



# ELECTIONS REVIEW COMMITTEE MINUTES

2013 – 2014 #2

*Date: May 8<sup>th</sup> 2013*

*Time: 6.04 pm*

**In Attendance:**

*CHLOE SPEAKMAN (Chair)*

*MARINA BANISTER*

*ADAM WOODS*

*DAWSON ZENG*

**Excused Absence:**

*HARLEY MORRIS*

**Others in Attendance:**

*SACHITHA KUSALADHARMA*

**1. CALL TO  
ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by SPEAKMAN at 6.04 pm.

**2. APPROVAL OF  
AGENDA**

BANISTER moved that the agenda for *May 8, 2013* be approved as *tabled*.  
The motion was seconded by ZENG.

*Vote on Motion 4/ 0 /0*  
**CARRIED**

**3. APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES**

SPEAKMAN amended the minutes to change the name “BASHEER” to “BASHIR MOHAMED” in the section “In Attendance”.

BANISTER amended the minutes to change the name “BANNISTER” to “BANISTER” in all relevant sections.

WOODS moved that the minutes for *April 23, 2013* be approved as *amended*.  
The motion was seconded by ZENG.

*Vote on Motion 4/ 0 /0*  
**CARRIED**

#### 4. NEW BUSINESS

#### Edits to the Standing Orders

SPEAKMAN: In our mandate it says “shall review the *Bylaw Respecting the Elections, Plebiscites and Referenda* of the Students’ Union;”. However, I believe there are actually four bylaws.

WOODS: That is a good call. I’m not sure whether 2100 should be included. I’ll make a quick call to Farid to clarify this.

WOODS moved to strike “*Bylaw Respecting the Elections, Plebiscites and Referenda*” of part (a) in the “Mandate” section of the Standing Orders, and replace it with “*bylaws 2100, 2200, 2300, 2400, and 2500*”.

The motion was seconded by SPEAKMAN.

Vote on Motion 4/ 0 /0

**CARRIED**

SPEAKMAN: I have an issue with point 5. I was wondering what happens when the committee goes *in-camera*.

WOODS: Assuming we move *in-camera*, and then everything is off the record. Any non-members or non-voting members will have to leave the room.

SPEAKMAN: Do we have to put that in writing?

WOODS: Yes. We have to have it there.

SPEAKMAN: I mean should we add a description of what happens?

WOODS: No. That will be in the Council Standing Orders.

SPEAKMAN: Regarding point 7, would anyone want to take the minutes? If not, should we add something which says “... or shall assign it to the record taker”?

WOODS: I think it may be de-facto, assuming there is no recording secretary present. I think we should come back to this later.

SPEAKMAN: In point 17 and 19, there is a wording “*his/her*”. I propose to amend one of those to “*her/his*”.

WOODS: I believe we began to switch it to “*their*”.

BANISTER: I think that’s better.

SPEAKMAN: What counts as an Announcement, Business, and a Discussion?

WOODS: An Announcement would be if you as the chair have an announcement to make. Old business is anything that the committee couldn’t finish in the previous meeting. New business is what has been proposed for the meeting or what has been brought up at the meeting.

SPEAKMAN: Regarding point 22, I personally don’t care if there are late additions. We might think about saying that we could have additions to the agenda that wouldn’t be voted on that day.

BANISTER: When would the deadline be for the agenda then?

WOODS: As chair, it’s really up to your discretion. We don’t know what future chair’s preferences are going to be.

SPEAKMAN: I’m good with leaving point 22 as it is.

SPEAKMAN moved to amend the wording “*his/her*” of point 17 and 19 in the Standing Orders to “*their*”, and approve the rest of the Standing Orders as amended.

The motion was seconded by WOODS.

Vote on Motion 4/ 0 /0  
*CARRIED*

### Committee Member Goals

SPEAKMAN: Because we have to submit our recommendations to Students' Council before the end of November, we should get started soon on whatever we want to accomplish this year. ERC has been a little bit irrelevant during some periods, but we have the opportunity of doing something meaningful this year.

One such project I'm looking at is increasing candidate and voter turnout.

WOODS: There has been a lot of criticism over our election processes. We have the most grueling election cycle in Canada. Changing it would mean a controversial year with a lot of hard work. A lot of people like the current process and we may make some changes which some may not like. The election process is very condensed, but still over a long period of time. For example, if you run for an executive position, it is advised that you miss the two weeks of classes. Some things we can work on are the timings of the election itself. I have no idea on how to make it easier, and more transparent. If the committee wants to make changes this year, I would recommend we read bylaw 2200 and make some points on what we think.

SPEAKMAN: I have no problem with trying and failing at council, if that's what council wants.

WOODS: I don't think it's something we can get done in a couple of months. I think that as a committee we have to do our due diligence before we bring anything to council, unless it's something so controversial that the committee cannot decide. If we look at reviewing elections, we may even have to pass it on to next year's committee. The impeachment bylaw literally took 9-10 months to get through.

BANISTER: We should definitely try to improve it in some capacity.

ZENG: So, one of our goals should be to review the election process.

SPEAKMAN: Another thing I can think of is making it more approachable for students who want to get involved.

BANISTER: For me personally, I had no idea on how to get involved before I met Le and Lau. There must be many more students like me who want to get involved, but don't have the insight on how to do that.

SPEAKMAN: That's directly part of ERC's mandate.

WOODS: You will find that the bylaws themselves are very technical. We should communicate better with the general student population. It's something that Josh, William, and I would like to work on this year. We could also produce a report stating issues of the elections. I think it's very intimidating to run, and we tend to scare off students somehow.

BANISTER: Can we do a survey involving a sample of the student population to find out what their opinion is on the elections process?

WOODS: There is an annual SU survey. There are typically around 7000 respondents. There are some elections related questions there. I will go

through the survey information and report back.

BANISTER: There should be some questions to find out why more people are not running for positions.

SPEAKMAN: I think a survey is a really good idea. Marina, you can start on preparing some sample survey questions.

ZENG: I was thinking of doing some research on how other universities conduct their elections.

WOODS: I have access to a whole research department, and can get the information.

SPEAKMAN: Dawson can be the liaison for that.

WOODS: I will go through old survey questions, and see what there is on elections.

SPEAKMAN: I was on SERC (Social Environmental Responsibility Committee) last year, and we talked about what the SU is already doing. I think someone was working on gender parity in representation. I think we can collaborate with those groups, to get more female candidates. I don't want to legislate it though.

ZENG: Last year we had a lot of female candidates whereas there are only few this year.

SPEAKMAN: Amanda Henry gave us a presentation which had details on the gender split of executives and candidates.

WOODS: It's a very opinionated topic. I personally think it's something that will pass in time.

BANISTER: If the survey is anonymous, we can have a question asking them whether they were less likely to vote for a candidate if they were female. We can also ask them what they think about the lack of female representation. However, I strongly believe that someone who is qualified should get the position irrespective of gender.

WOODS: We had a lot of very strong candidates this year. There were women more than qualified who could have run. There is something very daunting about going into an election. There were some men who were intimidated by this as well.

BANISTER: What is the advertising for campaigns like with respect to greek life?

SPEAKMAN: I don't think it is advertising. Dawson and Adam can answer this.

BANISTER: Why are there more fraternity and sorority people?

WOODS: In all the past years, we have valued getting involved. Fraternities and sororities are very competitive with one another.

SPEAKMAN: The intention of it has been really good. Also, you guys have a really great support network for each other.

**5. REPORTS** *None*

**6. CLOSED SESSION** *NIL*

## 7. NEXT MEETING

SPEAKMAN moved to reschedule the meeting scheduled to be held on *May 22, 2013*, to *May 20, 2013* at 6.00 pm.  
The motion was seconded by ZENG.

Vote on Motion 4/ 0 /0  
*CARRIED*

**Next meeting:** *May 22, 2013* at 6.00 pm

BANISTER: Do we have any other foreseeable meeting changes in the future?

WOODS: After the next meeting, we go back to Wednesdays. So, after the 20<sup>th</sup> of May, we have our next meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June.

I should make it known that I don't know if I'm going to continue to be on this committee. An executive is required to be on here. I'll try to talk Chelen or Le into this.

BANISTER: What percentage of meetings does one have to come to be on the committee?

WOODS: There's no rule. We have discussed for years on whether we should have a stricter mechanism to keep councilors accountable. At the same time, it's a voluntary position, and we already have issues in attracting people.

SPEAKMAN: What about people who aren't going to the meetings, but still carrying out their duties?

ZENG: I may have an issue with the dates in the future. I don't know for sure yet.

WOODS: You guys can attempt to send proxies for meetings you can't attend.

SPEAKMAN: I will miss the ERC meetings on July 31<sup>st</sup> and August 14<sup>th</sup>.

There are two options for those meetings. Those are to elect an interim chair or to reschedule the meetings.

Harley has a proxy too.

BANISTER moved to nominate herself to be the interim chair for the meeting scheduled to be held on *July 31, 2013*.

The motion was seconded by WOODS.

Vote on Motion 4/ 0 /0  
*CARRIED*

BANISTER moved to nominate ZENG to be the interim chair for the meeting scheduled to be held on *August 14, 2013*.

The motion was seconded by WOODS.

Vote on Motion 4/ 0 /0  
*CARRIED*

## 8. ADJOURNMENT

WOODS moved to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6.53 pm.

