

SAF Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 29th, 2020

Meeting Time: 18:00—20:00

Meeting Facilitator: Timir Baran Roy

Meeting Minute Taker: Alexia McKindsey

Members in attendance:

Sebastián Di Poi (SAF)

Oliva Champagne (SAF)

Rebecca Black (SAF)

Roy Singer-Shay (CSU Council)

Jordan Landers (CASA)

Julien Golbaghi (ECA)

Katherine Parthimos (FASA)

Malo Gueguen (Student-at-large)

Marin Algattus (CSU Executive)

Brett Cox (SC)

Maryam El Hebri (ASFA)

Stefan Hodges (Student-at-large)

Members absent:

Ariel Dabora (SAF)

Emma Campbell (Concordia Community)

Krista Jäger (GSA)

1. Call to Order

Quick introductions:

Brett: Internal Coordinator at Sustainable Concordia, he/him pronouns

Sebastián: SAF CEO, he/him pronouns

Olivia: SAF Project Coordinator, she/her pronouns

Jordan: SPC committee member

Julien: SPC committee member

Alexia: Minute Taker, she/her pronouns

Katherine: FASA Coordinator, she/her pronouns

Marin: CSU Internal Coordinator, SPC committee member, she/her pronouns

Maryam: ASFA Globalization Coordinator, she/her pronouns

Malo: SPC committee member, student-at-large representative

Stefan: Finance committee member, he/him pronouns

Rebecca: SAF Outreach Coordinator, she/her pronouns

Timir: Board Facilitator

2. Review and Approval of Minutes

- Minutes are usually posted on the website within the second week after a meeting takes place.
- SAF also reviews the minutes prior to posting them on the website.

Motion to approve the January 15, 2020 meeting minutes:

- Moved by: Brett
- Seconded by: Malo
- *Motion passed*; Marin abstains.

3. Review and Adoption of Agenda

- **Amendment to 7. Community Announcements & Ancillary Items:** addition of a. Media Participation.
 - Student journalist approached Marin with interest in attending SAF Board meetings for reporting purposes—ran it through Sebastián who suggested it should be discussed with the Board prior.
- **Amendment to 4. SAF General Updates:** addition of b. KPI Update.
- **Amendment to 7. Community Announcements & Ancillary Items:** addition of b. Sustainable Concordia.

Motion to approve the agenda:

- Moved by: Julien
- Seconded by: Jordan
- *Motion passed*.

4. SAF General Updates

a. Finance Update

- Reviewed SAF's revenues—change in revenue with the new fee levy's received this term.
- Revenue for January, 2020: ~\$200,000.
 - Tiny bit less than last year—Graduate enrollment is up; Undergraduate is down)
- Potential for investment using contingency fund—looking at ways of generating more interest (low interest loan somewhere on campus) and using it in a way that is more useful instead of having it sit in the bank.
 - \$55,000 is at our disposal—\$100,000 in total, but \$45,000 needs to be kept frozen).
 - Concordia Food Coalition as potential project.
 - Interested to see what Concordia has divested in and to use the investment on campus.
 - Suggestion to look up Sustainable Concordia's Sustainable Investing Project—can be found on their website.
- Q: Will a board member take on investment project? A: Can be delegated to Fincomm.

b. KPI Update

- As of December 2019, we are finishing the second quarter of our fiscal year—taken data from last two years for a three year comparison.
- Statistics show what is requested vs. what is allocated.
- Currently have \$48,000 allocated out of \$102,000 in requests.
- Total amount has dropped by \$90,000 in last year; \$40,000 for year before.
- SAF was able to meet 47% of total funding requests; 36% last year; 53% for year before.
 - In 2017-2018, SAF ran out of money in the last two months of the fiscal year, affecting project allocations—53% of budget was also going towards staff income.
 - May be good that the percentages decreased as SAF will be less likely to run out of money.
- Statistics show number of projects by funding category: full/partial/rejected.
 - Received 28 projects in total this past year; 31 last year.
 - Total amount of funding has dropped not because less people are applying but because they are asking for less money.
- Numbers doubled for amount of full funding that SAF grants.
- Amount of projects rejected has decreased from 32% to 25%.
- Consensus is that applicants are asking for less money.
 - Could also be attributed to the work Olivia has been doing towards making sure projects are handed in properly.
- Statistics for projects by theme—7 major themes that have been funded so far.
 - 30% Social Justice.
 - 35% Education and Research.
 - 0% Health and Wellness.
- Q: What are examples of Health and Wellness projects? A: Creative arts therapy, mental health, physical therapy, nutrition, etc.
- KPI's take the first/primary theme the project puts down in their application.
- Averages:
 - \$2,308 funded per project.
 - 176 students engaged per project.
 - 9 faculty members engaged per project.
 - \$11 cost to engage one student on sustainability topics per project.
- Last year's averages:
 - \$2,500 per project.
 - 250 students engaged per project.
- Dishware: 16% of projects use the Dish Project; 25% use plastic (high percentage even when SAF implements use of dishware—needs to be more conscious for the future); 17% use paper.
- On average we fund 25% of a project's total budgets.

- Q: Why are there less requests this year? A: Projects are smaller, engaging less students and asking for less money.
 - Could be that there are other or new opportunities for funding on campus.
- Overall, SAF is rejecting less projects and fully funding more projects with lower funding requests.

5. **Committee Updates**

a. **HR**

i. **Minutes**

- HR committee will start debrief with each Board member for staff evaluations.
- Discussed potential trainings we could do as an organization through COCo—conflict resolution, anti-oppression, etc.
 - Potential for a retreat later on in the year.
 - If there's any training that a member feels would be pertinent, please let SAF know!
- Sexual harassment policy: Google short form will be available to be filled out by anyone who has suffered such cases.

b. **SPC**

- Standard SPC meeting.

c. **Fincomm**

- Discussed in Finance Update.

d. **Marketing/outreach**

- Switched over to Gsuite and got \$10,000 (American dollars) towards text ads as a result—will require work on the website itself.
- Will have to have SCO for it to work, if anyone knows anything please reach out to Rebecca!
- Research awards—application for Winter is from Feb. 17 - Mar. 22.
 - Advertising it through your student associations is super appreciated!
- Rebecca welcomes and is very interested in talking with anyone regarding media coverage.

6. **Project Funding Allocation (7)**

- \$51,377 left to allocate (\$14,620 being requested this month).

Project 1: SPCA 301

- Requesting \$500.

- SPC recommended to reassess with new budget.
- Presented by Jordan.
- Project is part of a course curriculum in the School of Community and Public Affairs centred around an event hosting urban planning experts who will discuss innovative methods to build more sustainable cities.
 - Building a rapid transit route with surrounding developments—will encourage people to use transport.
 - Building methods like these are supposed to limit urban sprawl because it causes people to cluster closer to where transport is.
- Project is using the Dish Project
- \$250 for Facebook ad is strange—a bit unclear how they came up with that number.
- Update: sent in new budget—decreased Facebook marketing to \$30; food has increased.
 - Project expects to feed 100 people for \$400.
 - Still asking for \$500 in total.
- Rebecca mentions Facebook advertisement for \$30 is pretty typical.
 - SPC recommended that they reallocate more funds towards food than to Facebook.
- Consider that it's a small funding request—unsure of outreach.
- In terms of content, their Vision and Goals section was pretty thorough.
- Mutual agreement towards funding the project.

Roy enters meeting at 6:34 pm.

Motion to allocate funding of \$500 to SPCA 301.

- Moved by: Brett
- Seconded by: Julien
- *Motion passed;* Stefan abstains.

Project 2: Power Networking

- Requesting \$500.
- SPC approved \$440 with Dish Project.
- Presented by Julien.
- Project consists of a women's engineering society that is hosting a networking event for all engineering students.
- Project is inviting professionals and sustainable/ethical companies to guide students and to talk about their career and operations in the field—invites students to ask questions.
- Food, wine and cutlery was listed in request.
 - SPC didn't agree on funding \$100 for cutlery.
- Funded \$440, with allocating a portion of that funding to them using the Dish Project.

- Dish Project is a free service if you wash your dishes, if not it's \$40 for them to wash it for you.

Project 3: Sustainable Resource Map

- Requesting \$1,000.
- SPC approved \$900 with dissemination specifics.
- Presented by Brett.
- Project was started by a student named Caroline (intern with CUCCR) who is trying to build a comprehensive map of all the sustainable resources found throughout Montreal.
 - Very ambitious and significant in terms of impact.
- Approved \$900 because SPC wanted more specifics on how the project would be disseminated around Montreal.
 - Budget line for \$100 was just labelled dissemination—unclear.
- Page 8 of their application details their methods of dissemination: utilizing CUCCR's platform, hosting a presentation at a sustainability complex, implementing the map in Concordia app, using the Green Party who reached out to them, etc.
- SAF hasn't received a project revision request.

Project 4: ASAC Project

- Requesting \$2,120.
- SPC recommended full funding.
- Presented by Marin.
- Panel of a movie screening (She Can) resulting from two students who did an internship in Uganda—created a film to disseminate the challenges and experiences faced in Uganda.
- Wanted to do a screening and cocktail/panel given by figures in field of gender advocacy and diversity in the workplace.
- Good application.
- CEED submitted this project to SAF in the past—was denied.
 - CEED took a step back and ASAC took it on—application is more thorough this time.
- Q: When is the project happening? A: Feb. 1st
 - Maryam motions the project could do well for Black History Month.
- Q: Where is it being hosted? A: Grey Nuns.
- Q: Do we have to pay for podium & chairs? A: Hospitality Concordia charges per chair.
- Q: How do we feel about being their highest funding request? Project requested \$1,000 from ASFA. A: Not sure if ASFA will fund them.

- ASFA doesn't have as much funds available—typical that a project would ask for smaller amounts from ASFA.
- Q: Is SAF the largest fee levy project funding organization on campus? A: Yes, but there are non-fee levy organizations that may have larger funds to allocate.
- Discounted tickets for students and lots of people involved.
- Good that they are collaborating with other associations.

Motion to allocate full funding of \$2,120 to ASAC Project.

- Moved by: Roy
- Seconded by: Maryam
- *Motion passed.*

Project 5: Cinema Politica

- Requesting \$2,500.
- SPC recommended full funding.
- Presented by Marin.
- Project screens educational documentaries every week with main goal of educating.
- Consists of independent grassroots screenings that are not shown in theatres or online.
- Organization supports filmmakers pretty well.
- Typically we judge the content of the film and not the organization.
- Is hosting three films in March with a 600 student reach.
 - (1) Survival under colonialism, (2) broken capitalist healthcare system, (3) people living with disabilities.
- Q: Do we typically fund Cinema Politica? A: Yes, we actually had a formal partnership with them in the past where SAF granted them \$5,000 each year—contract ran out not too long ago.
 - They typically send out two applications each year—one for each semester for around \$5,000.
- Mutual agreement that project contributes to a culture of sustainability at Concordia.

Motion to allocate full funding of \$2,500 to Cinema Politica.

- Moved by: Katherine
- Seconded by: Roy
- *Motion passed.*

Project 6: XR Town Hall on Billionaire

- Requesting \$5,000.
- SPC recommended for reassessment with more information.
- Presented by Jordan.

- Project consists of a community initiative based on the collapsing global environment.
 - Renting out projector and sound truck to project the Doomsday clock and stage a community discussion/protest on the climate crisis in the downtown area (focused mainly around Concordia).
- Concern that \$5,000 is big asking price—budget seems unclear & projector may be really expensive.
 - SAF asked project to follow up with a more recent quote, as well as more info on the CSU funding and projection dates.
 - New quote is in the Google Drive—now \$8,750 for projection rental.
 - Projection dates: March 2nd up until the 5th or the 7th of March.
- We are three weeks away from when the event will happen.
- CSU has funded project twice in 2016 and 2017—project is confident that they will receive funding again.
- SAF partially funded the project in 2016.
- Roy and Brett have a perceived conflict of interest as they have both worked with SEIZE in the past.
 - Brett volunteered with them from last November - March.
- Olivia has conflict of interest—she has directly worked with SEIZE in the past.
- No objection towards Roy and Brett remaining in the discussion; mutual agreement for Olivia to exit the discussion.
- Olivia leaves room for discussion of Project 6: XR Town Hall on Billionaire.
- Marin recommends to deny the project and expresses potential issue with project that came up to her.
 - Individual A sent in this project application in their name because Individual B (who is the original applicant of project and has primary involvement in the project) had applied for a SAF position in the past.
 - Project sent an email to Olivia clarifying this exact situation.
- Q: Why would their application be less successful under Individual B instead of Individual A?
A: Unsure, but showed intent to lie to the Board.
 - There's a lot we don't understand about this particular instance and \$5,000 is a lot to ask, we should reassess and get more information before making a decision.
- Q: Can we make decisions based on this information? Should this information be taken into account? A: Should be denied and resubmitted honestly.
 - Seems like they think we make decisions based on the names associated to projects and not the validity of the project itself—what is it that we like about the project? We shouldn't deny it but we should ask for more information.

- If we bring this private information into the discussion, it creates an issue with our Board discussing the project when the issue is really that of the applicants—their issue with how they applied is not ours when it comes to funding the project.
- The issue with objectively judging this project now is that we can't overlook what we just heard.
 - Project is in March—they have time to reapply with a different name and with more info.
- Q: How did [Marin] find out that this project was originally submitted by Individual B and then changed to Individual A? A: [Marin] was told directly by Individual A.
- Q: Is Individual A part of the organizing team? A: Seems like it's Individual B's sole project from previous discussion.
- Agreement expressed towards looking solely at the content of the application, but the project is also showing a lack of honesty—could influence how they organize and promote the project.
- Q: Curious to know why they changed the applicant name? There must be a reason. A: Seems like an internal person within the project asked them to change the name.
 - Malo: One suggestion could be the fact that there is a [CSU] representative that sits on our Board and that, theoretically, could have made the applicant's worried about the representative's conflict of interest.
- Project has great potential and engages important discussion. The concern around them changing the applicant name has been given too much weight—lots of discussion around them misrepresenting the application.
 - Individual B is very involved in the project and there is more possibility for tension, conflict of interest, etc.
 - It is very clear who is working on the project, both Applicant A & B's names are presented on the project application and are therefore both involved in project.
- Portion of project is happening on March 21st—they have all of February to reapply and come to the SPC meeting—SAF will have two meetings in the time spanning now until March 21st.
- Katherine suggests Marin having a potential conflict of interest with the project applicants.
 - Opinion seems to be voiced too strongly in regard to the project and name changing circumstance that has come up.
 - We will be faced with the same issue if we deny funding or ask them to reapply.
 - Our job as a Board is to assess projects objectively and not investigate into making sure projects and applicants are being honest—we are supposed to assess what's given to us.
- We can continuously discuss this issue and go in circles—we should really focus in on the project itself.
 - They sent in the application a first time and someone within the SAF asked them to resubmit it under a different name—we don't want to cover that up.

- We are not covering it up, we are just trying to get past the personal issue when making decisions—we not supposed to be basing a project on these kinds of issues, but instead on the actual contents of the application.
- Roy: The discussion of this project shouldn't be focused on interpersonal drama—a lot of us seem to feel like they should reapply.
 - Budget is not the best, could be more in-depth with where funding will be going.
 - Suggestion to partially allocate.
 - Projection services \$10,000 (in 2016); \$8,735 this year.
- Q: What are we missing? Was anything else updated? A: Seems like only thing updated was the projector cost but the updated cost is pretty close to original quote.
 - Confusion about the sound truck—written proposal seems unclear.
- Statement is also bit unclear.
- SAF would be funding projection services only.
- Grey area within the requests—we don't have to make a decision right now.
- Suggestion to encourage discussion over the content of project itself—does this project foster a culture of sustainability at Concordia or not?
 - Enjoyment expressed towards project but unclear as to what they're asking for—can't visualize it.
 - Project is happening around the time of the climate action protests—gets students thinking about it.
 - Should treat projects equally—suggestion to postpone with reapplication in February.
- Q (Malo): Has [Maryam] read the application? A (Maryam): No.
 - Malo: Typically Board members who don't read the project applications shouldn't be involved in decision making processes.

Motion to postpone funding to XR Town Hall on Billionaire with reapplication to be considered in February's Board Meeting.

- Moved by: Marin
- Seconded by: Malo
- *Motion passed*; 3 approved, 2 against, 3 abstain [names missing].

Project 7: ineffable

- Requesting \$3,000.
- SPC recommended to reassess with more information.
- Presented by Brett.
- Project consists of an alternative stage play adapting to a 30 min. film—empowering Black queer community in Fine Arts; marginalized project.

- Issues presented: how are they disseminating the film? Clarification on budget (rehearsal space (free since they are students?) and production assistant & graphic designer who are marked TBD).
- Update on dissemination:
 - Project wants to submit films to off campus film festivals—listed such opportunities (part 4 of application; all associated fees will be covered).
 - No budget line for dissemination aside from printing posters and scripts.
 - SAF would be funding the outreach cost for any independently organized screenings.
 - Project suggested VA-3123, Mel Hoppenheim Theatre, etc. which are spaces that may be free, but project may also need to rent out off campus if not—spaces are typically \$15 an hour at the lower end cost.
- Q: Can we suggest that they partner with Cinema Politica? A: A little unorthodox, Cinema Politica also has their own curators (Canada wide organization)—there’s a Concordia branch but not sure if they have full curatorial discretion.
- Roy saw the play and it was really good; terrifically well done.
- Q: How much did we fund in the past? A: \$8,000 for theatre production (project’s entire budget was \$15,000).
- SPC recommend potential full funding—weren’t sure if project was asking for \$10,000 or \$3,000.
 - Got funded for \$2,300 but asked for \$8,000
 - Could allocate \$2000 because we aren’t sure about space rental—fair amount.
- Q: Any recommendations for resources or places they could practice/film? A: Potentially CSU—use Marin’s contact.

Motion to allocate partial funding of \$2000 to ineffable.

- Moved by: Marin
 - Seconded by: Julien
- Q: Why are we rolling back \$1,000 when the space rental is \$150? A: In honorariums line, they ask for \$1,000 for a production assistant and graphic designer (marked TBD)—everything else is listed specifically.
 - If we funded them \$2,000, we should also recommend that they submit a project revision request should they confirm these roles.
 - Can we fund retroactively?
 - For clarification: if they confirm these roles SAF can ask that they submit a revision request with the confirmed name listed for each role.
 - **Motion** to allocate partial funding of \$2000 to ineffable with **amendment** to suggest the project submits a project revision request contingent on when they confirm the production assistant and graphic designer roles.

- Moved by: Marin
- Seconded by: Julien
- Amended by: Roy
- *Motion passed*; 8 approved, [name missing] against.

Funded \$8,460 worth of projects this month—\$42,917 remaining in allocations budget.

7. Community Announcements & Ancillary Items

a. Media participation

- A student journalist approached Marin about coming into Board meetings to report on SAF and how the Board makes funding decisions.
- Is pretty typical with other fee-levy Board's that [Marin] sits on—could be good exposure for SAF.
- No precedent for this kind of thing with SAF.
- For transparency-sake, it could be good to have media participation and it would also set a precedent for future media participation.
- Q: Are there any downsides to setting this kind of precedent? A (Stefan): Would be really hard to deny any media coming in after. Seems like it helps for transparency, but we are already transparent through our minutes.
 - Important to feel safe when deliberating decisions—could be more damaging than useful.
- Q: Do we have closed Board sessions? A (Timir): If an outsider is present in a meeting and the Board doesn't feel comfortable discussing within their presence we can call a closed Board meeting.
- Maryam: In ASFA it's nice to have someone outside of the organization—a student-body-at-large representative comes in to give a different perspective.
 - A media person/outsider coming in to our meetings isn't allowed to offer their opinion.
 - In a closed session, no minutes are allowed to be taken, therefore less overall transparency—if that happens more often, it could be a problem.
- Q: Are students allowed to join meetings? A: Have had such cases in the past. SAF also invites project representatives that ask for over \$10,000 in funding to come in and do a presentation.
 - SAF has precedent for students coming in that are not in the media.
- Timir: Per Robert Rules of Order, people overseeing meetings can only speak if there is a motion on the floor for them to speak—no speaking privilege.
- If the Board is analyzing these projects objectively, what is the risk of having outsiders come in a report? May increase number of projects we received.
- We have a marketing team already.

- Stefan: Conflict is a positive thing in Board discussion—is an important part of decision-making and it can be harder to get into such conflict when having another presence in the meeting.
 - Safe space vs. transparency.
 - Concern with media being objective—not having control over how they paint the SAF vs. looking to our minutes which is an unbiased perspective.
 - Sebastián: Issue around discussion seems to be coming down to our transparency as an organization. We arguably already have mechanisms for transparency in place—we have a minute taker that is neutral and transcript based that we put out on our website to be viewed by the public.
 - Issue is whether that is enough to get our transparency out there.
 - Reiteration that media can be biased and has potential to stop discussion due to fear of what can be published—effectiveness of voting and decision making is therefore effected.
 - An idea for us publicizing our transparency can be to promote the fact that we have minutes on our website—make information more available.
 - Q: If students have interest in attending meetings can we invite them as observers? A: Yes.
 - Timir: Observers can participate, however if a Board member doesn't feel comfortable we can call for a closed session (which includes closed session minutes—not available to public). Observer has no speaking privilege.
 - Talking privileges can create problems (biases, lobbying, etc.)
 - Q (Marin): If we say no to the media, doesn't that show a lack of transparency? How do we respond to that? A: Can explain that we have minutes which are transparent and available to the public, assess the website, research the SAF.
 - Marin: Minutes are not accessible—really long, may be hard to read.
 - Suggestion to include a summary that just details the motions.
 - If people look for specific project within the minutes, they will get all the information that they need in the discussion.
 - Rebecca makes a post on Facebook that states what projects we have funded.
 - Overall, our financial funding decisions carry a lot of weight and we prefer not to have media in order to allow us the discretion of making such decisions.
 - We are just as transparent as any other organization and it is important to have that space to freely discuss decision making processes.
- Q: Who would be the spokesperson to address the media? A: Direct them to staff as Board members have a non-disclosure agreement.

Motion to deny access to the media attending Board meetings at this time, but to direct anyone wishing to report on the SAF to a staff spokesperson.

- Moved by: Roy
- Seconded by: Katherine

- *Motion passed*; three against (Malo, Julien, Marin).

2. Sustainable Concordia event

- Sustainable Concordia is hosting a series of workshops—eight week course for sustainability and environmental justice.
- February 9th is deadline to apply
- Workshops are happening in 2149 Mackay (SCPA basement) every Wednesday evenings.
 - Mixer isn't set but most likely first or second week of April—will update!
 - Mixer will be an opportunity to connect, network and build resources for sustainable initiatives.
- Looking for members to be on planning committee (talk to Brett!) before next meeting.

3. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting.

- Moved by: Roy
- Seconded by: Jordan
- *Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.*