**Board of Directors Meeting Agenda**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date**  | Sunday, 26th September, 2021 |
| **Time** | 3:00PM Atlantic Daylight Time (Canada) |
| **Location** | Topic: SMUSA Board of Directors September MeetingTime: 3:00 PM Atlantic Time (Canada)Join Zoom Meeting<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89222448784?pwd=a1JaaXQ3bjR5WW9vSm9Hcmp5TjhiQT09>Meeting ID: 892 2244 8784Passcode: 614200 |
| **Present** | Joshua Sydney (Board Chair), Alex Wilson (Vice Chair), Joshua Lafond, Mihika Mihika, Adam Snow, Pearl Buyanzi, Miyah Basden & Abhinav Gaur  |
| **Regrets**  | Brian Tumusiime |
| **Resource** | Franklyn Southwell (SMUSA President), Kaylie Dolan (Board Secretary) |
|  |  |

1. **Call to order and Land Acknowledgement**

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm, and a land acknowledgement was made.

1. **Welcome and Introduction of Board Members**

At 3:07 pm, Mr. Sydney welcomed new members to the Board. Each member of the 2021-2022 SMUSA team was provided an opportunity to introduce themselves; Franklyn Southwell (President), Kyle Cook (Advocacy), Joshua Sydney (Board Chair), Alex Wilson (Vice Board Chair), Joshua Lafond (Society Committee Chair, Board of Governors Representative), Mihika Mihika (Elections Committee, Society Committee, HR/Governance Committee), Adam Snow (HR/Governance Committee Chair), Abhinav (Elections Committee Chair), Miyah Basden (Finance Committee, HR/Governance Committee), Pearl Buyanzi (Finance Committee)

1. **Introduction of Board Secretary**

At 3:19 pm, Mr. Sydney welcomed the newest member, Kaylie Dolan, to the Board in the position of ‘Secretary’.

1. **Conflict of Interest Declaration**

At 3:20 pm, Mr. Sydney asked if there were any conflict-of-interest declarations to the Board of Directors. There was no such declaration presented.

1. **President’s Report**

At 3:27 PM, Mr. Southwell, President of SMUSA, gave the President’s Report (see Appendix).

1. **Chief Governance Report**

At 3:33 pm, Mr. Sydney gave the following Chief Governance report; highlighting the work of the HR/Governance Committee in establishing a new and robust HR policy, the Elections Committee in getting the elections process underway, and the Governance Training that was offered from the respective Governance Advisor.

1. **Any Other Business**

At 3:35 pm, Mr. Sydney asked if there was any other business to be discussed. None was presented.

1. **In-Camera Session**

At 3:35 pm, Mr. Sydney motioned to move to an in-camera session, Joshua Lafond seconded, motion carried.

1. **Adjournment**

Mr. Sydney motioned to adjourn meeting, Adam Snow seconded, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned 3:36 pm.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Logo, company name  Description automatically generated | **Board Report***September 19th, 2021* |

**Appendix**

**Advocacy**

**Annual Planning Sessions:**

Over the summer I facilitated workshops with the SMUSA executive to create our annual plan for this 2021/2022 academic year. I can say we are in the final stage of almost releasing the plan with all of our students through an info session that we will seek to conduct later in the semester. We just have to get final approval from our SMUSA board.

 **Strategic Planning Sessions:**

Over the summer, my executive members and I participated in a series of workshops conducted by the university that included faculty and students. The purpose of these workshops was to develop the university’s new five-year plan. Some of the major topics that were focused on included increasing enrollment, improving retention and the graduation rate. The workshops also provided an opportunity to do a review of each faculty in terms of assessing their strengths and areas that need improvement. So, some of the recommendations we made included for the university to offer more flexibility for students to choose between online and in person options, while investing in more skilled programs such as courses in graphic design, web design, media training etc.

**Elections:**

Over the summer we had the unique and rare opportunity to create a GOTV campaign for both a provincial and upcoming Federal election which is set to occur in a few days. On these efforts, we collaborated with both SNS and CASA to create digital content on our social medias for what is predominantly a digital campaign. We also hosted a town hall on campus for the provincial election candidates in collaboration with the Sobey school and we partnered with the Dalhousie university student union, and the Sobey school to host the federal candidates debate last week.

SMUSA happily engaged with Elections Nova Scotia in helping connect their staff with our internal services team. I would like to give recognition to our operations manager Graeme for helping out as well. These efforts helped establish a community polling station here in our student centre. Additionally, we were able to host all candidates in the Halifax Citadel- Sable Island debate here in our McNally Theatre. In partnership with the Sobey School Community Revitalization and Prosperity Network, the community was able to engage with the candidates VIA live stream. SMUSA also hosted pre-interviews with all provincial candidates in the area to assist in communicating the importance of voting.

**Students Nova Scotia**

1. SNS Annual Planning - StudentsNS hosted their annual planning sessions during the end of August. We developed our policy plans on a variety of issues- like student housing, student retention, accessibility and affordability. These new policy plans will be executed over the next 8 months by individual teams from each member school. Our VP of external Adrian White is chair of the policy committee, so the goal for him is having these policies done before November which should be a reasonable goal. It is just that Working with these groups and consulting student groups will take time.

**Internal**

**Community Organizing and Tenancy rights, housing options**

Our team has been Working with Lawyer Billy Sparks & grassroots organization Tenancy Rights for International Students, to develop a tenancy rights workshop called “Understanding Tenancy in NS” the first session occurred on August 8th, 2021, and over the rest of the year we will continue to host similar sessions like this. Also, we have been working with student services to create a list of off campus housing options for students, but new students especially who have no idea where to find accommodation off campus. The hope is that we can have an approved list of housing options that can be posted on our website as a student can click on for more options.

**Graduate Advisory Committee**

We are in the process of creating an advisory group for graduate students. We feel as though these are one set of students who often times feel neglected and underrepresented by us at SMUSA. So, this committee or working team will aim to provide a platform for these students to have a direct line of communication to us. At this point we already have finalized the Terms of reference for the Graduate Advisory committee and posted it online, so we are just in the process of accepting applications.

**Sexual Violence Committee and Advisor**

Over the summer SMUSA has continued its work from last year’s team in being part of the policy making process for the SMU sexual violence Policy which is being led by student services. I believe it is safe to say the policy is already written and now awaiting final approval. Additionally, SMUSA was invited to sit on the hiring committee panel that conducted interviews for the sexual violence advisor. We are pleased to have been included in this process and we are pleased with the recommendations we made for our top picks for candidates. So, hopefully in the coming weeks a final decision is made on the new hire.

**Pride Center Coordinator**

We are in the process of making a proposal to our SMUSA board for the approval of a budget for the new pride center coordinator position we are seeking to hire. This individual will be tasked with managing the pride center on the 5th floor of the student union building and their roles will include creating social and educational events for our LGBT community, organizing our pride week this semester, creating a working document and terms of reference for the pride center and of course accommodating all of our students identifying with that community. We are only hiring a student for this position, and they will report directly to our VP of Advocacy and the President.

**Residence Committee**

SMUSA is seeking to collaborate more with residence this year. We want to work together more directly on promoting our events and services to residence students, and to ensure we are giving them the opportunity to talk to us about any issues or concerns they are bearing. So, we did reach to out to Kati Kilfoil and her residence life team with a proposed term of reference and proposal for the structure of a committee but have yet to receive a follow up. But will be opening applications to join the committee within the next week or the following week after.

**Indigenous students**

We are continuing our effort to support our indigenous students and the community. So, over the summer, we have met with some indigenous students to getting the indigenous society started and find ways in providing all the supports they need. Additionally, we are in the process of working on creating events geared towards promoting indigenous culture and developing our facilities to better accommodate them. And we are working with the President’s office to get these events and initiatives in place for this year and for the long term as well. As well as being part of the hiring committee for the new indigenous advisor position.

**Hiring**

Starting this semester, we have made some additions to the SMUSA team. We recently hired a few positions and are in the process of hiring a few more:

* A fulltime Marketing and communications Manager,
* A full time Health Plan Coordinator
* A board secretary
* An assistant marketing officer
* An assistant health plan officer

**Events**

**Pride Month**

So, the city of Halifax did celebrate pride month in August this year in terms of hosting in-person events due to covid restrictions in June. So, SMUSA did host an online drag queen event to show our support for the community. The event itself went very well and was well attended with over 20 participants who took part in a make-up tutorial with a drag queen.

**Welcome week**

We are in the process of wrapping up our welcome week events. Overall, we managed to successfully host a great set of in person events such as our wings and trivia night in the gorse book, our jeopardy game, our scavenger hunt, movie night on the field, our water fight, and of course our ikea trip. Unfortunately, we did have some rain cancellations for some events but hopefully we are able to still host them later in the semester. We still have our society expo outstanding as well which is scheduled for next Thursday.

**Black mental health**

SMUSA is privileged to work with the Counselling centre and the Nova Scotia brotherhood to host the first barbershop talk here on campus on October 4th. This will be an opportunity for our men on campus and in the community to have a space to just share and reflect on the challenges they go through that affect their mental health which in most cases they never have the opportunity to reflect on. So, we are very excited for this project, and we hope this first of its kind event will be well received by our community here so we can make these events a regular occurrence on our campus.

**Consent week**

SMUSA is partnering with student’s services to host our annual consent week from September 20th to 24th 2021. The idea here is to create events and informative sessions for the rules of consent and respect on our campus, and how to be proactive in supporting survivors of sexualized violence as well.

**Election night party**

Tomorrow evening we will be hosting an election watch event in the Gorsebrook lounge in anticipation of the Federal election results. So, it is a 19+ event and we will be offering various drinks specials, so we encourage all of you to come out for a good evening of fellowship and responsible practices.

**Academic**

**ACADEMIC APPEALS**

 - Meeting with students to discuss the Final Grade Appeals process

 - Meeting with students to discuss the Academic Integrity Appeals process

 - Meeting with both of the above Committees to hear cases and weigh in on upholding or denying the appeal

**TUTOR DATABASE**

SMUSA Tutor Network (Tutor Database)

* The Tutor Network, also known as the Tutor Database, is live on its new site.
* Tutors may apply through the SMUSA website.
* Students have shown great interest in both joining as tutors due to the flexible schedule and above minimum wage, as well as utilizing the service.
* Students have been vocal about the need for more tutors.

**STUDENT CONCERNS**

 - I have been hearing from many students with concerns about Academic Integrity Offenses which they feel to be a result of poor communication with their professor

 - I have been hearing from students who are concerned that their professors are not communicating to them in a timely manner

 - Action: I will raise these concerns at the appropriate Committee meetings while respecting and strengthening existing faculty-SMUSA relationships.

**Accessibility Week 2022**

* SMUSA was invited to join the Accessibility Week 2022 Committee.
* The VP Academic was nominated as the representative to this Committee.