
**University of Saskatchewan Students' Union
Annual General Meeting**

Minutes for November 28, 2024 - 6:00 PM

Arts 143

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:24 PM. Chairperson Rafid-Hamed stated the land acknowledgment.

2. Call for Quorum

Quorum was present.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion to adopt the agenda as presented.

AGM001	Member Cortes-Vargas / Member Finnie	Carried
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4. Adoption of the AGM Minutes

Motion to accept the AGM minutes of November 30, 2023, into the official record.

AGM002	Member Abesia / Member Mashrafi	Carried
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5. Auditor's Report

5.1. Presentation of Audited Financial Statements by KPMG

Ian Braaten from KPMG stated that the auditor's report found that the statements were correct and there is a clean audit opinion.

Assets are at \$29.9M, up \$2.9M from \$27M the previous year. The increase has mainly come from investments.

Current liabilities are \$3.6M, up \$2M from \$1.6M the previous year. Current assets are \$14.5M. The current assets to current liabilities ratio is very healthy.

There is a deficit of \$300,000, down from \$1.1M the previous year.

Revenue is \$6.7M, up from \$6.2M the previous year. The increase has come from investments and sales at Louis'.

Expenses are \$5.9M, up from \$5.7M the previous year.

Surplus of approximately \$794,000.

5.2. Financial Statement Resolution

Be it resolved that the audited financial statements of the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union be accepted for the year ended April 30, 2024, as presented.

AGM003	VP Ahiabu / President Chavda	Carried
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5.3. Auditing Firm Resolution

Be it resolved that the auditing firm of KPMG Chartered Accountants be appointed for the 2023/2024 financial audit.

AGM004	VP Ahiabu / Member Drawin	Carried
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6. Proposed Amendments

6.1. Proposed Amendment to Section 15 (by Estefan Cortes-Vargas)

Member Cortes-Vargas was involved with an amendment from three years ago which allowed executives to take up to three courses per term; the purpose of that amendment was to allow international students to run for executive positions, since they must take at least three courses per term. However, Member Cortes-Vargas expected that the USC would create a policy which stipulated that executives could take three courses

only if it was required for their study permit. No such policy was created, so there is currently nothing to stop domestic students from taking three courses per term while serving as an executive. This proposed amendment to section 15 would change it back so that an executive can take a maximum of two courses per term.

President Chavda explained that the USSU executive is kept accountable through an accountability policy and the USC. This proposed amendment would disallow international students from serving as executives.

Member Mashrafi shared that they are a Member of Students' Council for international students and believes that international students who serve as executives are capable of working full-time on top of their course load.

Member Cortes-Vargas explained that the intention of the proposed amendment is not to exclude international students. The issue is that the USC never created a policy to make an exception to the maximum course load for international students, and therefore executives who were not international students exceeded the maximum course load. Rather than allowing executives to take up to three courses per term, there were other options, such as developing a course through which executives would gain credits for their work. The USC should take a year to create the policy, then the maximum course load can be increased once that policy is in place. Currently there are no measures to hold executives accountable short of impeachment; a course load policy would improve accountability.

Member Tellez-Hernandez shared that they believe that if executives are working 40+ hours per week on top of a full-time course load, they may become overburdened.

Member Pamimo claims that international students account for nearly 20% of students, and this amendment would be unfair to them.

Member Cortes-Vargas shared that there was an international student who served as USSU President without taking three courses in a term. President Chavda claimed that the reason an international student previously served as USSU President was due to an AES exemption.

The former USSU President shared that it was a credit request to the University that they were able to hold the position, not an AES accommodation.

President Chavda reiterated that it was due to an AES accommodation.

Member Wintermute proposed a sub-amendment to allow only those who are required to take three courses per term to do so. They also shared that they believe it is inappropriate to disclose that someone had an AES accommodation.

President Chavda claimed that no further amendments will be allowed because they first have to pass through a lawyer.

Point of order: Member Cortes-Vargas claims that is not true, and amendments have been accepted at every AGM.

President Chavda claimed that only friendly amendments will be accepted.

Member Cortes-Vargas claimed that under Robert's Rules of Order, sub-amendments must be accepted. They believe that the sub-amendment is in line with the intention of the original proposed amendment.

Chairperson Rafid-Hamed accepted the sub-amendment.

Member Meghal claimed that these students have planned their degrees ahead of time so that they are able to seek election.

Member Proudfoot shared that they work two jobs and a full class load on top of being a member of the Education Students' Society, and therefore it is possible to balance different responsibilities.

Member Zbaraschuk claimed that it is not the number of courses but a person's character that determines whether they will be accountable as

an executive. They shared that they have witnessed executives working during classes, so a determined executive will find the time for their work.

The sub-amendment was defeated by a vote of 31-81.

The amendment was defeated.

Motion to amend Section 15 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGM005	Member Cortes-Vargas / Member Kwashi	Defeated
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6.2. Proposed Amendment to Section 16 (by Estefan Cortes-Vargas)

Withdrawn.

6.3. Proposed Amendment to Section 18 (by Nada Emara)

Member Emara shared that the intent of this amendment is to develop an ethical investment policy to ensure that the USSU's investments remain in line with its values. Specifically, the policy should prohibit investments in the arms industry.

VP Ahiabu said that he agrees with the intention of the amendment. However, the USSU already has an investment policy in place, and elements of this proposed amendment could be incorporated into that policy rather than into the bylaw.

Member Emara believes that these proposed changes should be added to the bylaw so that responsible investing is a duty of the Executive Committee. Additionally, they would like to see a student working group that conducts financial reviews.

President Chavda shared that the University Students' Council has a Finance and Assessment Committee, composed of students, that reviews the USSU's finances and budget. Also, the USSU invests with RBC, and they review for responsible investment.

Member Proudfoot believes that a better definition of "environmental harm" is necessary because it could harm companies who fund research.

President Chavda shared that USSU policy disallows investment in any company valued at over \$100 million in market cap, which disqualifies many companies. Most of the USSU's investments are with RBC and First Nations Bank.

Member Kemmer proposed a sub-amendment: change "environmental harm" to "exploitation of natural resources without environmental analysis."

Motion to change "environmental harm" to "exploitation of natural resources without environmental analysis" in the proposed amendment.

AGM006	Member Kemmer / Member Cook	Carried
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Member Awad shared that the purpose of the amendment is to hold the Executive Committee accountable. While a policy may encourage responsible investment, Member Awad wants students to be able to see where the money is going.

Member Elsayad claimed that RBC invests in companies that are contrary to the USSU's values.

VP Ahiabu reiterated that the Executive Committee is not opposed to the amendment, they are simply looking for the proper way to implement it. The USSU invests primarily in non-risky assets.

Member Clarke claimed that there is a genocide occurring, and they are concerned that they may be complicit. They feel that they cannot in good conscience pay dues if doing so results in harm.

The amendment, with Member Kemmer's sub-amendment, was carried.

6.4. Proposed Amendment to Section 25 (by Estefan Cortes-Vargas)

President Chavda shared that the Executive Committee supports the intention of the amendment. However, by tasking with USC approving executives' office hours and number of courses, it is not clear what would happen if the USC did not approve. Therefore, he proposed a sub-amendment: change it so that the USC "shall be informed" of the executive hours and number of courses.

Motion to accept President Chavda's proposed sub-amendment.

AGM007	President Chavda / Member Flynn-James	Carried
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The amendment was carried.

6.5. Proposed Amendment to Section 35 (by USSU Executive)

VP Ahiabu shared that reducing the number of members of the Student and City Connection Committee will allow it to function easier.

Motion to amend Section 35 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGM008	VP Ahiabu / Member Kemmer	Carried
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6.6. Proposed Amendment to Section 37 (by USSU Executive)

President Chavda explained that the Indigenous Students' Union has eliminated its President position. This proposed amendment would change it so that a representative from the ISU, rather than its President, will co-chair the Indigenous Student Advisory Committee.

Motion to amend Section 37 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGM009	President Chavda / Member Drawin	Carried
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6.7. Proposed Amendment to Section 38 (by USSU Executive)

VP Singh explained that these proposed changes to the International Student Advisory Committee will allow it to meet on a regular basis.

Motion to amend Section 38 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGM010	VP Singh / Member Mashrafi	Carried
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6.8. Proposed Amendment to Section 60 (by Emma Wintermute)

Withdrawn.

6.9. Proposed Amendment to Section 63 (by USSU Executive)

President Chavda explained that the purpose of this amendment is to provide greater clarity on what quorum is for a referendum.

Motion to amend Section 63 of the USSU Bylaw.

AGM011	President Chavda / Member Kemmer	Carried
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6.10. Proposed Amendment to Section 81 (by Estefan Cortes-Vargas)

Withdrawn.

7. Proposed Motions

7.1. Proposed Motion (by Wren Dahl)

Member Dahl's motion called on the Executive Committee to draft a letter to the provincial government in opposition to Bill 137. While the bill does not directly impact post-secondary students, Member Dahl feels that it is important to support the trans community.

Motion for the USSU Executive Committee to draft a letter to the Government of Saskatchewan in opposition to Bill 137.

AGM012	Member Dahl / Member Ayles	Carried
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VP Singh stated that the USSU Executive Committee would gladly draft a letter.

7.2. Proposed Motion (by Emma Wintermute)

Member Wintermute shared that few people are familiar with changes to student wages. Most students are currently under level 1 classification. The USSU should establish clearly which executive's portfolio student wages falls under so that information on this issue can be collected and communicated to students.

President Chavda shared that the USSU submits budget recommendations to the Provost each year. This year, the USSU submitted a recommendation that USask compare its student wages to those at other U15 universities. The USSU can write a follow-up letter if necessary.

Motion by Member Wintermute regarding student wages.

AGM013	Member Wintermute / Member Dahl	Carried
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7.3. Proposed Motion (by Estefan Cortes-Vargas)

Member Cortes-Vargas believes that the wages of centre coordinators is not clear. The USSU should freeze executive salaries, conduct a review of USSU student employee wages, and ensure that executives do not make over 25% more per hour than the lowest paid student employee.

President Chavda shared that centre coordinators received a 12% wage increase last year, and other student employees also received an increase; executives did not receive a salary increase. This motion cannot apply to Louis and Louis' Loft employees because they are bound by a collective agreement. The only category of student employees whose hourly income is not within 25% of executives is Student Crew employees. Increasing the wages of Student Crew employees could result in an increase to student fees.

Member Cortes-Vargas proposed a sub-amendment to remove the 25% requirement.

Member Kemmer proposed an amendment to publish the finding of the wage review on the USSU website.

The amendment, with the sub-amendments from Member Cortes-Vargas and Member Kemmer, was carried.

Motion to conduct a wage review and publish the finding online.

AGM014	Member Cortes-Vargas / Member Dahl	Carried
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8. President's Report

President Chavda shared that the USSU under his leadership is guided by advocacy, awareness, and alliance. Some of the initiatives highlighted include introducing Campus Groups GPT, improving federal advocacy through CASA, and developing a strategic plan for the USSU.

9. Questions and Comments for Executive

Member Ayles shared that some students may not be familiar with AGM processes and were not aware that they could propose motions. In the future, the USSU should better explain to members what actions can be taken at the

AGM. They also asked what the next steps will be on the investment amendment.

VP Ahiabu answered that he will work with the Finance and Assessment Committee and then will publish the information on the USSU website. The guidelines that were added to the bylaw will be added to the investment policy as well.

Member Wintermute reiterated that it was inappropriate for President Chavda to publicly disclose a student's AES status and encouraged him to consider apologizing.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Adjournment

Chairperson Rafid-Hamed adjourned the meeting at 8:00 PM.

Motion to adjourn.

AGM015	Member Braaten / Member Twamley	Carried
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