

Students Nova Scotia	Board of Directors	students 
	<i>Meeting Minutes</i>	

Meeting Name:	Board Meeting		
Meeting Date:	May 16, 2013		
Meeting Time:	3:00 PM, AST		
Venue:	Call-in	City:	Halifax, NS
Attendees			
Primary and Secondary Delegates:	Ben Gunn-Doerge (SFXUSU), Amy Brierley (SFXUSU), Brennan Boudreau (CBUSU), Darcy Shea (ASU), Aaron Beale (DSU), Matthew Rios (ASU), Sagar Jha (DSU), Rachel Campbell (ASTSU), Matthew Latimer (CBUSU), Mike MacDonell (SMUSA)		
Other attendees:	Jonathan Williams (Executive Director), Brian Foster (Communications)		
Absent:	Patrick Carruthers (Treasurer), Kyle Power (Chair)		
Quorum (50% of Members represented?): Yes			

- 1) Call to order

- 2) Roll call

JW (ED): We no longer have a Vice-chair, and the Chair is absent. Is there a volunteer to chair this meeting?

Matthew Rios (ASU) **moved** and Rachel Campbell (ASTSU) **seconded the motion:** that the Executive Director of Students NS be allowed to Chair the meeting until a Vice-Chair can be appointed.

Motion passed by general consent.

3) Approval of Agenda

JW (ED/Acting Chair): The agenda was circulated late last night. The ED apologizes for the late distribution; KP (Chair) is preparing to leave for Ghana.

BB (CBUSU): We did not receive the agenda. (*By email?*) Correct.

JW (ED/Acting Chair): I have it projected up here. We can go through it, if you want. We will also review our mailing list. Did you receive the press release today? (*No.*)

BF (Comms.): I will add you to the internal mailing list. Apologies for the omission.

JW (ED/Acting Chair): This is a standard, short meeting. The three officers of the Board (Chair/Vice-Chair/Treasurer), as per the governing policies that changed in April, now may stay on until the AGM. The Board needs to approve their continued placement. In the case of the Vice-Chair, she declined to remain in her position until the AGM; she did not know where she was going to be all summer. A new Vice-Chair may be appointed today. Alternately, it can be put off, and you can have no Vice-Chair for a while if you prefer, but the motion is there. Position paper plans for the summer are here, a review of staffing arrangements around those, and what parts we want to see done by September. Appointment of Board reviewers for the summer position papers. Meeting with the minister on May 29th. A couple of proposals that we're putting in for funding. With the projects last year, we had a few different ideas about how we can use money this year, and I want to go over that with the Board. We don't necessarily need decisions on those; we can go ahead, provided that you're fine with the direction. Finally, summer scheduling; I want to know how often you want to meet this summer, and when people are available. Please let me know if there are other items that you would like to add.

MR (ASU): If it's friendly, I'd like to add a discussion about the Board Retreat. (*Amendment is friendly.*)

JW (ED/Acting Chair): Is there anything else to add?

MM (SMUSA): Are we going to do staff reports? (*Yes, at the end.*) Who is chairing? (*ED is Acting Chair.*)

Amended agenda approved by general consent.

4) Approval of Minutes

JW (ED/Acting Chair): The last set of minutes are not yet ready. We are doing a better job of remembering to say our names before we speak on this recording, so they will be easier to transcribe. Undoubtedly this is highly appreciated by the person transcribing the minutes. We will be approving the last set of minutes at the next meeting.

No minutes to approve

DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL

5) Be It Resolved That Kyle Power continue to serve as Chair of Students Nova Scotia until the Annual General Meeting.

JW (ED/Acting Chair): I understand that KP sent a letter to MR (ASU) in regards to this.

MR (ASU): I will read it verbatim: "Dearest Board, greetings and salutations from (likely) Frankfurt airport. For those whom I have not had the pleasure of meeting, my name is Kyle

Power. Well, My name is Kyle Power, his name is Matthew Rios. Just picture him, only better looking, and funnier. I have had the pleasure of serving as the Chair of the Board of Directors. As you are aware, I have not been present this week, and indeed will not be in Nova Scotia this summer at all, as I will be volunteering in Cape Coast, Ghana. You may not find this particularly relevant to your current lives, however I do know that you spent some time yesterday in a riveting discussion about internal governance, and may recall that the Chair serves from AGM to AGM, with the 2013 AGM likely to be a few months away, and this leads to a decision. I would be happy to continue serving as the Chair until the AGM, and once I get settled this weekend, I will have reliable internet with which to converse with Home Office. I have largely served in my role living outside of Halifax the past few years, and I anticipate being able to continue to fulfill my role from Cape Coast, although I will certainly advise the Board if this changes. While I will not speak for him, Jon (ED) has indicated (to me, at least), that he would be comfortable with this situation. However, there are, of course, drawbacks that should be considered. First, if an election is called, I will likely have to step down due to the logistical challenges of coordinating our efforts due to the time difference and my full-time employment in Africa, etc. Further, the reality is if your school is having concerns, I will not be able to meet with you in person. However, I will have Skype up and running. This will help me also attend some Board meetings in the future. All that being said, you have some important decisions to make, and I will leave you to them. I have always served at the pleasure of the Board, and would be willing to continue, but you have to make the decision that is right for you guys, and, of course, no hard feelings. Cheers, Kyle.”

JW (ED/Acting Chair): Discussion is open to the floor.

BB (CBUSU): So right now, the discussion is about whether or not to keep KP as Chair? (*Yes*) Requested clarification as to how this is feasible if he is not here throughout the entire summer?

JW (ED/Acting Chair): I can give you a run-through of why we changed the governing policies along these lines. If you access the Governing Policies document in the dropbox, it includes the role of the Chair, which has a number of tasks, the most minor of which is chairing meetings. Other roles include telling the ED whether or not we need to come to the Board on approval, or whether or not the Chair approve messaging, as a secondary spokesperson for the organization which he wouldn't be able to do, obviously, from Africa. Generally, though, it is day-to-day advice to the staff that the Chair provides; reviewing of a press release before it goes out. I am entirely confident that we can arrange to do that with him in Ghana. That is basically the most important item. The ones that he will be unable to do are more secondary: chairing meetings, being a spokesperson, fortunately (to an extent) the Vice-Chair has vacated that role, and the person that I would suggest could fulfill those areas of responsibility for the Chair. The last thing is that it might have seemed like a strange decision to have a Chair appointed who was away, but it took a lot of time and was very contentious. I think, if I'm not incorrect, that MR (ASU), AB (DSU), and MM (SMUSA) were all on board with this decision, and the deciding element was, that in this context, you all know each other for two days. Given the significance of the role of the Chair, we felt that it was not the ideal time for you to be appointing a new chair for the organization now, when you don't know each other, and it might wipe out a whole bunch of candidates who are in their first year, have just had their first meetings, and might not feel competent, but who might fill the role very ably. That was the most essential rationale for making these accommodations. I don't know if any of the returning Board members have anything to add.

MR (ASU): We wanted this Board and, subsequently, next years' Board, to reaffirm the decision. So Board members will stay AGM to AGM, and the compromise was made that the new Board will have to re-validate the officers staying on, by consensus.

BB (CBUSU): When would the new Chair be appointed?

JW (ED/Acting Chair): At the AGM, held during the Annual Planning Retreat (APR). AGMs are generally a formality, and includes the annual report from last year (the last activity of the

Chair), and the annual audit (the last activity of the Treasurer). *(And when is it?)* In June or July. Kyle would be in the position for two and a half months.

RC (ASTSU): Are we calling for a motion, then?

MR (ASU): No motion needs to be made here; it would have to be added to New Business if we are appointing an interim Chair now. I'll speak on behalf of Kyle: I think that he spent two years as Chair for this organization, and I don't think that he would offer himself for the position if he didn't think he could do it. And if Kyle cannot do it, he will communicate that immediately. He is not the type of person to let things go, and in my opinion, there is no overwhelming risk by allowing him to continue. As the Board, we obviously have the power to make different decisions at any later date if we feel that it is not working.

AB (SFXUSU): We have technology to facilitate communication (Skype, etc.), so it is not as if he is disconnected from the process.

BD (SFXUSU): My only concern is the time change, and its impact on immediate issues. I'm not aware of the nature of all that goes on with StudentsNS and the Board, but members that have previously been on the Board: is that something that needs to be taken into consideration?

MM (SMUSA): I have a question to add to those: does KP have a cellphone over in Ghana so that he is reachable right away?

JW (ED/Acting Chair): I don't know.

MR (ASU): The email insinuates that it would be through email or Skype.

JW (ED/Acting Chair): In terms of the biggest press releases, we'll have prepared them in advance, in terms of day-to-day response, it might be difficult, but we have a Vice-Chair who can respond in those cases. The Vice-Chair can act as an interim Chair, and then can move to a secondary position once the AGM has occurred.

BD (SFXUSU): With the election coming up, will it be an issue if he's not in Nova Scotia, or nearby?

JW (ED/Acting Chair): He indicated that if the election happened, he would step down, and we would have the opportunity immediately to elect a permanent Chair.

ML (CBUSU): I think, from what I've heard from MR, that it seems that I would be okay with KP continuing on as Chair until the AGM. We do have the Vice-Chair, and we don't want to rush into appointing a new Chair before we have a good feel for everyone.

JW (ED/Acting Chair): Is there a decision then? Do we need a motion, or just a motion to destitute the Chair if we want to do that, or not to if we don't want to? *(No, we need a motion to reaffirm his position as Chair, so we need to find appropriate language for this.)*

Rachel Campbell (ASTSU) **moved** and Matt Latimer (CBUSU) **seconded the motion: Be it resolved** that Kyle Power continue to serve as Chair of Students Nova Scotia until the Annual General Meeting.

Vote:

ASU – Yes

ASTSU – Yes

CBUSU – Yes

DSU – Abstained

SFXSU – Yes

SMUSA – Yes

Motion passed.

- 6) Be It Resolved That Patrick Carruthers continue to serve as Treasurer of Students Nova Scotia until the Annual General Meeting.

JW (ED/Acting Chair): I direct you, if you are interested in the position, to the job description.

MM (SMUSA): Pat is living in the city and working in the city. He did a great job last year, and said he would stay on. I don't know if there are any other accountants in the room. It's a tiresome job, and he did an excellent job last year.

JW (ED/Acting Chair): The role of the treasurer is to go over our monthly statements and make sure that we're kosher, and he'll have signing authority still for cheques. It will be good to have him in Halifax, and not in Antigonish, to be able to sign things. Lastly, he will be kept on to go through the audit process. One element is that we want the treasurer who goes through the review process to be the treasurer who has been with us through the year that is being reviewed. Otherwise, we have a treasurer overseeing finances with which they are not familiar. It was an accountability issue in that case.

Matthew Rios (ASU) **moved** and Mike MacDonell (SMUSA) **seconded the motion: Be it resolved** that Patrick Carruthers continue to serve as Treasurer of Students Nova Scotia until the Annual General Meeting.

Vote:

ASU – Yes

ASTSU – Yes

CBUSU – Yes

DSU – Yes

SFXSU – Yes

SMUSA – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

- 7) Be It Resolved That _____ be appointed as Vice Chair for the full 2013-14 term.

MM (SMUSA): Nominated Matthew Rios for the full-term position of Vice-Chair.

JW (ED/Acting Chair): Called for any other nominations. Called a second time for any other nominations. Does everybody know what the Vice-Chair does? (*No.*) I will put up the job description.

BF (Comms.): Requested that the Acting Chair explain for staff's benefit if the assumption is that the Vice-Chair will be interim, or if the Vice-Chair will be continue after the interim period.

JW (ED/Acting Chair): In policy, it would be permanent, unless specified that it is just until the AGM.

BB (CBUSU): Requested clarification: Say that one of us was Vice-Chair, what if that person had the opportunity to become Chair, after the interim period?

JW (ED/Acting Chair): They wouldn't.

MM (SMUSA): He or she would have to vacate the position of Vice-Chair, and then, in turn, run for Chair.

MR (ASU): Let's talk about this position first. I think that I have to accept the nomination before we can move forward. The cart is way ahead of the horse right now.

JW (ED/Acting Chair): So, Board officers will normally be elected at the AGM, unless there is a vacancy, where they will be elected at the first available opportunity. The bylaws are not perfectly clear as to whether or not they would be appointed permanently if elected now, so perhaps you

can make that clear in your motions. The key element of the role of the Vice-Chair is signing authority and fulfilling the role of the Chair when the Chair is not available. It's a backup Chair. In terms of spokespeople for Students NS, it's the ED, then the Chair, then the Vice-Chair. They would be the de-facto interim Chair in many aspects of the duties of the Chair until a permanent Chair is appointed at the AGM. They are also the corporate secretary in the bylaws, but we have minute takers.

RC (ASTSU): If we are to vote in a Vice-Chair today until the AGM, if that Vice-Chair wanted to re-offer in the upcoming year for the next full-year, just to keep it simple, is that a possibility?

JW (ED/Acting Chair): That would be at the discretion of the Board, but my governance advice would be that that would not be a good idea. Consistently, it is poor practice that interim leaders should not then be re-offered the permanent position, as they have a huge advantage. That being said, it is entirely at the discretion of the Board. I've called twice for nominations. Called a third time for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair. Heard none.

MR (ASU): Accepted the nomination. I don't have any interest in the Chair position. I feel that the Vice-Chair position is a really interesting one. I know that this year, we're hoping to enhance the roles of the officers in terms of ongoing discussions, and I think that we have a nice, diverse group, and that ASU likes to offer its opinion in some of those discussions. In terms of qualifications, I've been on the executive for a couple of years. I've been around StudentsNS for a while, and I certainly have admired the way that KP, in a non-partisan way, facilitates these types of discussions, and I hope to emulate that.

JW (ED/Acting Chair): Are there questions for the nominee?

AB (SFXUSU): Have you had experience before with Vice-Chair positions?

MR (ASU): I've chaired different committees through our Board of Governors, and different sub-committees so far, and SRC. Roberts' Rules is certainly not unfamiliar to me. Hopefully, with our Chair there, I wouldn't have to step in that often. It is my job just to assist the Chair, and to be secondary.

JW (ED/Acting Chair): Any other questions or movers?

AB (DSU): Do we call a vote? (*No*)

MM (SMUSA): Correct me if I'm wrong, but doesn't MR take over now as Chair?

JW (ED/Acting Chair): Yes. Do we have to move that?

Mike MacDonell (SMUSA) **moved** and Sagar Jha (DSU) seconded the motion that new Vice-Chair Matthew Rios be appointed Chair for this meeting.

Motion passed by general consent.

8) Position Paper plans for the summer

MR (Chair): You will become familiar with the way that KP Chaired meetings, and I have similar ideas. Robert's Rules don't need to be firmly followed other than announcing your school and your name. Free-flowing discussion is the best way to get ideas out. I will let the ED speak to this item.

JW (ED): I will put them up here. We had discussion in the Winter about what we wanted to get done this summer. The top priority, in my understanding, was mental health and disabilities, accommodation services, etc. There were three additional ones: Student financial assistance (including tax credits), employment, and housing. Our initial plan was that BP was to do mental health and disabilities, and move on to financial assistance if he had the time. I was going to do housing, and BF was going to do employment if he had the time. We wanted to get those three done by September. We had some internal conversations since. A complication: BF and his wife are having a baby in August. BF was our employment guy, and he was going to be our housing guy, but I can give you an idea of how much work these are going to be. Employment is going to

be a “3”, and housing is going to be a “1”, or a “2”. So discussions with staff yielded these recommendations for priorities for the summer. We could not expect to see the employment paper done by September. It is not possible for us to complete the top three there all this summer. This is the allocation of resources that we are looking at. I would be the lead on mental health and disabilities. BP would be the lead on student financial assistance because he is generally our guy for numbers and public policy. BF would be the lead on the housing report. The financial assistance one is our core issue, and I feel that we need to have our policy solid on this going into the election. I don’t like the idea of going through another year without being strong on this. The government announced the housing strategy. BF and I were at the announcement. It’s going to be rolled out in the next six months. One of the initiatives would be a credit of some type for graduates to buy houses. It might be a tax credit or a support program, and we’d like to participate in deciding that. It’s a key time and a feasible amount of work for BF to get done. Then BF would move to the employment paper in the Fall. My thinking is that, if he is working on a report, it might be something that he could work on from home a lot. It’s a relative advantageous position to be in.

B G-D (SFXUSU): Requested clarification regarding the indication of “3”; does that imply 3 weeks?

JW (ED): No, it indicates the level of difficulty. It might be fair to say 3 months as a timeline for that one.

BR (Comms.): The consultation and the ally building that has to happen during these papers is in-depth, and we get to know community stakeholders, which takes time, and then the drafting takes time, so writing is a small part of the process itself.

JW (ED): If you want, I can show you the plan from last year, which gives the list of priorities and the annual plan. The ones that we worked through are those ones, and we’d be moving student mental health to the top and changing these priorities here. The previous Board already moved them around somewhat, so we’d be skipping these ahead.

MR (Vice-Chair): Any other questions? Everyone’s clear?

JW (ED): It’s going to be a lot of work, to be honest. There are ten priorities there, and clearly we’re not covering all of them. They weren’t passed with the expectation that we were going to get all of them done. We wanted to have really good quality products on each of those.

MR (Vice-Chair): We’re also going into an election year. Obviously, all other things will be put on the backburner. We’re not looking for a motion on this, so if there’s nothing else to add, this is a good segue into the next item on the agenda: reviewers for papers.

9) Appointment of Board Reviewers for Summer Position Papers

MR (Vice-Chair): We’re looking for individuals who are 1) interested in the topics, and or 2) are willing to review a first draft. Essentially, you just go through the document and provide some feedback as to anything that is missing. We’re not looking for a proof-reader, but more to indicate if something is satisfactory or if it needs more.

JW (ED): I can bring up the governing policy again if you’re interested in what is written there on this position. We send you the first draft, and we welcome your feedback as to whether or not we’re on the right track or headed in the wrong direction.

BB (CBUSU): JW, do the housing papers deal only with on-campus housing, or all student housing?

JW (ED): It’s not just on campus. We haven’t established exactly how far we want to go with it, and it will depend somewhat on staff resources. It could extend as far as community living and relationships with community. Generally it’s residences on campus and tenant relationships: what are rights, availability of housing, affordability, etc.

BB (CBUSU): Is there any way to see before the draft is written what is going to go into it?

JW (ED): We circulate a proposal to the board in advance. Those will be within two-to three weeks from now (or earlier), and they indicate the methods that we propose to use, preliminary principles for the report, and an overview of different topics. That community living piece will be indicated as included or not. Part of your disadvantage is that we do a Board brainstorm earlier, and we did that with the previous Board, so you did miss out, but I will circulate the notes.

BB (CBUSU): How do we move forward with appointments?

MR (Vice-Chair): You appoint yourself. Self-nominate. It's not formal; if you're interested, just nominate yourself.

BB (CBUSU): Self-nominates for the Housing paper.

B G-D (SFXUSU): How many people are we looking for?

MR (Vice-Chair): We're hoping for at least one, but certainly if more than one person wants to read it and provide feedback, that would be good.

B G-D (SFXUSU): I'd be interested in the Student Financial Assistance Paper, but I'd be open to doing others.

MR (Vice-Chair): B G-D is willing to help out, with his preference being the Student Financial Assistance Paper.

JW (ED): May I ask, were you already appointed for the Mental Health paper?

MR (Vice-Chair): No, it was JA (DSU).

AB (SFXUSU): So, MR, are you then going to be the primary reviewer of that? No? I would like to put my name for reviewer of Mental Health and Disabilities.

ML (CBUSU): I would also like to put my name down for that.

MR (Vice-Chair): That's one of the great advantages of a Board. It might make sense to have two people.

JW (ED): I'm okay with that. I don't think that we need a motion, do we?

MR (Vice-Chair): No. Everyone, could you please stay in touch with JW (ED), and if there are any questions, just send them to him and bring them up at the next Board meeting. JW, please circulate the brainstorm notes.

JW (ED): For some, there's no point, since we'll have the proposal ready within the week. The scope on the housing one will have to be discussed with staff. I just want to make sure it gets done. Frankly, on the Mental Health one, there was some talk about having it extend into some things like sexual assault that are obviously really really important. It might be worth doing a mental health and accommodations paper, and later doing a safety paper just to keep it at a manageable size. I want to make sure it gets done.

10) Meeting with the minister on May 29th

JW (ED): So we have a meeting with the minister on May 29th. We've been informed that we can have 5 people attend that meeting. I wanted to get a sense of who would be interested in attending. The meeting was requested in two different contexts: the boycott around consultations on ancillary fees, and having a new minister/wanting to make an impression. It would be an overview of StudentsNS. We'd speak to the reports that we recently released, with emphasis on the Ancillary Fee report.

MR (Vice-Chair): When is the next round-table?

JW (ED): It was supposed to be in June. I don't have a date for that yet.

MR (Vice-Chair): There are obviously some new members of the Board who would be excited to get some face time with the minister. Is it your sense that this is a meet-and-greet opportunity, or is it an opportunity for specific, appointed asks? What are you looking for in terms of support from StudentsNS?

JW (ED): There are asks, but this is mostly meeting and making an impression. We won't have the asks done for the International Student paper if we release it in two parts.

MR (Vice-Chair): Are the 5 people 5 students, or students and staff?

JW (ED): 5 total. Staff can be just me, in which case we have room for four students. If we don't have 4, then BF (Comms.) would go.

AB (DSU): Have you met with this minister yet? (*No.*) I'm interested to see what will come of this meeting.

BF (Comms.): As your director of Engagement and Communications, I would say that, with the minister, my impression is that it is a very new portfolio for him. He's going to be learning this stuff, and it is quite a large portfolio. I would not expect opinions on a lot of things, and definitely not representative opinions of how the government is thinking on these issues. He's still very green on this file. That said, it is a great opportunity to build relations with government.

MR (Vice-Chair): When is the decision being made? (*The meeting is on the 29th.*) My suggestion is that we get back from CASA on the 23rd. Why don't we take tomorrow, and by the end of tomorrow, people can let us know who is interested, and we can make that decision via email. It gives people a chance to check their calendars and, if they're coming a distance, to make those arrangements. Is that comfortable? (*Do we email you or the ED?*) Both of us, preferably. We can just then do it all through email. We can find a way to decide who is going. I would strongly urge the Board to send 4 people as opposed to 5, with the other person being the ED.

11) D250 Mend the Gap Proposal

MR (Vice-Chair): This is a follow-up from last year. D250 is a fund with two previous Premiers as its trustees, and it goes towards funding democratic initiatives and we've been very lucky to get a tremendous amount of support from them.

JW (ED): Yesterday, I circulated the proposal. Last year, Mend the Gap was initiated in November, we created the proposal and applied for it in December, found out about it in January, and tried to do stuff right away. That's not how we want to do it next year. We want to secure the money now and have it available for September. The Fall semester makes more sense because that's when people decide if they're going to run for student politics. I want to talk through the new proposal with the Board. It has emphasis on new events, but we budgeted last year that we would have all this money for events, except that I'm getting the impression that that's not a very good place for us to be spending money. This year, we propose to spend about \$4,800 getting a co-op student in the Fall who is coordinating the campaign. We will also offer \$400 honoraria to campus coordinators on each member campus except at AST for obvious reasons. That would be the bulk of the money, with some money left over for StudentsNS to travel to campuses and attend events. There would be some money left over for food and so on. If it's inadequate, we hope that members would be willing to chip in and ensure that there are resources available for particular events to run. The proposal doesn't need approval, per se, but I wanted your feedback on whether or not it makes sense. If so, we'll submit it.

MR (Vice-Chair): We'll move into discussion now.

AB (DSU): I really like the structure. I like the co-op student and the campus-based honorarium. I've been a big supporter in the past, and I've had a lot of students come to me with similar concerns. It seems to be partly an issue of role models, which we knew. I just think that some people think that the money would be better spent on other things. It's not coming from me, so it's hard to articulate. For example, one woman said that it wasn't about role-model-ship for her,

she just didn't want to hear sexist comments when she was trying to campaign. I feel in some ways that the Mend the Gap campaign enforces differentiation between genders. I hadn't brought this up before, so I wanted to put it out there.

MM (SMUSA): I agree. That's why our Board decided not to have the campaign this year. It was two things: the lateness of it, and secondly the potentially negative effects and alienation of having the campaign highlight the female candidates. That's a reflection of the Board, not of JP and myself. I just wanted to have it noted. I just wanted to have a contingency plan for what if our Board again does not want to approve it.

MR (Vice-Chair): I'll respond quickly. Our StudentsNS board does not, of course, circumvent your own, respective Boards, so that shouldn't be an issue. Also, the Mend the Gap campaign is supposed to be in advance of elections. I think that that is a better message than during elections, where it may be perceived as reinforcing that female candidates need to be highlighted as female. It was more focused at fair representation of candidates in candidates who chose to run. We can still have a discussion on the merit of it and what it looks like. *(Agreed.)*

SJ (DSU): I think that it is a good sign that people are having difficulty articulating this. There are a few things about this campaign that I want to say. A campaign aimed towards encouraging and supporting women interested in running for student politics was problematic. This campaign didn't look at root causes of these issues and look at the kind of silo structures, policy structures, job descriptions; we didn't talk about how that would limit women's encouragement to run in the elections. So to encourage and support women already interested in running; that is a bit of a problem for me. There's a couple other things, like policy reviews. What these positions are set up like, and who is set up to be successful at them and who is set up to be not successful at them. It's touched here that research is a part of this program, and I think that this proposal might need to be flushed out a little more to really get behind it. There was no mention in the hiring of this campus volunteers of affirmative action. *(We have a standard of affirmative action.)* Thank you. The biggest thing for me was that mending the gaps is mending the root causes. There is emphasis here on events to make people feel empowered, I see the value in those, but I question the output in terms of implementing a solid plan so that everyone feels safe and welcome in student elections, that everyone feels safe and welcome in student positions. I think one goal should be to eliminate the program. If it is successful, it should not have to exist next year. I know that that's super-ambitious, but I think it should be one of the goals.

BB (CBUSU): The campaign came at a bad time for us, especially with our election being pushed. I agree with both DSU and SMUSA in that it seems like it was alienating the males because of the timing. It wasn't really explained; all that was there was that it was about getting women into student politics. *(AB: Correction, that is not what I meant.)*

MR (Vice-Chair): I have AB on the speaker's list next, but I'm going to give our ED a chance to weigh in, and I'm conscious of the fact that we have three female Board members, and I'm sure that all of us would appreciate hearing from them if they have anything to add, if that's friendly.

JW (ED): So, the research piece this year is significant, and we're just finishing it now. What I should have added was a report on this research. Like any StudentNS projects that are held on campuses, Mend the Gap should be designed by those campuses, so we don't define, in the proposal, how volunteers are to be selected. We propose that we might be involved in selecting those volunteers on your campus, but to a significant extent, we're creating materials that you can draw off of. As far as I know, the research that we've done is the first of its type done in Canada: a review of the past 5 years' election results for every student union position by gender so that we can establish that there is a gap and that it exists. We will hopefully release a public version of this report in September. In terms of structural issues, we've heard concerns also in this area. Part of this is a strategic area; do you want to have a campaign that emphasizes the positives, or the negatives. Mend the Gap vs. a "Encourage Women to Run" vs. "Stamp out Sexism." What kind of messaging do we want to go with, and will be most effective. My observation is that, during campaigns, the events held are overwhelmingly about root causes. They bring together people to talk about why women aren't involved, are discouraged from

running, and ultimately that's what it's all about: the campaign. Largely, the key result of this campaign is that talking about gender in student politics is now something that we're all doing, where as before, that wasn't the case. I think that there are different pieces that speak to those concerns, but a fundamental one is that ultimately we do get to some of the central causes, but do you want to have a campaign that emphasizes those, or one that is about empowerment? Do you emphasize the barriers, or empowerment?

MR (Vice-Chair): I'm going to implement one of KP's procedures so that we can hear from people who have not already spoken. I have AB, then SJ from the DSU, but first we are going to hear from the women on the Board. I will ask if our female Board members have anything to add.

AB (SFXUSU): I think that the research aspect will yield many results, and seeing how the positions are gendered is important information to have. I am not too familiar with how the events have been run on different campuses, so I can't really speak to that. It really depends on how each campus runs it and the timing, but I think that the research aspect of it could be really positive, and doing it over time.

DS (ASU): I saw the value of the campaign as a resource for women who wanted to run or who were thinking of running. When I think of a resource, I think of the more physical resources on campus (Women's Centre, Pride Centre), whereas this is not so much of a physical one. In many cases, such resources will alienate one or two groups, but the fact is that these people – women – do need these resources because there is a gap, and they have a harder time entering student politics.

AB (DSU): When you said 'research' and 'numbers', is that of the Boards?

JW (ED): We have Boards, Boards of Governors, Senates, representative councils, for almost every school. We couldn't get data from everybody.

AB (DSU): Some of this is coming from the membership, and some of it is just my own opinion. Sometimes, focusing on the positives can shut down discussions. The term "Mend the Gap" suggests implicitly that, if we did this thing, it would be fine. Research might be helpful; some people have said that the problem is obvious; sexism, misogyny, patriarchy all exist in campus culture and that's why people don't get involved. I don't disagree with you directly, but I think that a "stamp out the sexism" campaign would have been a lot more helpful.

MR (Vice-Chair): The only thing I'll comment on, AB, is that it's important to note that these societal issues are just that: societal, and not campus issues. There's greater need for us to push around these issues and for government to get involved in looking at some of these disparities. I understand your worries with the name/title of the campaign. I would focus more on what does the campaign mean. We're associating our own respective association with this slogan because we've all had different experiences on campus with it. So what can we change in terms of our approach to these assemblies on campus.

SJ (DSU): I think that part of this campaign is that it needs to be more proactive in building people who will be successful in elections and successful politicians from the get-go. I strongly feel that it should be geared towards negatives, as AB said. Looking back at our elections in the DSU, we had some serious instances of sexism, and no overt action or awareness from the DSU to work on those issues. Everyone knew it was wrong, but it wasn't taken seriously by our returning officers, and, in my opinion, if this culture of stamping out sexism existed right from the get-go at universities, the culture of sexism wouldn't infiltrate as it has into our elections. Furthermore, I think we need to be looking at universities and politicians and all positions that students see and mentor and are building mentorships with need to be representing all marginalized groups, especially when the main thinking here is that we don't celebrate the achievements from leaders from all different backgrounds already.

MR (Vice-Chair): In our experience, I think that you're preaching to the converted. You're not going to get any opposition here in this room, but I think what we're looking for is, because every campus is dramatically different in the way that they work, in the way that they handle their

campaigns to have the maximum impact. I think that we're looking to set the tone provincially with something that we all can agree is kosher, then we can put a different spin on it for our respective campuses. I think that that is something that we should encourage and support each other through. One thing I will say is that DS (ASU) is looking at doing a program of going and talking to High School students, and getting involved in student leadership while they're going to university. Those kinds of grassroots programs I think you've alluded to, I think in terms of being proactive and having those discussions before they get to university so that there isn't this perceived difference or gap. JW, we're not looking for approval of the campaign right now, we're looking for approval of the proposal for funding. Can we make an amendment to get the funding and then later to adjust the proposal?

JW (ED): Yes. If the ways that we're proposing to spend the money aren't appropriate, we can always adjust it later. We've deemphasized already the mentoring component (there wasn't a lot of interest) and each campus could adapt it to what you're trying to achieve. If you have an emphasis on dealing with sexism at Dal, since it's become such a strong issue; I should emphasize that every event that we've held so far has dealt with sexism in some way.

BF (Comms.): Because StudentsNS is a large tent, we knew that, as you saw with the plan, that one of the things that people wanted more of was campaigns. We thought that this was something that we should value more as an organization; local autonomy to develop these as they want to, so messaging is purposefully kept vague so that the locals have the power to tailor it to their campuses. That's all I'll say.

BB (CBUSU): DS and AB, did Mend the Gap play a role in their campaign? Had you heard of it?

DS (ASU): Yes, I had heard of it because I had been working with KP prior to my election, as a Senator. We did use a female-empowered campaign, I guess, but only because we had 5 males on our executive the previous year. I think that yes, it played a part in that there was notice that there was 5 males, and there were people who ran because of this disparity. My slate-runner and I were very adamant of the fact that we were the best people for the job, regardless of our gender.

AB (SFXUSU): My position is hired, not elected. In general, getting involved in this position, I hadn't known about the campaign. At our campus, women are generally quite active in our student government, although research may show differently for certain positions. Especially with the structure of our residences, you build up your involvement. We have all-women residences, and so obviously women are involved. It is specific to campuses, but that could be naïve of me to assume that women are comfortable in politics. It would be wonderful if they are, but I don't want to generalize.

BB (CBUSU): The only reason I ask is because I think that we should be encouraging those who want to get involved to get involved because they want to get involved. We shouldn't be pushing people to involvement because of their gender or race. We should be pushing for involvement, but not just for numbers.

MR (Vice-Chair): I have DS, then AB, then SJ, then we will finish this conversation so that we can find a concrete ask for today. We are agreeing that this is a good thing for us to talk about, and that funding is appropriate for this initiative.

DS (ASU): I think that my own response for your comment about involvement is that there is a hindrance for certain groups of people to get involved because of structures that are already in place. The point of this campaign was to break down those barriers and make it easier for people to get involved who normally wouldn't be.

AB (DSU): I really appreciate this discussion, and I haven't voiced these things before. It isn't a blame thing. What I want to say generally is that we should focus on culture and not so much on leadership. I think that would allow for a more expansive analysis to be built on the structural problems you were talking about. Some of the problems that I see sometimes in the SU is that, when we focus on leadership, female-bodied people are forced to adopt male characteristics to operate in those roles. That's just my experience. For example, you see homophobic language

being used in council, not just by men, but by women as well. A focus on culture would allow for an analysis of gender roles rather than just sex. Thanks for the discussion.

SJ (DSU): I was going to touch on what DS and AB said about looking at culture and gender roles instead of encouraging individuals from marginalized groups to get involved just because they are marginalized. Creating avenues so that people from all genders and cultures feel safe getting involved; I think that if that is in the wording somewhere, the way that the wording is set up now, it is focused on numbers and stats, and I feel that it could be focused on culture and climate and the experience of people from underrepresented groups.

MR (Vice-Chair): What I will do (in the absence of the Chair) propose that we approve this proposal in spirit, but ask the ED to capture some of the spirit of the larger cultural issues that we've discussed and the discrimination side of it, instead of just the election/campaign side of it. Maybe this is a full-year campaign instead of just a lead-up to elections campaign. I would like, if we can, a motion to accept in principle, and we'll call it Mend the Gap for now, if that's okay with everyone just so that we can put the funding proposal together, and we will circulate it before it is sent. We want to broaden the scope of this campaign, possibly, and look at some of the cultural ramifications around sexism in the campus experience. We also want to look at the possibility of getting into addressing some of the broader concerns regarding sexism and some of the root causes.

Sagar Jha (DSU) **moved** and Darcy Shea (ASU) **seconded the motion: Be it resolved** that the Board approve the D250 Mend the Gap Proposal (pending revisions to be made by the ED and subsequent approval of the Board of those revisions).

Vote:

ASU – Yes

ASTSU – Yes

CBUSU – Yes

DSU – Yes

SFXSU – Yes

SMUSA – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

12) D250 Student Assemblies Proposal

MR (Vice-Chair): I am conscious of time, and while I know that we love robust discussions, I ask that we try to keep this item brief, if that's comfortable with the Board.

JW (ED): The proposal is similar to the last. Last year, we did not do as many Student Assemblies as we would have liked to have done. One obstacle was simply timing. We will do a lot better this year; the timing of position papers last year (August) wasn't ideal, but in the coming year, we would be releasing position papers in September and January, which are much better months to host these events. The proposal is for funding from D250. The bulk would be \$400 honoraria for organizers on campuses per semester to organize the event. A real challenge last year was putting too much on the Board in terms of workload, and so we're conscious of that this year. The remaining funding would be, once again, excluding AST. The remaining funding would be for food, travel for staff, and I don't have the numbers in front of me...

SJ (DSU): I have them. Honoraria for students is \$4800, food for events is \$3200, travel is \$2000, and the total is \$10,000.

JW (ED): This time, we wouldn't cover anything except food at the events, and we'd want to be clear about this.

MR (Vice-Chair): I hope that this is a straightforward proposal. These can be used as a tool to engage our respective membership while leaving autonomy to schools to see how they want to engage. Some have seen small focus groups, while others have done large calls to the entire campus. I don't think that it is the purview of the Board to decide how each campus should go about it. If you have questions, I'm sure that the ED or myself can point you in the right direction.

AB (DSU): In general, should the honorarium be based on participants? I don't know if people are just going to get their friends. Should we just publicize it and if people don't come then it's a reflection of what we're doing.

JW (ED): We wouldn't communicate the honorarium being conditional to the volunteer because that changes the volunteer relationship. If somebody works really hard and gets 120 people out, vs. somebody who does next to no work and 500 people show up, I don't want to give them both an equal honorarium. It's partly a reflection of the fact that StudentsNS can't be on every campus in Nova Scotia all the time to make these things happen.

BF (Comms.): We're also conscious about not downloading the responsibility onto you.

JW (ED): We're trying to provide the resources while ensuring that you are not taking on a major piece of responsibility, so having some of the honorarium be conditional is that we have some control and accountability.

AB (DSU): So we just tell volunteers that you can get up to \$400 this semester, we decide after the project is done.

JW (ED): Yes. That would be decided on a campus-by-campus basis. We would ideally like for our members to recruit volunteers. This is another case where we are trying to secure resources for your SUs, and it's things that we want you to do.

MR (Vice-Chair): How did you arrive at the number of \$4800?

JW (ED): 6 x \$400 x 2. (*2 volunteers?*) No, 2 semesters.

AB (DSU): In general, I am totally for the structure, but I have a hesitation around the honorarium in general. Some people can use it as a way to exploit people. If it's a fun volunteer position, that's one thing, but if it's something where people actually have to do work, there are all kinds of fun things people can do to volunteer, so I don't know why anyone would want to do this. Just let that hesitancy be noted for the minutes, I guess.

MR (Vice-Chair): I guess the other side of it would be to let the honorarium be decided by member schools so that they can deal with that as opposed to us here. Is that comfortable?

BF (Comms.): May I interject? In the research that I've done into student employment, it's that we're conscious of that that we're thinking of offering it because too often with unpaid internships and volunteer positions, these things become highly exploitative very quickly. Our thinking is that you're right: with honoraria, you get into ambiguity about them being remuneration, but the spirit is also for it to be performance connected. It's also about different campuses facing different resource constraints; not all of them have as much funds to muster coordinators.

JW (ED): If we did provide the honorarium, to be clear, you would have to spend it on an honorarium position. There would have to be transparency.

ML (CBUSU): I do understand your concern, but this is such a big issue – getting students involved in student politics – that the promotional value of this event may outweigh the fact that there is a risk of being exploited. I am for an honorarium.

SJ (DSU): My only concern is that the honorarium is based on how many people attend.

MR (Vice-Chair): I have similar concerns as well. Why don't we let the language reflect it reflects the hard work and effort put in. Is everyone comfortable with that amendment?

AB (DSU): Maybe a measure of hours?

JW (ED): We do track hours on our volunteers, and we do try to compensate that, but if you do get into tracking hours in a volunteer job like this, it's not an honorarium anymore.

MR (Vice-Chair): I think that "service rendered" is a better use of language.

JW (ED): You can think of the numbers as a very loose guideline. If they got 15 people, they worked really hard, and it went really well, so be it. It's just one way of saying that they have to do a good job to get the full amount. I don't want to have to tell the funder that we gave out \$400 to somebody who didn't do a successful job.

MR (Vice-Chair): Just to be clear, is the ED comfortable with this language? (*Yes.*) Can we just have the language reflect something a little broader in scope than just the numbers? (*Yes.*) Can I please have a motion to accept?

Aaron Beale (DSU) **moved** and DS (ASU) **seconded the motion** to approve the amendments to the D250 Student Assemblies Proposal.

Amendments passed by general consent.

Sagar Jha (DSU) **moved** and Matthew Latimer **seconded the motion** to approve the D250 Student Assemblies Proposal.

Vote:

ASU – Yes

ASTSU – Yes

CBUSU – Yes

DSU – Yes

SFXSU – Yes

SMUSA – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

13) Summer Scheduling

MR (Vice-Chair): Can Board members please let me or the ED know if there are individual blocks in their schedules which are not looking good for scheduling summer meetings?

JW (ED): I also want to know if, like during the Fall and Winter semesters, Board members want to continue to have bi-weekly meetings. I strongly advise it.

MR (Vice-Chair): As do I. Are Board officers still to meet weekly? (*Yes.*) Would everybody be comfortable having meetings with a delegate from your schools every two weeks by phone? (*Yes.*)

BF (Comms.): We use Google Hangout now, which works for the most part. Please get a gmail account if you don't have one.

14) Review of the Board Education Retreat

MR (Vice-Chair) I am going to push this to the next agenda so that we have time to talk to our colleagues. We can come back to it next time we come back together as a Board. Is that friendly? (*Yes. Extremely.*)

JW (ED): I would also like to add an apology that I didn't circulate evaluation forms at the end of that event.

REPORTS

15) Reports of the Officers

- a) Chair – Absent
- b) Vice-Chair – Matthew Rios
 - i) Nothing to add
- c) Treasurer - Absent

JW (ED): He will submit his reports electronically, and will attend meetings relevant to his financial advice.

16) Reports of the staff

- a) Executive Director – Jonathan Williams
 - i) I circulated my monthly report last week.
 - ii) This week has been big, and hopefully we'll have significant impact with the funding paper that come out today.
 - iii) The International Student paper is being released in two parts; first part at the end of May, and the second part at the start of June.
 - iv) We'll keep everyone posted regarding Leaderlab

MR (Vice-Chair): Requests a motion to go in camera.

Aaron Beale (DSU) **moved** and Darcy Shea (ASU) **seconded the motion** to go in camera.

In camera.

Out of camera.

17) Reports of the members

- a) ASTSU
 - i) Gearing up the summer term. Exciting time on campus. People all over Canada arriving. May ask ED to come and sit in on some of those meetings.
- b) ASU
 - i) Just had graduation weekend.
 - ii) Getting ready to leave for CASA
 - iii) Continue to send thoughts and well-wishes to the Taylor family. The outpouring of support from different schools certainly means a lot.
- c) CBU
 - i) We just had the press release for the Capers helping Capers initiative, and we just sent the cheques to the four charities that the executive chose last year. We had media presence and did some interviews. Our new charities are the Cape Breton Mental Health Foundation, Memorial Fund, the Northside Hospital Foundation, and the Transition House
 - ii) We moved into our offices

- iii) Convocation weekend went well. We had our new president there, and we had a chance to attend an event with the honorary degree recipients.
- d) DSU
 - i) Intense two weeks of transition. Lots of team-building
 - ii) Peer-support mental health program launching in September
 - iii) Going about the first stages of hiring a degree coordinator
 - iv) Few more hirings
 - v) First council meetings, lots of experience anchoring inexperience. Good mix of new and old, good collaboration
 - vi) Going to CASA
- e) SFXUSU
 - i) Whole new team, moved into office on May 1st.
 - ii) Great transition with outgoing team. Great collaboration.
 - iii) Travelling to CASA tonight.
 - iv) We're pleased to be in Halifax.
 - v) Lots of work for orientation week
 - vi) Looking to create a new Mental Health Rep and work toward strengthening relations between Athletic/Recreations and SU
 - vii) Setbacks from the strike means that cuts are happening, and SU is working to ensure that they're as evenly distributed as possible.
- f) SMUSA
 - i) Nothing too serious. Transferred over same exec except for one position.
 - ii) Relations with university are going pretty well except for small battles.
 - iii) MM is heading to CASA tomorrow, JP heading up on Saturday.

NEW BUSINESS

Michael MacDonell (SMUSA) **moved** and Brennan Boudreau (CBUSU) **seconded the motion to adjourn.**

Motion passed by general consent.

ADJOURNMENT