ask is too high given that CEED has their own budget to work with too; SPC recommends \$800
- Applied to lots of places for funding, not relying wholly on SAF

Motion to allocate partial funding of \$800 to CEED:

- Moved by: Tara
- Seconded by: Ashvin
- *Motion passed*, Emma abstains

Project 8: UZURI Gala

- Requesting \$6,000
- Fashion show / theatre event to showcase Afro-inspired clothing and theatrical stage talent
- SPC likes the concept but original application was very weak; included some sketchy details like asking \$1,000 for decorations, having no venue confirmed
- Asking for \$6,000 now instead of \$5,100 as before
- Redid the “bigger picture” and budget sections of the application per Olivia’s request
- SAF funding to cover venue rental
- Venue rental package deal exceeds \$8,000, for Plaza Centre-ville (not a sustainable venue)
- No venue on campus could accommodate this event
- Project making revenue from drink sales (not mentioned in the updated application)
- Applied for a sponsorship from TD Bank
- Q: Could we stipulate that they don’t accept funding from TD? A: No

- Decorations budget will be used to decorate tables with reusable tablecloths and floral centrepieces, as well as printing show programs
- Asking \$1,500 in the dancer/performer section, maybe this could be funded as an alternative to decorations or venue
- Students are paying \$40 to get into the event and the after party?
- Is this project contributing a culture of sustainability on campus?
- Seems like the event could be more holistically sustainable they chose a less fancy venue, less fancy decorations, made it more affordable for students etc., would probably do a more effective job of creating a community network if it was accessible to more students
- \$1,700 for artists and model preparation? To support students and the arts even though the board disagrees with other aspects/choices of the project

Motion to allocate partial funding of \$1,700 for performs and facilitators to UZURI Gala, with the stipulation to offer recommendations to the project:

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

\$28,704 left in allocations budget for next month

5. SAF updates

CEO / Project Coordinator

(1) SEIZE Letter of Support

- Funded SEIZE in the summer, \$5k for their workshops series Solidarity Economy
- Lots of student interest in this; campaigning for a fee-levy, lots of drama around that process so far, CSU Council not really following procedure correctly. Should SAF sign the letter encouraging CSU Council to send the SEIZE fee levy question to referendum? Any amendments or suggestions?
- In the near future clarification is needed because students by and large don't understand the SEIZE / SSAELC situation (not necessarily by SAF but certainly in general)

Motion to approve the signing of the SEIZE Letter of Support:

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

(2) Project info session videos coming soon (collab with Rebecca) & SRA Update

- Olivia and Rebecca doing a project info video for approved projects to understand the reimbursement process.
- A week away from the Sustainability Research Awards deadline but no applications yet, starting to feel a little anxious. Please share in your networks to help get the word around.

- SRA celebration event will hopefully be the week of April 9th, it would be great to have lots of board members there.
- Batiment 7 on the back-burner during this busy time of year; Alex collecting more info in the meantime. Wondering how the living lab and an upcoming artist in residency at the faculty of fine arts could be complimentary.
- SC's Sustain-Alive coming up next week, including a living lab discussion and other events all week
- (3) Project by expenses report review - taking questions and feedback
- Because of reallocations, SAF's total allocations budget has gone up to almost \$120,000.
- Reimbursements requests coming in pretty slow. Olivia's report shows where the reallocated funds (leftover from projects) have come from.

Financial Coordinator

- (1) Transition to self employed vs. Employee as of March 1, 2019
- Ariel's been at SAF for five years! In the next 5-10 years Ariel wants to work with local non-profits to do their accounting and use this info to improve their community impact.
- He is transitioning from an employee of SAF to a self-employed contractor to start working with more organizations. He's also reached out to a few others in the Concordia community, as a more accessible option to improve financial systems.
- Drafting up a potential independent contractor agreement for SAF to approve. Would save the SAF money, about \$585 per year because Ariel wouldn't be receiving benefits and SAF wouldn't be paying his EI etc.
- This would set up Ariel to work with more organizations in addition to the SAF, working toward his long-term goal.
- Ariel would offer SAF the same services but it would be a different legal relationship with SAF (i.e. he would no longer be an employee). Sets a good precedent as it allows part-time employees more flexibility. Ariel doesn't have an office here and it would help him save on taxes and lend more legitimacy to the business he's starting.
- Q: What do you see the sustainability of this new form of financial coordinator for SAF and other orgs on campus in the event that you decide to leave Montreal or take on a different job etc.?
- A: SAF will always be a priority for Ariel and he is specifically looking to work with Concordia-based NPOs. The prices charged to the org will be discounted by about 15%.
- Q: How long is the contract? A: Ariel's contract would be month to month. It would be good to transfer cheque signing and other administrative responsibilities to a student employee, Ariel would handle bookkeeping, accounting, etc.
- Ariel would still be bound to all of SAF's producers and HR policies.
- Health and Wellness and Professional Development benefits would no longer be available to Ariel.
- Long-term goal would be to hire a student to do the day-to-day, the budget to actuals, to work with the finance committee, etc., other skills that make great work experience
- Eventually (in a few years) Ariel will leave the organization. What will the succession plan be? It would be good to start building that handbook now.

- Ariel (and all staff members) have been working on a manuals for training and this sort of thing so that SAF will never be screwed if someone have to leave.

Motion to approve Ariel's change in employment status from employee to independent contractor:

- Moved by: Ashvin
- Seconded by: Tara
- *Motion passed*

6. Committee updates

Finance - Investment Committee Memo

(1) Bonds 101

- Bonds are fixed-income investments that generally carry less risk than stocks
- Dependable income that can be described as a loan to a company
- SAF would be a creditor and be more secure
- Concordia recently released the Concordia Sustainable Bond, vehicle to finance the new science hub being built at the Loyola campus
- Building is about a \$16 million dollar investment, most of it is funded by the government and the rest is being funded by this bond
- It's a nice way for SAF to take its money and invest it back on campus
- BUT it's unlikely that SAF will actually be able to invest in this option as it turns out, but it's a good example of a good option for a bond
- Looked more closely at Desjardin's environmentally friendly portfolios (SocieTerra), which turned out to be disappointing. Top ten holdings that make up big portion of the fund are really, really not great companies. Desjardins just screens them for some kind of sustainability policy, even if it's not very robust.
- Looking to update the timeline for investment to the end of the 2019 fiscal year to allow more time to make a truly responsible decision, which is requiring some creative thinking and extensive research.

HR/Governance Committee

(1) Psychological and Sexual Harassment Policy

- Almost complete - will be ready for BoD approval in April.
- Government provides a pretty good template and the HR committee has developed some good additions. Consulting with SARC and Annex friends.

(2) Training/Development schedule for organization

- Developing harassment policy points out the need for nonviolent communication, bystander intervention, anti-oppression; would be good to train the board on these skills each year.

(3) Satisfaction Polygon

- A tool to evaluate workplace satisfaction.
- Done with (most) staff, not ready for Board yet—the criteria will need to be adjusted before the board can participate, will be ready for April or maybe May

7. Community Announcements

- Hi Tara! Replacing Vanessa as the SC rep. Tara writes poetry and non-fiction and theatre reviews and has a cold today.
- Sustain-Alive next week!
- Zero Waste Challenge coming up too! Workshop happening next week in preparation.
- Please spread the word about the Sustainability Research Awards! One week left to apply.

8. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 19h25