

SAF Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 30th, 2020

[ONLINE]

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)

Krista Jäger (GSA)

Jordan Landers (CASA)

Katherine Parthimos (FASA)

Brett Cox (SC)

Rebecca Black (SAF)

Stefan Hodges (Student-at-large)

Ariel Dabora (SAF)

Maryam El Hebri (ASFA)

Marin Algattus (CSU Executive)

Members absent:

Julien Golbaghi (ECA)

Emma Campbell (Concordia Community)

Malo Gueguen (Student-at-large)

Roy Singer-Shay (CSU Council)

1. Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

- Timir reads land acknowledgement.

2. Review and Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the March 25th, 2020 meeting minutes:

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

3. Review and Adoption of Agenda

Motion to adopt the agenda:

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

4. SAF General Updates

a. Finance Update

- Fincomm met a couple of days ago—worked on setting up the budget for next year, figuring out how SAF’s income will change with enrolment/opt-outs (due to current changes and circumstances).
 - Estimated an enrolment decrease of 15%—mostly covers international students.

Marin joins meeting at 6:17.

- SAF will run operations as usual and use the contingency fund if needed.
 - SAF may run a small deficit next year, but we have enough financial room to do so.
- Ariel: The fiscal year ends in May—we’ll present a budget draft in the next meeting that will need to be approved.
 - [Ariel] will speak to other committees and student groups to forecast what next year’s budget could look like.
 - Board members can expect to see a shared google sheet with some of the assumptions to be reviewed in the next board meeting.

b. Other Updates

i. [Sustainability Research Awards Overview presentation](#)

- SAF held it’s third round of Sustainability Research Awards (it went well!)
- Olivia summarizes the results with a quick presentation:
 - 12 awards were given out—partnership with faculty allowed for more awards.
 - 7 Undergraduate awards.
 - 5 Graduate awards.
 - Criteria: Quality of research proposal, innovation and critical thinking, potential in advancing sustainability at Concordia University.
 - Applicants by faculty:
 - Most applications came from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences
 - Fine Arts and Engineering applications doubled.
 - JSMB had the least amount of applications.
 - Themes:
 - Themes received were pretty well balanced.
 - Most popular theme involved tackling the energy, resource & technology.
 - Issues addressed (applicants):
 - Sustainable production and consumption & climate change issues were the most popular.
 - No applications for accessibility, indigenous issues and poverty & income inequality categories.

- Low applications for community building category, which is usually the theme SAF sees the most in our monthly project funding.
- Issues addressed (recipients):
 - Climate change categories were the most popular—pollution was the highest.
- Rebecca: Most applications come from ASFA, so that could be why we are mostly receiving applications in those categories.
- Sebastian: Could also be due to the limited amount of options applicants are allowed select when applying—SAF could considering eliminating those limitations in the future.
- Recipients: (Go to SAF’s website to view them all!)
 - Galareh Barkhordari et al: Project uses human energy to source electricity by putting a generator/convertor on all the spin bikes in Concordia’s gym making Concordia the first ever human powered gym in the Quebec.
 - Serena Mohamed: Project analyzes all the flowers and bee species found at Loyola, their blooming and nesting period in order to figure out how it will shape the bee community.
 - Brittany Talarico et al: Project analyzes the environmental impact of cigarettes being littered on campus and offers recommendations as to how we can mitigate that environmental impact—when the butts are disposed they have leeching water properties.
 - Shelagh McNally: Project is working on enhancing the VA green space.
 - Samy Benhamza: Project consists of the CAPsolar SAF has funded before.
- Sebastian: This is the record number of applicants we’ve received for these awards.

ii. Strategic Directions 2017/2020 - 2021/2024

- This will consist of the first of many sessions that will be broken down over the next four-five months to determine our future strategic directions.
- The goal in today’s meeting is to tell [the board] about SAF’s progress, the current situation, answer questions from [the board] and hopefully compose a committee for the future strategic directions.

1. Overview

- Enabling project autonomy, sustainable growth and long-term success:
 - In developing longterm projects and research centres, SAF has collaborated with Bâtiment 7—will continue evaluating that and see if there are other collaboration possibilities.
 - Locked down \$47,000 that will be allocated towards Living Lab projects.
 - Diversified SAF’s funding sources—successfully acquired from the faculty.

- In strengthening our coaching and mentoring at the pre-funding and post-funding stages—Olivia has been working increasingly closely with project applicants.
 - SAF will be developing workshops over the course of the Summer.
 - Olivia: We now have project info sessions and have facilitated the pre-application process. Summer workshops will help with pre- and post-application processes. SAF will send out a survey to find out what kind of resources and workshops our project applicants would like to have access to.
- In building partnerships with hubs for transforming pilot projects within university operations, Bâtiment 7 fits into this—longterm outlook.
 - SAF is also forming close relationships with SHIFT & D3.
- In building partnerships with the Concordia administration for integrating pilot projects within universities operations, Living Labs fit into this—longterm project integrated into the university.
- Strive for organizational excellence:
 - Governance handbook has been created.
 - HR committee has set goals that have changed over the years—will touch base on that in HR updates.
 - Enhanced our website user experience—application platform and resource section of website.
 - Rebecca: It's very difficult to create an online application form (we have a PDF form instead). The resource section could be updated, although we did add the KPI's.
 - Olivia: Against adding live impact metrics (accountability issues)—we can't be posting those metrics without verifying or fine-tuning and that could implement other people; went through route of releasing annual KPI's instead.
 - Developed a database for internal metrics.
 - Collaborated with researchers to analyze the impact that SAF funded projects has on the Concordia community
 - Collaborated with Sustainable Concordia, EH&S team and researchers to measure the culture and practices of sustainability on campus—haven't collaborated with EH&S too much.
 - For hosting financial literacy workshop series throughout the year with other organizations—Ariel has focused on training the Board in the last year.
 - Ariel: Would like to host a panel discussion in the Fall with non-profits in the city to discuss best practices, accountability, being transparent, etc.
 - Offer info sessions or mini-workshops on selected topics—Summer project.
- Foster, inclusion, diversity and interdisciplinary:
 - In organizing inclusive events for networking, co-creation and reflections, SAF has held mixers, sustainability hub lunch-ins and the Sustainability Research Awards ceremony.

- A virtual platform has been discussed but [SAF] is unsure how useful that would be—nothing set in stone yet.
 - Olivia: Sustainability ambassadors has recently been discontinued—administration has cut funding.
- Presentations during department and faculty meetings, as well as classroom presentations, networking events, tabling on campus have been held.
 - Rebecca: We struggle with the engineering department—will be something to work on.
- For encouraging interdisciplinary and setting measurable goals, KPI's track this—usually Engineering and JMSB partner up, whereas FASA and ASFA partner up.
 - Seb: Living Labs point people to various departments—if contact isn't made, we make that contact for them.
- Explore the campus as a living laboratory for sustainability action:
 - Collaborated with centre for teaching and learning to promote experiential learning on campus.
 - Built partnership with existing programs—Bâtiment 7.
 - For partnering with leadership in sustainability major—the major still hasn't been released.
 - Seb: May have to be looked at for next strategic directions.
 - In collaborating with Concordia sustainability research centres to use sustainable projects on campus case studies for existing and new research—SAF will talk to CURE.
 - Collaboration with University press hasn't been done yet.
 - Will need to collaborate with researchers to develop a journal of applied sustainability and organize interactive exhibitions of sustainability action research on campus.

2. Committee Formation

- Q (Stefan): How many members do we need for this committee? A (Seb): Whoever is interested and has the energy to take it on. The committee will consist of 2-3 meetings held over the summer, perhaps a training with COCo. We will need at least one Board member from each committee.
- Olivia: The decisions made in this process will be constructing a sort of legacy for SAF—projections are made several years into the future that guide SAF's vision and decision making. We check in every 6 months to see how we are doing and set goals accordingly.
- Seb: This is a very inspiring process!

- Katherine: Feels like this is a great sub-committee but has a bit too much on her plate at the moment to join. In moving forward, SAF could improve or upgrade the points from the last strategic plans and perhaps make them a bit more generalized.
 - Seb: Generalizing the points will help, so we are not tied down to specific goals.
- Jordan: Interested in participating.
- Stefan: Interested in participating.
- Maryam: Not sure if she'll be able to commit enough time to it.
 - Seb: The meetings will start sometime in June.
- Brett: SAF has done a great job with these goals, very impressed but also echoes Maryam's concerns—very interested and would love to participate, but unsure if he'll have the energy and time to commit to it. Slightly interested.
- Olivia: Most other non-profits make it mandatory to engage in strategic direction meetings, we are being very nice and lenient about participation.
- Seb: Committee won't be making the decision alone, the staff will offer support.

iii. [Drawdown eco challenge - Join the CU for Change team!](#)

- SAF has a team for this challenge—consists of a charity model with lots of potential to engage locally or from home.
- Examples include riding your bike, urban agriculture, reading up on issues.
 - Engagement is flexible—can be super engaged or just consist of knowledge building.
- SAF will be engaging in it and invites the Board to do the same.

5. [SAF General Updates](#)

a. **HR**

i. [Sexual Harassment Report Form](#)

- As of last year, the government mandated that all organizations need to have a sexual and psychological harassment policy.
- SAF has created a form that has the option to allow people who fill it out to remain anonymous.
- The form requires a method of contact—HR felt it was necessary to be able to contact the person if someone does reach out to us in this manner (for facilitating accountability, transparency, and sorting out the issue).
- The form is short and only requires the most necessary information—SAF will contact the person after this initial step to find out more information.
- Seb: Reached out and showed the form to Mark—is waiting on his input but it would be a good first step to get the form out there first.
- Q (Maryam): Is the person filling out the form allowed to have someone speak on their behalf instead if they choose to be anonymous? Q (Seb): Not presently, but we will add that in.
 - ASFA points people to the advocacy centre.

ii. Remote meetings - governance point

- In last HR meeting, we created a point for remote meetings in the Governance Handbook.
 - Procedures regarding quorum and voting will remain the same as in-person meetings.

iii. COCo trainings updates (anti-o, conflict resolution, non-violent communication, potential strategic directions development facilitation)

- [Seb] had a conversation with COCo in hopes of organization training sessions before COVID-19 and they only got back to us after the fact.
- [Seb] proposed the option of doing the trainings online and COCo agreed—the trainings will be specific to our organization.
- We may have 1-2 training session to happen in June/July—could happen in person if things open up.
- Mutual agreement for proceeding with the trainings—will move forward with organizing them.

b. SPC

- Project by Expenses:
 - Olivia reached out to past/currently funded projects classified as active and asked if they were still using/needed their funding or not, in light of COVID-19/other circumstances.
 - Some projects decided they didn't need the money (Solar capstone, UZURI Gala, etc.).
 - As a result, we now have \$11,806 to spend in allocations until June.

c. Fincomm

- Recently activated online payments with Desjardins.
 - Consists of a secure platform where we have to collect individual's banking information.
- When Ariel authorizes a payment, Seb has to be the secondary approval.
- We are waiting to speak to the university to see if there will be a change in timing for the fee-levy revenues.
 - There may be a change in collections (when people pay for classes), although after speaking with other organizations, it seems as though the timing should remain the same.
- Online opt-outs will be discussed next meeting when we have more information.

d. Marketing/Outreach

- No updates.

6. Project Funding Allocation (2)

- **\$11,806 left to allocate (\$5,721.70 being requested this month).**

a. CAPsolar Minimum Viable Product Request

- One of the clauses in SAF's contract with applicants maintains that any purchased capital assets valued over \$300-500 is the property of SAF.

- This project has requested that the assets of their solar panel remain as their own—needs approval from the board to overwrite this clause so they can maintain ownership.
- Seb: The project created a solar charger for neighbourhood vehicles.

Motion to allow CAPsolar to override the contract and maintain ownership of their assets.

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

Project 1: CARE

- Requesting \$2,721.70.
- SPC recommends full funding.
- Presented by Jordan.
- Project was previously seen in February and consists of a material research initiative within the Fine Arts faculty.
- Project reapplied and made their application more clear.
- Olivia: Project consists of creating an audit/inventory of all materials used within the Fine Arts faculty—how to be safe and sustainable in fine arts practices.
- Project has faculty, staff and student stakeholders
- Board expresses general positive feelings towards the project.

Motion to allocate full funding to CARE.

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

Project 2: Unsettling

- Requesting \$3,000.00.
- SPC recommends full funding.
- Presented by Brett.
- Project consists of a three-part event series looking at broad questions encompassing colonialism and de-colonialism within our community. The team tackles complex topic related to these issues. [Brett] attended the first two events and found that they were fantastic, well organized and was overall super happy with them.
- SAF previously requested more info—more detail on past two events and budget specifics.
 - They resubmitted with an incredibly detailed budget—project did a super great job.
- Maryam has a perceived conflict of interest—project team lead was her professor.

- Seb: Doesn't feel like this is a direct conflict of interest—would be more of a conflict of interest if you have a close relationship to the person.
- Timir: You can abstain if you don't feel comfortable voting.
- Olivia: They submitted this project last month—SPC asked them a few questions and they decided to postpone the project application because they didn't have enough time to make the changes necessary.
 - The event is happening the late Fall—COVID-19 shouldn't affect it happening in person.
- Rebecca: A gathering of this size shouldn't be supported by SAF even if it is occurring in the Fall—Concordia is thinking about going online for the Fall as well.
 - Q (Maryam): COVID-19 is also set to have a resurgence in the Fall, in that case, large gatherings will still be banned. If the event isn't going to happen online, should we still fund it knowing COVID-19 may affect it happening? A (Rebecca): We should fund based on the project not on the circumstance—they should also have no problem moving the event online if necessary.
- Seb: Any government implemented mandate will ultimately affect how our projects take on their event—if it would make us feel more comfortable, when motioning, we could propose a contingency plan asking the project to pursue online platforms in case a new mandate is put in place.
- Stefan: A contingency plan would be important to have—doesn't feel like we should trust the state to determine how these events should happen. It may not be safe to host the project publicly even if things do open up—we wouldn't want to support a project that puts people at risk.
- Olivia: Project revision requests include timeline changes that usually don't need to be brought to the Board for approval.
- Krista: Loves the project, but would be nice for the project to have a contingency plan in place.
 - Olivia: Will communicate that to them.

Motion to allocate full funding to Unsettling with the recommendation that they create a contingency plan to possibly host the event online in the Fall.

- Moved by: Brett
- Seconded by: Krista
- *Motion passed*; Maryam abstains.

Funded \$5,721.70 worth of projects this month—\$6,084.30 remaining in allocations budget.

7. Community Announcements & Ancillary Items

a. Interstice - Online Design Research Exhibition launches tomorrow at 6pm

i. Zoom discussion of projects at 6:30pm

- Exhibition project for Master of Design students is launching online—the vernissage couldn't happen in person so they've put everything online.
- Is launching it tomorrow at 6 pm—you can join the Zoom vernissage!
- Consists of themes including augmented reality to decolonize the street, check it out!

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting.

- Moved by: Brett
- Seconded by: Stefan
- *Meeting adjourned at 7:51pm.*