

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

Meeting Name:	Board Meeting		
Meeting Date:	April 05, 2013		
Meeting Time:	11:00 AM, AST		
Venue:	Call-in	City:	Halifax, NS
Attendees			
Primary and Secondary Delegates:	Nick Head-Petersen (SFXUSU), Alana Lawrence (CBUSU), Michelle Lahey (Vice-Chair/CBUSU), Jesse Smith (ASTSU), Jared Perry (SMUSA), Mike MacDonell (SMUSA), Aaron Beale (DSU), Jamie Arron (DSU), Robert Bossler (ASTSU)		
Other attendees:	Jonathan Williams (Executive Director), Brian Foster (Communications), Alexis Zederayko (Volunteer Recorder)		
Absent:	Patrick Carruthers (Treasurer/SFXUSU) (regrets), Kyle Power (Chair/ASU) (regrets), Matthew Rios (ASU) (regrets),		
Quorum (50% of Members represented?): Yes			

- 1) Call to order

- 2) Roll call

- 3) Approval of Agenda
Amended agenda **approved by general consent.**

- 4) Approval of March 15, 2013 Minutes
Minutes **approved by general consent.**

DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL

- 5) Discussion of 2013 Provincial Budget

JW (ED): Would like to remind attendees to mute their microphones when not speaking. ED will give an overview of the budget: BF (Communications) and ED attended the lockup. The resulting budget is a win for StudentsNS, and all members should be proud. There was \$4.6 million invested in student assistance, and we received 90% of the expenditures we asked for in our pre-budget submission. We also received the second largest new social policy expenditure, which is a positive show of our results. The implications for students include a \$340 increase in the maximum assistance amount, and a \$308 difference in the loan-to-grant ratio (from 65/35% to 60/40%). We will want to look into the expenditures for mental health in the coming year. BF (Comms.) did a review of the coverage. We received media attention from CBC Global, Chronicle Herald, Metro, and others. We also received regional coverage from Radio Canada and Eagle Radio in Cape Breton. The CFS response was very negative, especially regarding tuition changes and cuts to operating grants. ED called Nick Stark and expressed the view that student groups are unable to say that “the government is doing nothing” to assist students, which was the view expressed in the CFS press release following the budget. Nobody is going to want to give us money if we respond in this manner. Does BF (Comms.) have anything to add? (No.) Also, via personal contact with the government, ED was informed that it was StudentsNS who achieved the \$5.5 million increase to student assistance last year. This year, there was confirmation again that the \$4.5 million increase is due to communications from StudentsNS. It is uncommon in this field to be able to say with confidence that one organization made such a difference. Students have put in \$300,000 to StudentsNS in two years, and we have delivered \$16 million.

ML (Vice-Chair): Called for questions.

JS (ASTSU): We made three asks; which one was not addressed?

JW (ED): MSI for international students. It was also the cheapest one, and it is still on the table. ED thinks that it is likely that we will get this in the future. It may not come at budget time. The government was closing a \$300 million gap, and likely was not comfortable giving \$500,000 to non-residents.

JA (DSU): It was an obvious win, but we don't want to take off pressure long-term. Noted concern regarding the language that we're using. Requested that ED clarify the conversation that he had with Mr. Stark.

JW (ED): ED called Mr. Stark, and had a two-minute conversation. He expressed that he couldn't understand their position. We are one of the few groups to get anything in the budget, and ED does not understand how the CFS can say, in the first line of their press release, that the government did nothing. This statement undercuts our ability to get anything if we give bad press no matter what.

N H-P (SFXUSU): Understood the need to play political ball, but does not want us to tailor our responses based on government desires or expectations. We should look at the impact on students.

JW (ED): Agreed. We got two out of the three things that we asked for. In all cases, our response will look at the benefits to students. ED noted that CFS responds only negatively regardless of government action, and that we say positive things and gained an increased investment in students.

JA (DSU): Requested clarification regarding Mr. Stark's response. *(ED and Mr. Stark wished each other a good weekend. There were apparently some follow-up comments on Twitter, but ED was not privy to that conversation.)*

BF (Communications): This is a complex formula to balance. One element is calculating the results of our actions, but we also have to give credit where it is due. We will run into shut doors if we do not. We have to be delicate with stakeholders and refrain from biting the hand that gives, whether with the media, politicians, or bureaucrats, as our actions can have a huge impact. Agrees with the need to state that these gains are "not enough", but notes the difference in emphasis: CFS is not setting themselves up as effective. Their only power is to bring it to the streets. In Alberta, during years of surplus, they are still cutting PSE. We are trying to recognize that this money comes at the expense of other groups.

AB (DSU): Is our receiving of these asks a result of us not asking enough? Also noted that the messaging of press releases can be changed.

JW (ED): These asks were approved by the Board. Our pre-submission was done in the context of a constrained fiscal climate, so our asks were modest. Do we say exactly what we think at all times, or do what will get results?

N H-P (SFXUSU): We talked about this at the Board meeting in Halifax, and tried to tailor our asks for wins and the message that they send to government.

AB (DSU): Felt that we were legitimizing government inaction. StudentsNS was quoted in government press releases. Legitimization of this sort fails to push our goals further.

JA (DSU): JA is not critical of staff, but is bringing up this discussion so to address how to approach next year's budget.

N H-P (SFXUSU): This was all discussed at the Board meeting, and we gave staff direction. Staff did fairly what was directed.

BF (Communications): KP (Chair/ASU) pointed out that we maintained our integrity by adding to the press release that student finance is still not sufficient considering tuition changes, etc. For changes in direction, Board needs to give staff enough notice to act with proper diligence.

JW (ED): From the staff perspective, this budget is a positive thing, which is rare in this work. Also, within our pre-election submission, we could have been less incremental. StudentsNS has since communicated to the government that if we could only get one thing, it would be an increase in the grant/loan ratio. Also noted that it is the responsibility of all Board members to take part in discussions so that our decisions reflect their views.

BR (Communications): There is a way to do this which is not public. CFS's publicity burns bridges; it displays non-confidence in the other party that they had to go to the press. With us, our lack of publicity stunts means that our releases gather much more attention. When we went in, it appeared that we didn't get it, and we were going to be critical, but we adjusted tactics when we saw that we had received what we asked for.

ML (Vice-Chair): Called for any further discussion. *(None.)*

6) Governing Policies:

ML (Vice-Chair): Here are the proposed amendments:

12 Members are expected to cover THEIR costs TO ATTEND in-person meetings and events.

13 STUDENTSNS WILL COVER THE COSTS OF STAFF MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE AT EVENTS, AS WELL AS HOSTING COSTS INCLUDING PAYMENTS TO FACILITATORS AND TRAINERS, SPACE RENTAL AND STATIONARY, UNLESS OTHERWISE DETERMINED IN ADVANCE BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

14 *Students Nova Scotia reserves the right to charge fees to members and other attendees of meetings and events corresponding to THEIR COST FOR ALLOWABLE EXPENSES (ACCOMMODATIONS, FOOD, ETC.), plus a maximum ten per cent (10%) surcharge to compensate Students Nova Scotia for administration and risk of cost overruns. Members and other attendees must receive notice of all Students Nova Scotia charges five (5) business days prior to the commencement of the meeting or event, when possible.*

15 *When delegates register to attend a meeting of the Board of Directors or other Students Nova Scotia event, they agree to cover their costs of the meeting, WHEN APPROPRIATE.*

ML (Vice-Chair): Called for additions or comments.

JW (ED): KP (Chair) and ED worked through these. For example, for the Board meeting in Cape Breton, SUs were billed for StudentsNS staff's travel costs. These changes would put the cost onto StudentsNS. Also, concerning Veronica MacNeil's training sessions, StudentsNS would pay StudentsNS's costs for meetings. Board members will still pay for their food and accommodations, plus 10% to protect StudentsNS against cost overruns, but may pay more for activities you want that StudentsNS can't afford. It is a small amendment, but concerns were voiced.

JA (DSU): Requested clarification regarding notice. May Board members have more than 5 days or notice regarding the cost of meetings? JA is not looking for a big discussion of this issue now.

JW (ED): Yes, and requested that members look at what was spent in the past on StudentsNS to prepare a budget. These amendments guarantee cost-effectiveness, as costs will come out of StudentsNS budget.

ML (Vice-Chair): We are approving the amendments as one motion.

Nick Head-Peterson (SFXUSU) **moved** and Alana Lawrence (CBUSU) **seconded the motion:** With respect to the costs of StudentsNS board meetings, **be it resolved** that Board of Directors amend Governing Policies 12 through 15.

Vote:

ASTSU - Yes

CBUSU – Yes

DSU - Yes

SFXSU – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS

7) Reports of the Officers

a) Chair - Absent

b) Vice-Chair – Michelle Lahey (CBUSU)

i) Engaged in a consultation yesterday after the budget

c) Treasurer - Absent

8) Reports of the staff

- a) Executive Director – Jonathan Williams
 - i) Circulated his monthly report, so not too much to discuss.
 - ii) Spoke already regarding the budget.
 - iii) Home-office staff is plugging away at the position papers. International student paper is seeing good progress, and ED had a meeting with ASTSU regarding this issue. Is anticipating another meeting with SFXUSU.
 - iv) BF (Communications) is looking into the details of our next Leaderlab.
 - v) ED hopes that everyone can make it to the Board meeting on April 19th. We will discuss the budget, strategic plan (with Veronica McNeil), and the agenda will be substantial. We do not know the location yet, although it will probably be around Truro.

N H-P (SFXUSU): Noted that PC (Treasurer) will not be able to attend, as he will be writing an exam.

ML (Chair): Noted that CBU is not finished exams until the 24th, and will have to check with professors regarding exam schedules. Called for new business. (*None.*)

Nick Head-Peterson (SFXUSU) **moved** and Alana Lawrence (CBUSU) **seconded the motion to adjourn.**

Motion passed by general consent.

ADJOURNMENT