

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES
2020/2021**

Date: November 27, 2020
Chair Member: Chavannay Bennet
Attendees:

Term: F20

Title		AUSU Members	Authorized Proxy
President	★	Yahaya Alphonse	
VP Campus Affairs	★	Japhet John	
VP Student Life	★	Cieanna Walcott	
VP Indigenous		Vacant	
International Student Councillor		Vacant	
Queer* Councillor	★	Rebekah Gwynn	
Residence Councillor	★	Elvis Boakye	
Athletics & Varsity Councillor		Vacant	
Women's Councillor		Vacant	
Diversity & Equity Councillor		Vacant	
Mature/PT Councillor		Vacant	
International Student Councillor		Balpinder Kaur	
Brampton Rep		Vacant	
Timmins Rep		Vacant	
Recording Secretary – NV	★	Dipeeka Luitel	
Ombudsperson – NV		Tyler Murphy	
Chair – NV	★	Chavannay Bennet	
Finance Coordinator – NV		Vacant	
Executive Director – NV	★	Janette Wallace	
People's Garden Coordinator – NV		Johnathan Lalonde	
Food Pantry Coordinator – NV		Alyson Macleod	
WUSC Coordinator – NV		Vacant	
Communications Officer – NV	★	Chardon Kozak	
Equity Officer – NV		Ali Pearson	

Meeting called to order at:	2:49	Confirmation of Quorum:	5	# of members present:	13
Approval of Last Meeting Minutes	Moved by: Yahya Seconded by: Cieanna				

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Vote Count	In Favor: 5	Opposed: 0	Abstain: 0	
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Voting Items:

Agenda Item(s):	Ratification of women's, international student, and pt & mature, brampton and timmins voting members		
Speaker(s):	Yahaya		
Motion:	Motion to ratify Barbara Asare, as the Women's Councillor, Nicolette Rebello as International Student Councillor, Edmund Badu as Mature/PT Councillor, and Shanece Lee a Brampton Rep voting members		
Discussion:	<p><i>Janette</i> - Going through the elections report. There was an issue with Nicolette not being able to attend the All-Candidates debate but Nicolette provided sufficient notification to CRO and was able to answer the questions prior to the debate. There were no disputes between the candidates and none of the candidates received any demerit points. Therefore, all candidates who won did so without any issues. Going virtual was difficult for campaigning because not all students have social media so this may be something to address going into the future.</p> <p>Motion to ratify Barbara Asare, as the Women's Councillor, Nicolette Rebello as International Student Councillor, Edmund Badu as Mature/PT Councillor, and Shanece Lee a Brampton Rep voting members Mover - Yahaya; Seconder - Japhet Motion passes</p>		
Vote Count:	In Favor: 5	Opposed: 0	Abstain: 0

Agenda Item(s):	Appointment of Balpinder Kaur as Diversity & Equity Councillor		
Speaker(s):	Yahaya		
Motion:	Motion to appoint Balpinder Kaur as Diversity & Equity Councillor for the 2020/2021 school term		
Discussion:	<p><i>Yahaya</i> – Balpinder was hired as the International student for the SS20 term, and due to the vacancy, we have for the Diversity & Equity Councillor as well as her previous experience in a similar role we are seeking to appoint her for this new role. Once we state our intent to appoint, students have 10 days to challenge our decision.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – Other options are to wait until the by-election or later until the next election in April if we feel that the position of Diversity & Equity Councillor is not currently needed for the board.</p> <p>Motion to appoint Balpinder Kaur as Diversity & Equity Councillor for the 2020/2021 school term Mover - Cieanna; Seconder – Elvis Motion passes</p>		
Vote Count:	In Favor: 5	Opposed: 0	Abstain: 0

Agenda Item(s):	Expressions of Interest/ Appointment process for Varsity & Athletics councillor		
Speaker(s):	Janette, Rebekah, Yahaya, Japhet, Barbara		

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<p>Motion:</p>	<p>Motion to fill the position of Varsity & Athletics councillor for the remainder of the 2020/2021 school year</p>
<p>Discussion:</p>	<p><i>Janette</i> – In order to fill this position by appointment, it will be done through an expressions of interest process. The potential candidates will state their intent, and we will advertise them. If students do not come forward with any disputes, then the candidate will be ratified for that role.</p> <p><i>Rebekah</i> – As a current varsity member, there is interest from the varsity council to have representation in AUSU with an official liason.</p> <p><i>Yahaya</i> – Varsity makes up a significant portion of students so this would be a good way to incorporate more representation onto the AUSU board.</p> <p><i>Japhet</i> – Has had interested students reach out to him about the Varsity Councillor position, so this would be a good opportunity to provide better representation of the students.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – We will require a resume/cover letter from the interested applicants and if there is enough time then we can hold an interview panel for the position. After selecting the preferred candidate then we will advertise the candidate. The previous election had issues with the elected Varsity councillor due to evidence of him not being inclusive. AUSU had received complaints from students at large about them so they were not ratified for their role, and this is why there is a current vacancy for this position.</p> <p><i>Barbara</i> – Suggest reaching out to the varsity council and having them appoint a member to the position onto the board.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – The issue this is that is that it would exclude candidates of student athletes who are not on the varsity council or have associations with varsity council.</p> <p><i>Yahaya</i> – Moving forward, we should be taking ideas from the varsity council on nominating a candidate but for now AUSU policy is not specific enough to warrant having the varsity council appoint a candidate.</p> <p><i>Rebekah</i> – The varsity council has many students with a heavy work load but the council would be willing to create more roles for new members if the candidates were able to serve as an official liaison for this position.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – Best way forward would be to approve the motion and then table the discussion of how we fill the position for later.</p> <p><i>Rebekah</i> – The needs of varsity students are especially unique this term due to COVID so having a student fill this position would be especially important.</p> <p>Motion to fill the position of Varsity & Athletics councillor for the remainder of the 2020/2021 school year. Mover – Yahaya; Seconder - Japhet Motion passes</p>

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Vote Count:	In Favor: 8	Opposed: 0	Abstain: 0
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Agenda Item(s):	Change chair for the board meeting		
Speaker(s):			
Motion:	Motion to have Dipeeka take over role and act as temporary chair for the remainder of the meeting		
Discussion:	Mover – Japhet, Seconder – Yahaya Motion Passes		
Vote Count:	In Favor: 8	Opposed: 0	Abstain: 0

Agenda Item(s):	Hiring of Daniyar Almenbayev for Finance & Accounting Technician
Speaker(s):	Janette, Yahaya
Motion:	Motion to hire Daniyar Almenbayev for the position of Finance & Accounting Technician
Discussion:	<p><i>Janette</i> – There is an urgent need to have an accounting person come on board to deal with the AUSU finances. AUSU is creating new staff positions for the board, and some of these positions will serve a longer term as AUSU has very high turnover. We are also re-evaluating the compensation of the board members. The position of a Finance Intern was previously funded by the government, this term we will not be hiring an intern because the students cannot have any previous work experience and this does not meet our current needs. Since we are seeking more permanent support, we are looking for a candidate for a full-time position. To provide support to students with Algoma’s rapid growth and expansion, we are seeking a more permanent and experienced candidate to fill this role with a salary of \$42k/year. Daniyar has worked with AUSU previously and has knowledge with how AUSU operates. Daniyar would have to move back to Sault Ste. Marie from Calgary to fill this role because having it be virtual would be very difficult. If the board approves to hire Daniyar, we should offer him a moving allowance to ease his transition back to the Sault.</p> <p><i>Yahaya</i> – Can speak to how Daniyar is a good candidate for this role due to his previous experience at AUSU and his knowledge about how AUSU functions. Having to retrain new people for positions makes it difficult for AUSU and having a more permanent person fill this role would allow AUSU to be more efficient. Relying on Janette to complete all the roles makes it very difficult for her to handle all the finances adequately.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – The board structure is very outdated, so having more positions for students to fill the roles which would create more jobs and allow the creation for more permanent positions to better serve the needs of AUSU.</p> <p>Motion to hire Daniyar Almenbayev for the position of Finance & Accounting Technician.</p>

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	Mover - Cieanna; Seconder – Yahaya Motion passes		
Vote Count:	In Favor: 8	Opposed: 0	Abstain: 0

Agenda Item(s):	Emergency fund		
Speaker(s):	Janette, Yahaya, Elvis		
Motion:	Motion to allocation of \$15k for the creation of an AUSU emergency fund.		
Discussion:	<p><i>Janette</i> – Does the board want to put forward a motion to create an emergency fund to assist students who have a demonstrated need in requiring support? The current bursary program allows students to apply for up to \$500 for financial emergency. A new program would allow for the creation of more strict guidelines. Or we could table this item and put it forward as a recommendation for the next AUSU Board.</p> <p><i>Yahaya</i> – Due to current conditions, this would be a good idea. We may need more information before we officially move forward in the creation of the emergency fund.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – Recommend putting less than \$20k into the fund as a starting point.</p> <p><i>Yahaya</i> – Based on the amount of applications we have, we might to create a committee to handle all the applications.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> - We should create criteria for the funding, and we should be careful to not create a deficit in the AUSU finances due to this fund.</p> <p><i>Elvis</i> – It is necessary to create emergency funds right now instead of tabling this topic for the next board. There will be students who will need assistance this coming school term so we should make sure we are able to assist them as quickly as possible.</p> <p><i>Yahaya</i> – We should begin by allocating \$15k towards the fund, we do not have to create a whole committee right now but allocating the money is a good start.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – We can also revisit this as a board and allocate more money further on based on the needs of the students.</p> <p>Motion to allocation of \$15k for the creation of an AUSU emergency fund. Mover - Elvis; Seconder – Cieanna Motion passes</p>		
Vote Count:	In Favor: 8	Opposed:	Abstain:

Discussion Items:

Agenda Item(s):	Board Restructuring and Capital Investment townhall
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Speaker(s):	Janette
Discussion:	<i>Janette</i> – The townhall for board restructuring and capital improvements will be held on December 4, 2020. There may be pushback from students, especially from SASA due to the removal of the VP Indigenous position, but this meeting is to receive feedback from students. We will be revealing the conceptual design on the Speakeasy, the People’s Garden, the Globe, etc.

Agenda Item(s):	Update on budget/year end audit
Speaker(s):	Janette
Discussion:	<i>Janette</i> – we are about to start the audit as soon as we receive confirmation from Algoma on the budget for the health plan and the payroll which is expected by next week.

Agenda Item(s):	Holding AU accountable for quality of learning and academic supports - Open discussion
Speaker(s):	Yahaya, Japhet, Janette
Discussion:	<p><i>Yahaya</i> – Students have been complaining that professors are not teaching and instead are just presenting slides for their classes. Have spoken to students from other Northern Ontario schools and they mentioned that the academic dean has the authority to give professors guidelines on how they are required to conduct their classes. We need to put pressure on holding professors accountable for the quality of education. Students are also complaining about the extra fees that are being required by them from professors who are posting materials online which can only be accessed after payment.</p> <p><i>Japhet</i> – There are international students who have to obey their home country’s guidelines on money and finances which is causing undue hardships to them. We have been speaking with AU on creating an opt-in/opt-out option for including textbook costs into their tuition fees.</p> <p><i>Yahaya</i> – We are working to create a committee to deal with this issue and supporting students.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – Algoma is not the only university experiencing this, news articles are stating that up to 60% of students are stating they are not receiving enough support for online learning. We should compile all of this research to present a solid case to Algoma.</p>

Agenda Item(s):	Health & Wellness supports for students in the community and on campus
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Speaker(s):	Rebekah, Janette, Yahaya
Discussion:	<p><i>Rebekah</i> – Looking to update the list of different health services offered as many services are either no longer in service or are running different due to COVID. Thinking of creating posters to put in the common areas on campus, in the dorms, and handing out flyers. Also looking to create an off-campus health services and partnering with Sault Collee to petition the city to attract more health professionals as there is a severe lack of doctors in the Sault.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – We should also look at opportunities to take initiatives in funding health services on-campus. We also need advisors to direct students to the right place. There is a lot of work to be done and we should establish a lead in healthcare.</p> <p><i>Rebekah</i> – Spoke with Karen who has stated that many students are cancelling their appointments, but this is likely due to the long wait time for those appointments which will not be addressed in time due to having a pressing health care issue.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – Dr. White is a practicing physician outside of Algoma University and has many clients, so Algoma should create contracts in hiring a doctor who is more available to students. Dr. White has office hours once a week on campus and is also only respond to emails once a week.</p> <p><i>Yahaya</i> – Algoma should hire a dedicated doctor for the Algoma campus.</p> <p><i>Rebekah</i> – Dr. White has stated that Algoma is providing students not what they need to succeed but only what they need to succeed academically.</p>

Agenda Item(s):	Workplace and customer service training
Speaker(s):	Janette
Discussion:	<i>Janette</i> – Government is mandating workplace training for customer service, workplace violence and harassment. There are some training modules that are not offered by Algoma so AUSU will need to pay out of pocket to receive the training.

Agenda Item(s):	Semester reports/honorariums
Speaker(s):	Yahaya, Janette
Discussion:	<p><i>Yahaya</i> – Honorariums will be given out very soon but board reports from the summer and the fall semesters are required to receive the honorariums. The newly elected councillors are not required to fill out the board report.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – If new councillors would like to submit a report, they can do so and may receive a portion of their honorariums.</p>

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Agenda Item(s):	Policy committee
Speaker(s):	Yahaya, Janette
Discussion:	<p><i>Yahaya</i> – Looking to create a policy committee to update current AUSU polices.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – Current policies are outdated and creating a committee would allow us to make changes to our polices. The committee members would not have to be internal to AUSU. There are two types of policies - governmental and operational – that are required to be updated.</p>

Agenda Item(s):	Frost O-week
Speaker(s):	Janette
Discussion:	<i>Janette</i> – For o-week there will be a virtual booking, if there are any ideas of events then please reach out to Cianna or Japhet.

Agenda Item(s):	Website RFP
Speaker(s):	Janette
Discussion:	<i>Janette</i> – There are issues with getting qualified candidates for the RFP. Have put out a new request for applicants which will close next week.

Agenda Item(s):	Handbooks/Contractual Renewals
Speaker(s):	Janette
Discussion:	<i>Janette</i> – Cutting the handbooks as an expense for the next semester. Winter semester will be held online so it makes more sense to send a digital handbook for students. We will also need to decide during the next board meeting on advertisements for the next school year.

Agenda Item(s):	Flurrrish Update
Speaker(s):	Yahaya, Janette, Nicolette
Discussion:	<p><i>Yahaya</i> – We are putting a pause on Flurrrish, as there are things that are more time sensitive such as the Speakeasy and the budget/hiring that we need to focus on.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – Flurrrish is a social media app for clubs, but they can use other social media such as Facebook to communicate as this is not a good time to implement a new app.</p>

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	<p><i>Nicolette</i> – We should be aware that many students are not using Facebook anymore.</p> <p><i>Janette</i> – We need to know the trend of social media platforms that students are currently using. We do not have the capacity to test a new app right now.</p>
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Adjournment of Agenda		Motion to adjourn the meeting at: 5:11		
		Moved By: Yahaya		
		Seconded By: Cieanna		
Vote Count:	In Favor: 6	Opposed:	Abstain:	