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CUS GRT Force Minutes

November 7th, 2011

Start Time: 5:03pm

Present: Jackie, Emmet, Riki, Johannes, Tim, Jacky, Chris, Aldora, (Cole)

Late: -

Regrets: Graham, Chad, Klazina

Updates

- Johannes: I'd like to preface the conversations I've had since Monday's meeting, and frame our discussion around that. Monday was one of the best meetings we've ever had, and it made clear what the real issues are with the board structure that we need to discuss. Some of the main issues were a really poor understanding of the expectations of the board, whether they're written in the bylaws or not, people don't understand how the board is supposed to function; there were points brought up of the execs speaking 75% of the meeting, and perhaps that's more a matter of emphasizing that the board should be speaking at a board meeting. Also emphasizing that people should be held accountable to their attendance, preparation, and ensure there are board procedures in place because the board of procedures was supposed to be written up but we were counting on one person to do this. I think our operations are also poor, we had a really good conversation between myself and others, however what happened instead of a consulting process, the entire board turned into a committee trying to figure out what to do. Composition can and does help to a certain extent, I think there's still value in bringing alumni on board, it's not as big in how the board actually operates. Armin and Emmet reaffirmed my belief that first years can bring unique and articulate opinions and discussion points to meetings, that isn't to say there isn't value in bringing alumni on board to discuss those more difficult issues. Any feedback to this?
- Jacky: I think Johannes is doing a great job, you're the first president has dared to change something, I applaud your courage.
- Johannes: I would like to commend Chris, Jacky, and Tim for driving the conversation on Monday in a positive direction
- Johannes: there are some people who knew Roberts' Rules very well and jump into the conversation on Monday, another issue is there isn't a clear division between the execs and the board, there isn't a distinct leader of the board, it's hard for Jackie to take minutes and lead at the same time

- Johannes: after taking on the feedback, the main changes that are proposed:
 - Transition time back to March 1 or two weeks after the transition period
 - It's better to get our feet wet and have a clear idea of our position before the end of classes
 - Elected speaker from amongst the board members, right now there's a conflict of interest where the execs hire the speaker
 - Institutionalizing board procedures (not part of the referendum)
 - There is a document that lays out some of the main things that a board should be doing (creating the main processes, for example there should be a template of monthly updates from the execs)
 - Alex Monegro sent me a great template of a monthly 1-page report detailing objectives and where they are with these objectives
 - Four alumni board members
 - Similar structure, super majority students but there are four alumni who provide that extra support and engagement
 - Creating an equitable nominating structure
 - I propose that a nominating committee from the current board nominate some individuals for a two-year term the following year
- I'm having a meeting with Sheldon on Wednesday for input, ideally my goal is to decide what each of these points looks like, I'll write these up and present them to Sheldon for proofreading
- Tim: I like how these changes are proposed, my original fear with the previous suggestions was that the message to the students would be "this isn't working right now and we have to change everything". This proposal seems much more positive, "we can make it better", I think it'll be much more receptive to the CUS in general. Three referendums in three years is unheard of and risky in establishing confidence in the student body, if it shows we're not starting from scratch every year it maintains confidence
- Johannes: the next step is cleaning up everything, instead of having all of these policies laying around, having a code and constitution where only things that need to be done by referendum are under the constitution
- Tim: have you thought of hiring or getting external help? We're students and aren't experts, I'd be willing to put money into it
- Jacky: I would encourage you to constitutionalize your board procedures
- Tim: but board procedures can change
- Jacky: more fixed things that won't be changing
- Chris: with the alumni part, there was some talk, and Andrea brought up the mentorship program she's proposing that we might look at this closer to the end of the year
- Cole: there is a lot that needs to be cleaned up, there are abstracts provided for some of the policies, but to make them more readable for students
- Johannes: reimbursement policy was made to be much easier when a video was made
- Johannes: Any opposition to changing the transition time back to March?
- Tim: what's our current turnover date?
 - Last day of classes
- Tim: has the election date changed?

- Johannes: they're January to February
- Tim: so we're cutting short the board members' terms?
 - Yes, the point is to allow shadowing, it'll be happening anyway, you're empowering the new people to make decisions, and you'll be there for assistance
- Tim: this makes more sense, I'd suggest that there has to be a way to make shadowing a more formal thing
- Riki: we were talking about on-paper transitioning, but it's different than in-person transitioning
- Jacky: Maria Sun (elections officer) was looking at having board member job descriptions
- Johannes: alternative: what's the difference between March 1st and two weeks after elections?
- Riki: I think March 1st is good
- Chris: what about things under the budget that fall under our year?
 - They've already approved the budget, the spending has been approved
- Tim: the budget will stay the same, but requests post March-1st will be handled by the new board; any previous decisions continues, the risk of transitioning is always there
- Johannes: elected speaker vs. hired?
- Riki: if the board elects within the board, that person should be capable
- Jacky: the name "chairperson" is more professional
- Johannes: agreed
- Johannes: Institutionalizing board procedures?
- Johannes: four alumni board members, I think I've motivated my side
- Riki: it's not exactly that they'll directly contribute, but it'll set the tone, I think it's good functionally and good for appearance and professionalism
- Tim: why four?
 - Two rotating each year
- Johannes: for any super majority vote for anything needing 75% of the vote, you need at least one alumni in support
- Tim: I'm fine with this as long as there is 2/3 majority
- Riki: I like it because the students have the power but alumni still have a say
- Chris: will the meetings be monthly?
 - Yes
 - The operations would be student bodies presenting to the exec and them presenting a recommendation to the board and the board making decisions so they can spend less time talking about operational stuff and more time on strategic things
- Tim: over the weekend I had a chance to listen to Robert Lee who's a member of the board of governors, and he told us the story that happened when he was a board member for the school, and he used his connections to reach out and do so much for the Vancouver community, I think it could take us places we could never have imagined
- Jacky: I'm concerned about the genre of alumni
 - Our current board will help to decide that, so we don't get inadequate people, I would hope most people would have good judgment for this

- Aldora: what if the decision needs to be made in the middle of the month and it's a monthly meeting?
 - It's the same with meeting bi-weekly, there's nothing we can do, if it's serious we can hold an emergency meeting or do an email vote, if we communicate the importance of monthly meetings, we can't cater to them necessarily
- Chris: we should put policies in place for monthly reports from the execs
- Johannes: and we can have larger quarterly reports
- Johannes: now creating equitable nominating structures, this is something I don't have an answer for
- Tim: so we'll do a staggered nomination the first year this happens? Two alumni will be chosen by the last board and two by the new board?
 - No, we're picking four and asking two to be two years and two for one year
- Tim: and then it'll always be the previous board that picks the new alumni
- Riki: what about AGMs? Even if they aren't in favor at the AGM isn't it equitable?
- Johannes: the student board elections should be ratified, and then also the alumni
- Riki: who will be directly affected by the decision? The board and the exec, but do we really need members at large?
- Tim: in terms of getting student representation isn't it redundant? You already have student representation from the board, I don't think we need MALS, and I don't think there are high conflicts of interest because the last board is electing the new members

End Time: 6pm