**14th Meeting of the 50th SRC**

**Date: Friday, March 1st 2024**

**Location: ONLINE - Zoom**

1. **Call to Order**

Elizabeth Namit, the Chair of the SRC called the meeting to order on March 1st, 2023, at 3:05pm.

1. **Land Acknowledgement**

St. Thomas University Students’ Union recognizes and respectfully acknowledges that it carries out its work on the traditional unceded territories of the Wolastoqiyik, and Mi’kmaq peoples. This territory is covered by the “Treaties of Peace and Friendship” which these nations first signed with the British Crown in 1726. The treaties did not deal with the surrender of territories, but in fact recognized Mi’kmaq and Wolastoqiyik titles and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations. STUSU members and staff pay respect to the elders, past and present, and descendants of this land.

1. **Roll call**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Position | Name | Present | Regrets | Absent |
| President | Stevie DeMerchant |  |  |  |
| Vice President Administration | Ahmik Burneo |  |  |  |
| Vice President Education | Emily Boucher |  |  |  |
| Vice President Student Life | Isabella Baralt |  |  |  |
| Indigenous Representative | Tanner J Augustine |  |  |  |
| International Student Representative | Ana Lucía Pavón |  |  |  |
| At Large Representatives (2) | Lauren Hayes |  |  |  |
| Off campus Representatives (2) | Emma Craib |  |  |  |
| Sexuality & Gender Diversity Representative |  |  |  |  |
| First Year Representative | Aidan Steeves |  |  |  |
| Harrington Representative | - |  |  |  |
| Vanier Representative | Fae Swinamer |  |  |  |
| Holy Cross Representative | - |  |  |  |
| Social Inclusion Representative | Colby Beers |  |  |  |
| Grad Class President | Lindsay Graham |  |  |  |

Quorum has been met with 7/11 members.

1. **Review of the Minutes.**

**[4.1.] BIRT** the Board approve the minutes of the 13th Meeting of the 50th SRC as presented.

**Moved by:** VP Education

**Seconded by:** VP Student life.

**Motion** CARRIES

1. **Review of Agenda**

**[5.1] BIRT** the Board approves to amend the agenda to include under New Business 10.1. “STUSU Re-election - President and VP Admin”

**Moved by:** Vice-President Administration

**Seconded by:** Off Campus representative.

**Motion** CARRIES

**[5.2] BIRT** the Board adopts the agenda as amended.

**Moved by:** VP Student Life

**Seconded by:** VP Education

**Motion** CARRIES

1. **Unfinished Business.**

No unfinished business.

1. **Executive Reports.**

*Executives provided verbal report followed by a written one.*

* 1. **President report – Stevie DeMerchant**

Meetings:

* Board of Governors Meeting:

During this meeting, we had a productive discussion about the upcoming St. Thomas University strategic plan. We received a presentation on the plan and had the opportunity to address any concerns or provide feedback. It was a valuable opportunity to express our gratitude for STU and ensure that student perspectives were taken into account. Additionally, STUSU provided an update on the latest student initiatives and projects.

* New Brunswick Student Alliance Governance Committee Meeting:

In this meeting, the committee members discussed potential by-law changes and the future direction of NBSA. We explored ideas on how to shape NBSA's goals and objectives over the next five years, aiming to enhance its effectiveness in representing and advocating for students.

* Meeting with STU Administration, Indigenous Representative, and Wabanaki Student Center Staff:

This meeting focused on refining the draft of the new smudging policy for residents. We collaborated with STU administration, the Indigenous Representative, and Wabanaki Student Center Staff to ensure that the policy adequately supports the needs of students, administration, and residence life. We discussed ideas to further enhance the policy and promote inclusivity on campus.

* Meeting with Dr. Farooqi and the Executive Team:

During this meeting, the STUSU executive team had an opportunity to meet with Dr. Farooqi to discuss upcoming events on campus and address any concerns raised by students. It was an important platform to coordinate efforts and ensure effective communication between the student body and the university administration.

Miscellaneous:

* Candidates Debate:

The candidates' debate witnessed an impressive turnout, and all participants delivered exceptional performances. It was a successful event that allowed students to engage with the candidates, ask important questions, and gain insights into their platforms and visions for the future.

* Procuring Snacks and Supplies for Election Events:

We organized the procurement of snacks and supplies necessary for the smooth functioning of the election events. This ensured that participants and attendees had a comfortable and enjoyable experience during these events.

* Youth Panel at the Wolastoqey Tribal Council Annual General Assembly:

I had the privilege of being invited to speak at a youth panel during the Wolastoqey Tribal Council Annual General Assembly. I had the opportunity to address important topics such as access to the Post-Secondary Student Support Program, educational barriers faced by Indigenous students, and ways in which communities can support their youth. It was an enlightening experience to engage with the audience and contribute to the discussion on empowering Indigenous students.

* SEC Meeting:

During the SEC meeting, the team provided updates to one another.

* 1. **Vice President Administration report – Ahmik Burneo**

Last Week:

* Initially met with the CRO and the VPSL to coordinate the candidates’ debate which took place this week.
* Met with a student who is interested in starting a Media club and this meeting was to provide more information about what the difference is between a ratified and recognized club with the union. At the same time, she shared her ideas on the club, and I guided her through the process before applying for either recognition or ratification.
* I was invited to attend an executive meeting for the international student association last week. Initially it was intended to be on I think it was Wednesday, when I sent an email to follow up and confirm, they said it was the same day that I was sending the email and so I was not able to attend this meeting.
* Last week two funding applications for club and societies were approved by the finance committee and another was under review.
* I received an update from the students interested in starting the Human Rights society, they were drafting a constitution and asked some questions for guidance.

This Week:

* On Monday the executives along with CRO attended the candidate’s debate. It was the candidate’s debate for the president and the vice president education, and it was a great turn out. It was great to see people it was the first time the candidate’s debate was held in person in a while, so we were excited to see the people interacting and contributing to the debate, essentially the Q&A section of the debate. This was also transmitted live through Instagram and later was shared on social media for those who were not able to attend were able watch later.
* A student reached out to the president but later was directed to me, as they were expressing their interest in starting two clubs. The clubs are possibly a book club and a chess club. They were trying to understand the process of starting a club on campus with the union.
* A while ago the governance committee received an amended constitution from the Pre-Law society, which the committee reviewed and provided some feedback. This week we received an updated version of the amended constitution which was reviewed by the committee accordingly and it will be later shared again with our thoughts.
* Some students interested in starting the Human Rights society, now they will formally be called the STU Human Rights Initiative. They have officially submitted an application for ratification by the union. The governance committee met this week to review the Pre-Law’s society constitution, the Human Rights Initiative ratification application and the English society application for ratification that we have pending.
* We received the funding application that was pending last week, we reviewed it for the Irish society, and it was approved by the finance committee. At the same time the Mental Health society applied for funding from the finance committee, which it was evaluated and then approved.
* A student who was interested in getting registered for the health and dental plan. The person responsible of this of campus trust was on vacation, but everything is set, and I confirmed with the student on that end we are good.
* Yesterday I attended the board of trustees of campus trust where we discussed some potential medications that will be potentially in cooperated into the plan or be removed and this is our second to last meeting of the academic year as part of my term as student trustee.
* At the same time yesterday, the executive team had its meeting with Dr.Farooqi the St. Thomas University President and it was a good opportunity to share some updates of the work we have been doing and share some concerns .
* The executive team received an invitation from the STU Black Student Association to attend their event called “Black Food Fest and Art” which took place last night, the VPSL and I attended, and we really enjoyed it.
* Last night the executive team met to discuss some issues around the elections.
* Today the executive team met for its weekly executive meeting.
* Today the VPSL and I went around campus to encourage people to vote.
* I held my weekly office hours at the help desk both last week and this week.

**7.3. Vice President Education report – Emily Boucher**

Last Week:

* Attended MP Atwin’s youth table, had a great conversation with the Minister of Tourism where we discussed any initiatives, they have to attract students coming to New Brunswick.
  + We also discussed the possibility of beginning a campaign, maybe regarding lack of transportation or making initiatives towards reconciliation efforts in Fredericton
* Attended Senate where new courses were approved, and I shared updates regarding the events STUSU planned
* Attended a town hall/Q&A for the International Student Program, where IRCC answered any questions students had brought up regarding their new decision regarding the international student cap.
* Soon rolling out the hiring ad for the new executive director for the NBSA, most likely tonight
* Working on funding proposals for new grants for the NBSA that are due soon
* Organized Pizza & Policy with MP Atwin, unfortunately we had to reschedule to March 13th from 1-2pm in the Dawn Russell Lounge.
* Received an email from a student from University of Alberta requesting a meeting to discuss textbook costs and new potential policies that if implemented, will raise textbook costs even more
* Emailed facilities to request a meeting with them to find a solution for the on-campus covid tests that are expired, and to have them replaced with new ones. Waiting for a response
* Currently setting up an event for the Learning and Teaching Development Committee for students to give their opinion on their workload and how they are feeling in a post-covid world. If anyone is interested in helping out with this, I’d appreciate any help! We would be setting up a table in JDH

This Week:

* Setting up Pizza, Policy and the Planet with MP Atwin and Minister Guilbeault on March 11th from 2:30-3:30pm.
* Working on biweekly updates for the NBSA
* Attended a NBSA governance committee meeting
* Attended Student Executive Council
* Attended candidate’s debate for the STUSU executive roles.

**7.4. Vice President Student Life report – Isabella Baralt**

Last Week:

* Book the OC Lounge for Pizza and Policy and the candidates’ debate.
* Met with a student to discuss a family emergency and how to approach it with their classes.
* Met with the CRO and VP admin to discuss the candidates debates and all the logistics.
* Exchanged emails with the International Student Coordinator to discuss some students’ cases and how we can support them.
* Kept conversations with MayDay for Merch.
* Held my office hours in the helpdesk.
* Met with the SEC

This Week:

* This focused on elections.
* Purchased all the drinks and snacks for the debate and meet and greet.
* Organized and received orders for the merch.
* Booked the Dawn Russel lounge for the Pizza and policy event.
* Started receiving and organizing the Community Food Smart Orders.
* Started organizing and sending emails for Accessibility Week.
* Ahmik, Stevie, and I met with Dr.Farooqi to discuss different concerns and projects.
* Attended the BSA Food Fest and Art Expo.
* Held my office hours in the helpdesk.
* Met with the SEC

1. **Employee Updates.**

No employee report available.

1. **Representative Reports.** 
   1. **International rep report**

* The Multicultural fair is coming up since Fichay is not here and neither is Alberto because of his concussion. Therefore, I have been working with the members of STUISA to get everything up and running. So far, we are running a bit rocky, but I think in the end it will run smoothly.

**VP Student Life:** I just want to let you know Lucia, feel free to let them know that the union can help them and would be more than happy to help them organize it if they need it and of course help you help them.

**International rep:** Okay thank you.

1. **New Business.** 
   1. **STUSU Re-Election President and VP Administration**

**President:** STUSU Re-Election, as many of us have seen as a union, we did have to call for a Re-Election. Unfortunately, there was a human error made, and we ended up doing voting for one day when our by-laws state that this is mandatory minimum of two days. Our priority is students, so we tried to address this as quickly as possible and be as transparent as we can. Right now, what we are trying to do is make the best out of a not so good situation. On behalf of the STUSU, we apologize for this inconvenience to everybody, we are hoping we will be able to move forward with transparency, accountability, and action on our behalf. Ahmik can dive more into the nitty gritty of this decision and what led up it.

**VP Admin:** Just to provide a bit of an explanation on how the decision was made, essentially once ballots were closed, they cannot be open so as we noticed that there was a violation of our by-laws requiring for a minimum of two days for the spring general elections, when the election technically only lasted ten hours from 8am-6pm we needed to fix this. The reason behind doing it the next day right after is essentially because if we would have declared the results official last night an appeal process would have occurred, with the appeal it is not the results itself that would have been appealed but the election itself would have been appealed. Therefore, the entire election will be invalid by the time of an appeal would have been made and so because we are already planning to have a by-spring elections to look for potential candidates for position of vice president administration we want to ensure to avoid such a process and keep things moving smoothly, and so again because we could not open the ballots when they were closed the best decision again to ensure transparency was to call for a re-voting, right at the next day. Just so to provide a bit of a timeline as I have noticed that there has been some misinformation being shared around, the results were not shared with the entire student body, initially votes were shared with the candidates the CRO sent an email to all candidates at around 6:11pm last night, but the STUSU never shared it on social media because we were actually planning to do so until we noticed the mistake at 7:13pm all candidates were informed about the decision being made about recommencing the elections beforehand all the executive, the general manager had a meeting to discuss potential solutions for this considering all the potential risks and consequences of that again, with an error committed there are consequences and therefore we had to find the best way to cope with them and the best alternative among the different alternatives. At 8:00pm the students were informed with the decision of recommencing the elections on social media, on the STUSU Instagram specifically. Then because we are committed to transparency, accountability and we are here to represent the student body, we have a responsibility first with the candidates and with all the students, we got in touch with the STU communications to first inform all the students after it was already informed that there was a re-elections, there was a message sent to all the students last night at around 9:39pm and then there was a reminder today in the morning sent out, explaining the reasons behind the re-election and taking ourselves STUSU accountable for the mistake and providing again an explanation of possible solutions. That is why the voting for the elections have started once again today at 8am and they will last until tomorrow at 6pm.

**Chair:** Are there any questions or comments on this?

**The Aquinian:** I just didn’t know if I should ask it now or leave it for later just to clarify that results were up on the ballot website that STUSU uses. When Ahmik says it wasn’t posted does that mean when the ballot closes does it automatically post it or does STUSU have to approve when it gets posted.

**VP Admin:** I honestly believe the CRO has more explanation on that.However, I believe results are published on the website, but by STUSU saying posted I mean when we officially make a postensuring to bring exposure to all the candidates that have been elected, we did that on social media, but we did not post the results but inform the candidates first, but the link again everyone who voted will have access to that.

**The Aquinian:** So basically, when it closes the website, itself is the one that immediately posts it. That was just to clarify on the article we posted on breaking news. As we kind of said that STUSU posted, just for clarification we can change it to the website STUSU uses for ballots was the one that posted it not STUSU itself. It is good that you are clarifying that because we did not know how the website itself works.

**Off campus rep:** I was just wondering if it was only the timing issue or if the choice was also made due to other issues, especially concerning how Grad President was originally left off some student ballots.

**VP Admin:** Ellie, if I am allowed, I may read out loud the question from the OC rep. The OC rep is wondering if it was only a timing issue if the choice was also made due to other issues specifically concerning how Grad President was originally left off some student’s ballots. I believe that was early in the morning around 8:15-8:30 once ballots were open. I believe there were around 4-5 students who got the issue. Right at that moment when we found out the CRO got in touch with the company who manages the website to fix that. The CRO reached out to all those third-year students who had initially voted but did not get the option to vote for the grad class, so they got the opportunity to vote in that moment. For that it was not a decision made for those other issues essentially because of the timing of the by-law violation.

**VP Education:** Mine is more so a comment, yesterday I was sick so I missed a lot of the kerfuffle, but I would like to take the time to thank Ahmik, Isabella, Stevie and especially the CRO for addressing this so swiftly and I know it was a bit of a stress, so I am really grateful and I want to stress that I am thankful and appreciate the work that was done to address it.

**VP Admin:** I would also like to make an explanation and therefore a motion right after the explanation. Because of all the last-minute decisions we have to make the executive team and along with the CRO made the decision to incorporate some of the candidate campaign material into the STUSU social media to ensure they get exposure once again in the middle of all this situation. Although, we understand that it might violate part of our by-laws that doesn’t allow campaign materials to be exposed but I wanted to bring it to SRC so again we are accountable of the steps and actions being taken and raise the motion if everyone is okay to approve for this election to incorporate such campaign materials in STUSU’s social media.

**BIRT** the Board raises the motion to approve the incorporation for this election campaign materials in STUSU’s social media.

**Moved:** VP Administration

**Seconded:** VP Education

**Motion:** Carries

**International Rep:** I just have a question, basically what we did just now, this motion that was just carried, is to make legal what was already done this morning.

**VP Admin:** Because if it was not, it would have been removed if the SRC was not in favour of such action.

**International Rep:** So hypothetically, next year for instance the STUSU would be able to post said material on social media. No? Only this one time?

**VP Admin:** Because then again, the by-laws are open to be amended by SRC, so technically the by-laws stipulate that there must be one day before elections where no campaign materials are shared. So that is why no campaign materials are allowed to be shared.

**The Aquinian:** Should the CRO be present for this decision?

**VP Admin:** would you mind rephasing the question because I don’t understand**.**

**The Aquinian:** I was just meaning should the CRO be present in today’s meeting to talk about elections, just in my understanding the CRO is the main person behind the election planning, organizing, and managing. I was just wondering for protocol’s sake not for any other reason.

**VP Admin:** Absolutely, by the CRO being present in the decision not really because we are being the decision to SRC. She has been part of the conversation, and she has been well informed that the motion was going to be raised in SRC. Right after the SRC she will be informed that everything has been approved by SRC.

1. **Questions, Announcements & Notices**
   1. **STUSU Merch - VP Student Life**

I just want to say what I said on my report that I am going to be extending the merch deadline until Monday, I will resend an email about it. I just want to give the weekend for the people to send in their orders if they want to.

* 1. **SRC Meeting after March Break - Chair**

SRC immediately after March break will have to be on online and there is a possibility that I will not be able to present in the meeting.

**VP Education:** Best of luck in your competitions

1. **Adjournment.**

**[12.1.] BIRT** the meeting of the SRC adjourned at 3:42pm.

**Moved by:** VP Education

**Seconded by:** VP student life

**Motion** CARRIES

**Submission:**

The minutes were respectfully submitted to the Vice-President of Administration on Tuesday March 5th, 2024 at 9:05am

**Alyssa Ivany**

Recording Secretary

STUSU Student Representative Council